



Psychology

Graduate Student Handbook



7th edition, effective January 2020

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**M.A. Program leading to the Master of Arts in Psychology degree at the
University of Texas Permian Basin**

Graduate Student Handbook

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This handbook is designed to provide new and current students with information about the requirements leading to the **Master of Arts in Psychology** degree at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin (UTPB) and its two concentrations: (1) Clinical Psychology concentration; and (2) Experimental Psychology concentration. For most students, the transition from being an undergraduate to being a graduate student is challenging, to say the least. *The quantity and quality of work expected of graduate students exceeds that expected at the undergraduate level.* Graduate work tends to be more rigorous and involve more independent work than undergraduate studies. Courses also tend to be more challenging because they are taught at a higher level and cover material in greater depth. This includes thinking as a critical scholar, reading current academic journals, and reviewing others' scholarly research and treatment interventions. The contacts you make in graduate school at UTPB are the beginnings of your professional network and it is important that you cultivate strong ties with both the faculty and other graduate students.

Program Overview

The **Master of Arts in Psychology** program offers concentrations in either Clinical Psychology or Experimental Psychology. The programs provide advanced training both for recent B.A. and B.S. graduates, as well as for individuals who have been in the work force for a number of years. Our M.A. program provides students with instruction related to working in a wide range of settings, including mental health centers, juvenile detention centers, child service agencies, specialized school services, residential treatment facilities, family counseling agencies, governmental and community agencies, research facilities, business, human resources, and marketing settings, teaching in community colleges, or preparing for study at the doctoral level (Ph.D, Ed.D., or Psy.D.). Although some students subsequently enter doctoral programs and complete their doctorate, many immediately accept challenging positions in the public, private, or non-profit sectors. Students may complete the program on a full-time (at least 9 credit hours per fall and spring semester) or part-time basis. However, all program requirements must be completed within eight years from the date of admission.

The Department of Psychology at UTPB is strongly committed to following all legal and ethical guidelines applicable to the professions of the teaching, training, and practice of Psychology. The Department of Psychology adheres to the current American Psychological Association's Code of Ethics (2002, *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060-1073).

MA Thesis or Non-Thesis MA Project Requirement

Students in the Experimental Psychology master's concentration must complete a thesis. Students in the Clinical Psychology concentration may select either the thesis option or the non-thesis "project" option. Although there are differences between the thesis and non-thesis options (described below),

both are capstone courses which provide the student the opportunity to work with a graduate faculty member as supervisor.

The Clinical Psychology concentration offers two tracks of study to accommodate the interests of students:

- A. Doctoral preparation track, which requires the completion of a data-based MA Thesis; and
- B. Practitioner track, which requires the non-thesis MA Project.

Each clinical track requires the student to complete a 60 credit hour program of coursework and clinical practicum experience. Both tracks emphasize core clinical/counseling content, basic research skills, professional skills, and practicum experience. The doctoral preparation track is designed for those who intend to proceed with doctoral work. The practitioner track is designed for those who want to practice in psychology and who will seek licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) or Licensed Psychological Associate (LPA) after the award of the MA degree in Psychology.

MA Thesis. Generally, a thesis is an empirical research study with data collection, written in APA-style, which includes an abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, and reference sections along with relevant appendixes (refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) for instructions on formatting your thesis). The purpose of the thesis is to enable the student to demonstrate:

- A thorough knowledge of some area of research
- The ability to design, justify, and carry out a research project that has the potential for furthering the knowledge of the area of research
- The ability to report research in a clear and concise manner using the guidelines set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition). Henceforth referred to as APA style.

MA Project. Generally, the MA Project takes the form of a critical review of the literature on a topic relevant to clinical psychology. Although there is often no testing of hypotheses nor the collection and analysis of data, outcomes from prior studies may be compared and contrasted, and new roads of empirical research may be offered. Methodological reviews, meta-analyses, and theoretical projects may also be entertained.

Full-time Graduate Faculty in the Department of Psychology:

- **Wei-ju Chen**, Assistant Professor of Psychology, received her B.S. (summa cum laude) and M.A. in Psychology from San José State University. She completed her Ph.D. in Psychology with focuses in Health Psychology and Quantitative Methods at The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2017. After obtaining her doctoral degree, Dr. Chen conducted multidisciplinary research and managed a cancer genomics training program as a postdoctoral research associate for 2 years at Texas A&M University before joining UT Permian Basin in 2019. She currently teaches Experimental Psychology and Health Psychology at the undergraduate level as well as Research Methodology at the graduate level. Dr. Chen has a passion for interdisciplinary research with an emphasis on minority

health disparities, genomics, autism spectrum disorders, cancer prevention, stress and coping, emotion, and statistical methods. Some of her work can be found in peer-reviewed journals such as *Autism Research*, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *European Journal of Human Genetics*, *Genetics in Medicine*, and *Journal of Applied Biobehavioral Research*.

Dr. Chen may be reached at (432) 552-2346 or chen_w@utpb.edu. Her office is MB 3124.

- **Jamie S. Hughes**, Associate Professor of Psychology, received her B.S. degree with honors at Michigan State University, her M.S. degree at Illinois State University, and her Ph.D. in Social Psychology at New Mexico State University in 2010. She joined UTPB in 2012 following an appointment at Daemen College in Amherst, NY. Dr. Hughes teaches undergraduate courses in Experimental Psychology, Social Psychology, Introduction to Psychology, and the Psychology of Women. She teaches graduate courses in Social Psychology, Psychology and Law, and Statistics. Her research interests are in social psychology, moral psychology, social justice issues, and teaching pedagogy. Her work can be found in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, the *British Journal of Social Psychology*, the *Journal Social Psychology*, and *Criminal Justice and Behavior*.

Dr. Hughes can be reached at 432-552-3345 or hughes_j@utpb.edu. Her office is MB 3126.

- **James Olson**, Professor of Psychology, received his B.A. degree “With Honors” from the University of California at Santa Barbara, where he was named outstanding student in psychology in 1969. He received his Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1974. He is one of the “founding faculty” of UT Permian Basin, coming to the university in 1973. He was instrumental in the development of the campus’ Counseling Center, where he served his clinical internship. He is a licensed psychologist in Texas, since 1978. He served as Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences from 1994 to 2004. He is currently Professor of Psychology and Program Head for the M.A. program. He teaches Career Counseling and Development, Current Psychotherapies, and Cognitive Behavior Therapy at the graduate level, and Statistics, Drugs and Behavior, and Industrial/Organizational Psychology at the undergraduate level. He has been selected for several prestigious teaching awards: (1) Amoco Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1976, given annually to one faculty member at each of The University of Texas’ campuses by the Amoco Foundation in recognition of "outstanding teaching performance at the undergraduate level;" (2) Piper Professor, 2011, for “outstanding teaching” with competition from each of the 165 public and private colleges and universities in Texas; and (3) University of Texas Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award, 2012, “to recognize faculty who demonstrate commitment to teaching and sustained capability to deliver excellence to the undergraduate learning experience.” He has co-authored three books: (1) *Basic Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* (1981, Holt, Rinehart and Winston); (2) *Breaking and Entering: An Ethnographic Analysis of Burglary* (Sage Publications, 1991), and (3) *Breaking and Entering: Burglars and Burglary* (Wadsworth Publishers, 2004). He has eight book chapters, and has published in a variety of journals, some of which are: *Perception and Psychophysics*; *Pharmacology*; *Biochemistry and Behavior*; *Journal of Drug Education*; *The Behavior Analyst*; *Journal of Crime and Justice*; *Journal of Orthopsychiatry*; and *Addictive Behaviors*. His research on residential burglars was covered by the *Time*

Magazine, U.S. News & World Report, Newsweek, including an invitation to the *Today Show*. His research interests are broad. Among other things, he is currently working on binge drinking among college students, “caring” behaviors in the classroom, non-drug alternatives for drug misuse prevention, and, evaluating the Veterans Treatment Court in Midland, Texas.

Dr. Olson may be reached at (432) 552-2345. His office is MB 3200 and his email address is olson_j@utpb.edu.

- **Lauren Neal**, Assistant Professor of Psychology, graduated summa cum laude with her B.A. degree from Lee University. She completed her M.A. and Ph.D. in Experimental Social Psychology from the University of Alabama. Dr. Neal joined UT Permian Basin’s Department of Psychology in 2019. She teaches courses in Introductory Statistics, Cognitive Psychology, and Social Neuroscience. Her research investigates the neurophysiological bases of motivation, emotion, and personality. Her work is published in a number of peer-reviewed journals including *Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience, Biological Psychology, Psychophysiology, and Motivation Science*.

Dr. Neal can be reached at 432-552-2347 or neal_l@utpb.edu. Her office number is MB 3114.

Application to the M.A. Program in Psychology

- Complete an application form available from the Office of Admissions and turn it in at the same office.
- Provide official transcripts indicating the successful completion of the B.A. or B.S. degree.
- Applicants must provide three letters of reference, two of which must be from past professors who are in a position to evaluate the applicant’s qualifications for graduate study. The third letter, if not also from a past professor, should be from someone knowledgeable of the applicant’s knowledge and skills in a work or volunteer environment.
- Take the Graduate Record Examination general aptitude test (GRE) and meet the minimum University requirements.
- Submit a letter of “intent.” This should explain reasons for applying to one of the Master’s degree programs in Psychology. The applicant should also indicate their reasons for selecting UTPB, their preferred option of either clinical or experimental concentrations, and indicate with whom the student wishes to work, if known.
- The transcripts, letters of reference, GRE scores, and letter of intent should all be turned in at the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Forms and information can be obtained the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, or at the following website:
http://www.utpb.edu/utpb_adm/academicaffairs/graduatestudiesresearch/index_frame.htm

All application information should be completed by March 15 for admission to the subsequent Summer or Fall semesters, and by October 22 for admission to the subsequent Spring semester. Late applicants may be reviewed July 1 for enrollment the subsequent fall semester. A letter will be sent noting whether or not an applicant has been admitted to the program. If an application is incomplete, the applicant may be contacted requesting the missing documents. However, it is the

responsibility of the applicant to submit all required materials by the March 15 or October 22 deadlines. Failure to submit all the necessary materials by the deadline will delay admission consideration.

The Office of Graduate Studies and Research will gladly respond to all questions about application status. Reach them by phone (432) 552-2530 or email: gradstudies@utpb.edu

Minimum GPA and GRE requirements. A student is eligible for regular acceptance if he/she has earned a bachelor degree from an accredited college or university in psychology or a related discipline (with a 3.0 GPA or better from the last 60 hours of the undergraduate degree) and a satisfactory *Entrance Score* (ES). The *Entrance Score* (ES) formula is one's GPA (on a 4.0 scale) from the last 60 hours of the undergraduate degree multiplied by 200, and then this sum is added to the combined verbal and quantitative scores on the GRE multiplied by 3.44. Minimally, acceptance to the M.A. Program in Psychology for regular status requires an ES of 1,600 or more and a 3.0 GPA or better from the last 60 hours of upper level work toward the Bachelor's degree, and all of the prerequisite courses completed. A student whose ES is below 1,600 for regular admission but is 1,400 or above, may be eligible for provisional acceptance to the graduate program; applicants with an ES of 1,660 or more but who lack course prerequisites fall into the provisional category. All students admitted with provisional acceptance shall be assigned specific requirements in terms of courses and performance, to include a minimum of twelve semester credit hours of 6000-level course work, with a grade of B or better in each course taken.

Note, meeting the University's minimum GPA and ES requirements does not guarantee admission to the M.A. program in Psychology. The faculty of Psychology will convene as a "Graduate Acceptance Committee" in March, October, and July to review applicants.

Prerequisites. Three undergraduate psychology courses (9 hours minimum) are required for admission to the M.A. program in Psychology.

- Introductory Statistics (i.e., PSYC 3301)
- Experimental Psychology (i.e., PSYC 3304), or Research Methods in Psychology
- An advanced, junior or senior level, course in psychology. Students interested in pursuing the M.A. in Psychology with the clinical concentration are encouraged to take PSYC 4351, Tests and Measurement, as it is required before enrolling in the two graduate courses required for the degree (PSYC 6350 and PSYC 6351).

Students with deficiencies in these prerequisites may be granted "provisional" admission status, and must take the specified prerequisite courses and earn a minimum grade of B during the first two semesters the student is enrolled provisionally in the program. Students may enroll in the necessary undergraduate courses (PSYC 3301, Statistics; and/or PSYC 3304, Experimental Psychology) and in selected graduate courses concurrently. Note, all graduate courses are taught in the evening or online at UTPB. However, although the undergraduate courses that are prerequisite courses may not be offered face-to-face in the evening, the majority are offered online; we attempt to offer the

undergraduate prerequisite courses at least once every two years in the late afternoon or early evening face-to-face.

University policy permits some graduate coursework taken while students are classified as “provisional.” Specifically, students may apply six graduate credit hours without petitioning (and a maximum of nine with petition) toward the degree. Graduate hours in excess of nine cannot be applied to the Master’s degree. Further, courses in which students have earned a grade of less than “B” (i.e., a grade of “C” or less) are not counted to the degree.

I. The Concentration in Clinical Psychology

The Clinical Psychology concentration leading to the M.A. in Psychology degree is aimed at training students in the assessment and treatment of mental disorders through individual, family, and group therapies. The concentration offers training in child, adolescent, and adult disorders. This course of study is grounded in the scientist-practitioner model and thus involves training in theory, research design and statistics, and the application of evidence-based principles to the provision of psychological services.

Successful completion of the M.A. in Psychology with the Clinical Psychology concentration is designed to provide students the education requirements needed to take state examinations required for the Licensed Psychological Associate (LPA) in the State of Texas (60 hours minimum; for additional information see <http://www.tsbep.state.tx.us/>) or, with additional coursework, the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Texas (60 hours minimum); for more information about the LPC, see: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/counselor/default.shtm>. In addition to completing the requirements for the M.A. degree, both the LPA and LPC require additional supervised hours after completing the MA degree. Both licensures, the LPA and LPC, also require the successful passage of an examination called for by the licensing body after the completion of the M.A in Psychology.

Course Requirements for the Clinical Psychology Concentration (60 hours minimum)

For about a third of the courses listed below there are course prerequisites. If a course does not have a prerequisite listed, then there are none and the student may enroll in that course at any time. Course descriptions and their prerequisites are provided in Appendix C.

A. Required “Foundation” Courses (9 hours):

- PSYC 6302, Research Methodology
- PSYC 6304, Advanced Statistics: ANOVA; or PSYC 6314, Advanced Statistics: Regression
- PSYC 6324, Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues

B. Concentration Courses (39 hours):

- PSYC 6305, Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy
- PSYC 6306, Psychopharmacology
- PSYC 6307, Addictions Counseling
- PSYC 6312, Group Psychotherapy
- PSYC 6321, Psychopathology

- PSYC 6322, Current Psychotherapies
- PSYC 6323, Individual Psychotherapy
- PSYC 6325, Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Families
- PSYC 6350, Intellectual Assessment
Corequisite for this course is one course in Tests and Measurement and the permission of instructor (students are encouraged to take Tests and Measurement as soon as possible; this course may be taken prior to, or concurrently with PSYC 6350)..
- PSYC 6351, Personality Assessment.
Corequisite for this course is one course in Tests and Measurement and the permission of instructor (students are encouraged to take Tests and Measurement as soon as possible; this course may be taken prior to, or concurrently with PSYC 6351).
- PSYC 6381, Trauma, Crisis, and Grief Counseling
- PSYC 6392, Practicum (6 hours).
This consists of two semesters (225 clock hours each semester) of supervised practical experience in an appropriate clinical setting. Prerequisites for this course are: PSYC 6305, 6312, 6321, 6322, 6323, 6324, 6325, 6350, and 6351; proof of liability insurance; and permission of instructor. Students must contact the practicum instructor the semester prior to enrolling to be sure all prerequisites are fulfilled. This course is not available in summer to first-time enrollees

C. Other Required Psychology Courses (9 hours):

- PSYC 6371, Social and Cultural Psychology, **or** PSYC 6372 Multicultural Counseling
- PSYC 6341, Lifespan Development Social and Personality
- PSYC 6378, Career Counseling and Development

D. Master's Thesis (3 hours) **or Master's Project option (3 hours):**

- Take PSYC 6399, Master's Thesis, for the Doctoral Preparation Track.
- Take PSYC 6398, Master's Project (Non-Thesis Option), for the Practitioner Track.

E. Optional Additional Psychology Courses (no hours are specifically required here)

Any one of the courses below may be selected as "extra" edification/experiential courses.

- PSYC 6375, Psychology and the Law
- PSYC 6389, Selected Topics
- PSYC 6395, Seminar on Selected Topics

Course Sequence

Students in the Clinical Psychology concentration should enroll in Tests and Measurement (PSYC 4351) as soon as possible if they did not have this course as an undergraduate, and begin by taking

one of the PSYC 6350 and PSYC 6351 testing courses their first semester. Students should also take the nine prerequisite courses to PSYC 6398 Practicum course, so they are prepared to take Practicum in a timely fashion. Students in this program should discuss their course-taking plans with their faculty advisor prior to or at the beginning of the first semester.

II. The Concentration in Experimental Psychology

The Experimental Psychology concentration focuses on advanced psychological theory (i.e., developmental, cognitive, personality, and social psychological theory), research methods, statistics, and manuscript preparation. Students in this program receive one-on-one attention and class sizes rarely exceed 15 students. The small size of the program enables faculty to mentor and collaborate with students in research. Students will have the opportunity to publish and present their work at professional conferences or in academic journals.

When students finish the Experimental Psychology concentration they will be able to:

- Evaluate research methods, statistical analyses, and theory
- Integrate knowledge about psychological theories and empirical findings to justify research
- Use theoretical, methodological, statistical, ethical, and APA style knowledge to develop hypotheses, design research, collect and analyze data, integrate findings, and to write and orally defend an empirical report

To reach these objectives, students are expected to be involved in research activities throughout their graduate program. Research activities are coordinated with faculty members depending, in part, on the student's interests. During the first year, students in consultation with their faculty advisor, develop a plan of study for their graduate program. The plan specifies students' long-range goals, the field of Psychology in which they will become proficient, the kinds of research skills they intend to acquire, the sequence of courses, research, and professional experiences they hope to follow, and an approximate timetable for accomplishing these ends. The degree plan is to be completed during the first semester after admission and should be submitted to the graduate school prior to the end of the first year.

Successful completion of the M.A. in Experimental Psychology will provide students with a broad background in psychological theory, research methods, and statistics. Further, students will gain analytical and critical thinking skills, oral and written communication skills, and they will have the ability to solve applied and theoretical problems. This training will allow students to pursue employment conducting research in university or national laboratories. Graduates may also be placed in hospital, mental health, and social service fields, in granting agencies, business settings, or at community colleges. The terminal master's degree will also prepare students for continued study at the Ph.D. level.

Course Requirements for the Experimental Psychology Option (36 hours minimum)

For some of the courses listed below there are course prerequisites. If a course does not have a prerequisite listed, then there are none and the student may enroll at any time. Course descriptions are provided in Appendix C.

A. Required “Foundation” Courses (15 hours):

- PSYC 6302, Research Methodology
- PSYC 6304, Advanced Statistics: ANOVA.
- PSYC 6314, Advanced Statistics: Regression
- PSYC 6371, Social and Cultural Psychology
- PSYC 6341, Lifespan Development Social and Personality

B. Elective Courses (15-18 hours):

These courses should be chosen in consultation with the faculty advisor and be consistent with a student’s overall goals. Up to 6 hours of undergraduate course work (as a graduate student) may also count toward electives.

- PSYC 6321, Psychopathology
- PSYC 6322, Current Psychotherapies
- PSYC 6305, Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy
- PSYC 6306, Psychopharmacology
- PSYC 6375, Psychology and the Law
- PSYC 6378, Career Counseling and Development
- PSYC 6389, Selected Topics
- PSYC 6391, Independent Research
- PSYC 6395, Seminar on Selected Topics

C. Master’s Thesis (3 - 6 hours):

- PSYC 6399, Master’s Thesis

Course Sequence

Students in the Experimental Psychology program should enroll in Research Methodology and Advanced Statistics ANOVA or Regression their first year. Students in this program should discuss their thesis plans with their faculty advisor prior to or at the beginning of the second year.

Independent Study/Directed Research

For students who are interested and able to benefit from such experiences, the Independent Study, 6391, course may be considered in consultation with your faculty advisor. These course options are reserved for students who have a demonstrated ability to profit from them. Activities from the following list should be consistent with the students’ long-range career goals, their topical interests, and the skills they intend to acquire. These hours are intended to help students gain additional marketable experiences, and they will be highly individualized.

For those interested in **pursuing a Ph.D. in psychology**, PSYC 6391 will allow you to: (1) collaborate with a faculty advisor on research or (2) conduct a pilot study prior to proposing your master thesis. This option requires a final project—a literature review, research poster, or research paper.

For those interested in **teaching**, the PSYC 6391 course can be used to gain teaching experiences as a teaching assistant (with approval from the instructor of record and/or faculty advisor). Students who wish to pursue this option will observe teaching and read literature on teaching and learning. As the semester progresses, students may take more responsibility in the specific course to which they were assigned (by presenting a guest lecture, developing potential course activities, and/or assessment measures). Student will also complete a final project—develop a teaching philosophy, a teaching portfolio, a course design or a grant/research project related to teaching.

Those interested in **quantitative psychology and statistics** may enroll in PSYC 6391 as a psychology department statistics intern. This will involve assisting undergraduate and graduate students and/or faculty with their research data. This experience will be planned, supervised, and assessed by your faculty advisor with whom you will arrange a final project.

III. Grade Achievement Policy

Students in the MA in Psychology programs receive credit for only graduate (6000 level) courses in which a grade of A or B has been earned. Any 4000 level course taken as a requisite to regular status must also result in a B grade or higher. Continuation in the graduate programs in Psychology is contingent on maintaining a minimum grade of B in all courses counting toward the degree. Under no circumstances will a grade of C be counted for credit in the Psychology graduate program. Note, this criterion is higher than that printed in the current online *UTPB Graduate Catalog* (see <http://www.utpb.edu/docs/default-source/utpb-docs/g-catalog/14-16/gradcatalog.pdf?sfvrsn=2>). Students seeking the MA in Psychology must have a B or A grade in all courses counting toward the MA degree, not merely a B “average.” A student admitted into the psychology MA program who earns a C+ or lower in any course taken to apply to the MA degree in Psychology will, at a minimum, receive an academic review by the graduate program faculty, and will be monitored and placed on academic probation until the course is repeated with a B or better grade. Such notice will be made in writing by the department chairperson or the graduate program head. Any student placed on academic probation is limited to six credits per semester while on academic probation. Occurrence of a second C or lower grades in one’s graduate course work shall be grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.

Students should visit with his or her academic advisor at the beginning of each new semester to discuss any issues affecting progress toward the degree.

IV. Student Professionalism

Throughout the program, the student will find that both academic progress (e.g., course grades) and professionalism is monitored. Professional behavior is an expectation. Sometimes students misinterpret the informal and personal atmosphere of the graduate programs in psychology as *laissez faire*, or “anything goes.” Although it’s true that the university environment is more informal than most corporate, nonprofit or for profit agencies, or government agencies, appropriate professionalism is expected. Clearly professionalism consists of a variety of behaviors, and

although it is often difficult to exhaustively define, teach, and assess professional behavior, the graduate student is expected to demonstrate professionalism in the following ways:

- Coming prepared for class, having completed readings or other assignments;
- Regular attendance and participation in class, and other obligations (this includes practicum appointments and regular meetings with one's Thesis Advisor during the thesis semester);
- Arriving for classes, thesis meetings, and practicum appointments at the scheduled time;
- Meeting the due dates established for class assignments (including Thesis deadlines; see below);
- Adhering to the American Psychological Association's professional code of ethics (e.g., confidentiality; dual relationships) and university regulations (e.g., academic dishonesty; drug free environment, and so on);
- Maintaining appropriate dress, personal appearance, and hygiene, particularly in the practicum experience;
- Maintaining courteous, civil relationships with fellow students, faculty, and staff;
- Being psychologically sound, interpersonally effective, and able to engage with fellow students, faculty, staff, clients, and professionals in the community in a healthy and responsible manner; and
- Maintaining professional conduct in the community.

In both the clinical practicum and experimental independent research experience, a "zero tolerance" policy is in effect to protect the welfare of clients and community collaborators as well as the integrity of the psychology M.A. programs. Examples of unprofessional behavior include, but are not limited to, the following: disorderly, aggressive, or threatening conduct on campus or in the community; behavior that endangers the safety, health, or welfare of others on or off campus (i.e., driving while under the influence); breaches of confidentiality, issues of test security, multiple relationships with clients, and so forth.

V. The First and Last Semesters

Upon notification of acceptance at either "regular" or "provisional" status, the applicant will be assigned a "temporary" faculty advisor if interest in working with a specific faculty member was not specified in the student's letter of intent. Student with "temporary" faculty advisors may change faculty advisors later. For example, students may change advisors if they decide to work on their MA Thesis or MA Project with a faculty member who shares more interest and expertise relevant to the thesis or project topic. Make sure you meet with your assigned faculty advisor as soon as possible. He or she is one of the most valuable resources you have for information and advice. In consultation with your faculty advisor, the student will decide on the courses to enroll in the first semester. Some courses have prerequisites or other sorts of restrictions placed on them that further dictate discussing your coursework with your faculty advisor. Furthermore, if one is a full-time student certain courses are encouraged to be taken as soon as possible so that graduation is not delayed.

Midway during the first semester, or before, in consultation with their faculty advisor, the student develops a plan of study for graduate work and completes a “Master’s Degree Program Plan” (see Appendices A and B). This is a formal document summarizing your plan of study. The degree plan specifies:

- The courses necessary to successfully complete either the Clinical Psychology or the Experimental Psychology concentrations.
- The faculty advisor.

Note that the faculty advisor who is initially assigned may be changed at any time the student elects. Some students opt not to stay with their initial faculty advisor and choose someone else once they have completed two or more semesters, particularly if they were assigned a temporary advisor. The degree plan serves as a general framework that permits the students’ graduate work to be adapted to their interests and abilities and provides a standard against which their progress can be assessed. It is flexible, as is the faculty advisor. Degree plans, like faculty advisors, may be changed with a minimum of red tape in order to update the degree plan. Changes must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

- For PSYC 6399, Master’s Thesis, and PSYC 6398, Master’s Project, three members of the graduate faculty in Psychology will serve on the MA thesis or project committee, one of whom is the faculty advisor. This is described in detail below. Note, the selection of one’s MA thesis or project committee members may be changed as one gets closer to considering the actual thesis or project topic. The degree plan will only need to be updated and submitted to Office of Graduate Studies and Research.
- Sample Master’s Degree Program Plans are provided in the Appendices as follows: (a) Appendix A, Clinical Psychology concentration with the intention of LPA and/or LPC licensure; and (b) Appendix B, Experimental concentration.

The student, faculty advisor, and two members of the graduate faculty of psychology, and the head of either the concentrations in Clinical Psychology or Experimental Psychology, all need to approve and sign the Masters Degree Program Plan, and then it is filed in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The student is responsible for obtaining all signatures of approval and timely filing the degree plan with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Details of the PSYC 6399, Master’s Thesis, and PSYC 6398, Master’s Project, options for those seeking to concentrate in clinical psychology are described below in headings VI and VII. All those choosing to concentrate in Experimental Psychology will select the Master’s Thesis option, and enroll in PSYC 6399 under heading VI.

At the beginning of the final semester, or before, the student must file a “degree check” with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, to be sure all courses for the degree have or will be taken with a B or better grade. The student also needs to “apply” for graduation through the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. **Importantly, graduation applications must be submitted early in one’s last semester.** Please check with the graduate studies office to determine the graduation deadline for the semester you plan to graduate (i.e., they do not accept late applications).

VI. The MA Thesis Committee (for those in the Experimental Concentration and those in the Clinical Concentration--Doctoral Preparation Track)

Sometime in the second year of study the students in the Experimental Psychology Concentration and Clinical Concentration (Doctoral Preparation Track) should have a pretty good idea of who his or her permanent faculty advisor will be, and this faculty member will then serve as the chair of the student's thesis committee. The student should have a formal meeting with his or her faculty advisor and begin to explore research ideas for the thesis before enrolling in the actual course, PSYC 6399, Master's Thesis. Students should choose a topic that interests them, but ensure that their faculty advisor approves of the topic and can advise one on it. Thus, in their first year students should get to know the faculty members in psychology in anticipation of choosing a thesis topic and chair of the thesis committee. If changes are to be made in the membership of the thesis committee, they should be made at this time and the degree plan updated and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

The thesis committee consists of the faculty advisor (who serves as chair), two full-time graduate faculty in the Psychology Department, and one other member of the graduate faculty who is not a faculty member in the Psychology Department. The member of the committee from outside the Psychology Department is generally selected from a slate of two or three faculty who are available, and is generally selected by the chair of the thesis committee in consultation with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research and the student.

The chair of the thesis committee, or thesis chair, is expected to direct, supervise, and monitor the student's work. The three other committee members serve as resources for the student. They may be called upon to play an active role in some aspect of the thesis, but never as active a role as the chair. The chair is expected to provide constructive, timely, written feedback on each completed draft of the thesis proposal and the final form of the thesis document. However, the chair is not responsible for correcting student skill deficits in writing, statistical analyses, APA style, or motivational problems.

Enrolling in PSYC 6399, MA Thesis, and Writing the Final Master's Thesis

The MA Thesis course proceeds in two steps: (1) completion of the MA thesis proposal and oral presentation; and (2) MA thesis writing and final master's thesis. Gathering the data and completing the thesis manuscript usually takes at least one semester, and be aware that this is quite a tight timeline. Students should anticipate the high likelihood that they will need to enroll in a second semester of Master's Thesis. While enrolled in PSYC 6399, the student is responsible for keeping the thesis chair regularly informed of the progress of data collection, statistical analysis of the results, and successive drafts of the thesis manuscript. Note, it is incumbent upon the student to communicate with his or her thesis chair frequently regarding progress, either face-to-face or via email/phone communication. Meetings between student and the other thesis committee members may also take place throughout the semester as needed. Early drafts of the thesis manuscript should be developed by the student in close consultation with the faculty advisor/thesis chair. These drafts are usually not shared with other members of the thesis committee unless requested or unless the student needs specific advice or help on portions of the manuscript. Again, the student should allow seven calendar days before expecting written comments from the chair about a draft of the thesis manuscript.

(1) Step 1 of PSYC 6399, Master's Thesis: The MA Thesis Proposal and Oral Presentation

The student should have a copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition). Before writing, the student should get the handout called *Instructions for Preparation of Master's Theses and Research Project Reports* at UTPB's Office of Graduate Studies and Research. It's also available online at UTPB's website. Go to "administration" on the left-hand menu, click; then under the "Academic Affairs" menu, click "Graduate Studies & Research"; then click "Student Information" on the left-hand menu; finally, click "Thesis Guidelines."

The thesis proposal process begins with a discussion with the faculty advisor/thesis committee chair about the student's interests. Subsequent discussion should lead to the identification of a specific problem of interest. Once a problem of interest or specific research questions have been identified, the student writes the thesis proposal, which includes an introduction (a literature review and hypotheses for testing), the procedures for data collection (method section), anticipated results and plans for data analysis (how one will go about statistically analyzing the data), and references (references section). Guidelines are as follows:

- Your thesis proposal should be formatted in the same way as the final thesis manuscript, using APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) with some notable exceptions as described below. Exceptions to APA Style for your Master's thesis proposal are: The left-hand margin and top margin must be 1.5 inches. The bottom and right-hand margins may be 1 inch as per APA style. These expanded margins left and top are necessary in order that your final thesis manuscript may be bound in book-fashion.
- For your thesis proposal, you will not have an Abstract, because clearly you have barely begun.
- Although the final thesis document will generally be written using past tense, use future tense for the Method and Analysis sections described below.
- The first numbered page should be a Title Page following APA Style.
- The text will follow with page 2 since you're not including an Abstract with your thesis proposal, beginning with your introduction to the literature. This is the literature review that describes the topic in its historical and theoretical context. It addresses why the study is worth conducting, how it will add to the body of literature, and culminates with the hypothesis/hypotheses to be tested. It is usually ten pages (plus or minus five). For more details see pages 30-67 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).
- Next is the Method section. This will include the participants, apparatus/materials/measures and procedure sections. All stimulus materials, instructions to participants, tests, questionnaires, informed consent forms, and so forth, should be included in Appendices. This section is usually three to eight pages. For more details, see pages 29-32 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).
- Follow the Method section with an Analysis section. We call this the Analysis section for the thesis proposal stage, but later it will be termed the Results section. This section should describe anticipated results and implications. It should also include the statistical analyses necessary to reject or retain the null hypothesis/hypotheses. This section is usually one to

- two pages at the proposal stage. The purpose of the Analysis section is to be sure that the student has the competence or resources to adequately examine the data that are collected.
- The References section will follow the Analysis section. There is no Discussion section at the proposal stage. This reference list should be prepared according to the instructions set forth in Chapter 9 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).
 - After the References section, as appropriate, include any appendices and supplemental materials as per guidelines on pages 42-43 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition). This includes information relevant to the methodology, but which would not normally be included in a Method section. If one is using questionnaires, surveys, and other materials, it is appropriate to present them in their entirety in an appendix.

The process will involve writing preliminary drafts, rewriting, and so on. When the student believes that a draft manuscript has sufficient quality, it is presented to the thesis chair for review and comment. Drafts of the manuscript often pass back and forth several times, depending on the extent of the needed revisions. At some point, the manuscript will pass muster and be in a state presentable to the two other thesis committee members in psychology for feedback. This manuscript becomes the thesis proposal. It could take anywhere from half a semester to a semester to complete a polished, quality thesis proposal.

Note that as drafts of the thesis Proposal manuscript pass back and forth between the thesis chair and the student, the student should allow at least seven calendar days before expecting feedback. Draft manuscripts may be submitted in hardcopy or electronically, as specified by the thesis chair. It is worth repeating that the thesis chair is not responsible for correcting deficits in writing, statistical analyses competence, or APA style. The thesis chair is not an editor or proof reader. In fact, thesis chairs and thesis committee members have the right to return documents without reading further upon encountering ten (plus or minus five) grammatical, spelling, or APA style errors.

The Oral Thesis Proposal.

The purpose of the thesis proposal is to provide the psychologists who are members of the thesis committee a clear and complete description of what you intend to do and how you intend to do it so they can provide the student advice on how to improve the research project. Ideally, the final master's thesis will lead to a published journal article.

The oral thesis proposal consists of meeting with the student and the three psychologists on the thesis committee to discuss the thesis proposal as a group. The psychologists serve to help with any logical or methodological problems and give advice. A successful oral thesis proposal meeting is one that leads the faculty to approve the execution of the proposed research project, trusting the chair and student to employ any recommendations specified during the meeting. The meeting is facilitative in nature, designed to enable the student to complete a successful thesis oral defense (described below). However, if major changes are needed, a new proposal (or major revision) and another oral thesis proposal may be required.

It is the student's responsibility to coordinate a date and time that is acceptable to the psychologists who are members of the thesis committee.

- The student should decide on a few dates when the meeting for the oral thesis proposal could be held. Note establishing the availability of the thesis committee prior to setting dates will expedite the process. These dates should be at least two weeks into the future. Note that it is next to impossible to set up a meeting in the summer. Faculty are on 9-month, fall-spring semester appointments, so unless they are teaching throughout the summer, and most are not, they are under no obligation to meet during the summer.
- The student contacts the faculty offering possible dates and times. Often this will require several back-and-forth contacts in order to accommodate the faculty and student's schedules.
- The student schedules a room to hold the meeting for a 60-minute block of time. The committee chair will describe how the student may go about reserving a room. The student will be asked for his or her name and that of the thesis advisor, and assigned a conference room. If a PowerPoint presentation is to be made, then it is essential that the conference room has the appropriate equipment to do so.
- The student provides the psychologists who are members of the thesis committee a hardcopy of the thesis proposal at least seven calendar days prior to the date of the preliminary orals. Some members of the thesis committee may prefer only an electronic copy, so you may ask each professor's preference. This seven day lead time is extremely important.
- It bears repeating that the thesis proposal delivered to the thesis committee should be polished and flawless (from the student's point of view). It should be free of typos, consist of correctly spelled words, incorporate correct APA style, and be grammatically correct.

Usually the oral thesis proposal meeting lasts about an hour. Students are encouraged to consider holding a PowerPoint presentation consisting of roughly 10-12 slides. Students are also encouraged to acquire information about the characteristics of "good" or "effective" PowerPoint presentations before developing their PowerPoint slides.

The oral thesis proposal begins with a presentation by the student with a summary of the historical and theoretical contexts of the topic, and why and how another study on the topic should be conducted. This usually takes about 20 minutes (plus or minus five minutes). This is followed by discussion with the faculty on the finer points of the hypothesis/hypotheses, methodology, and statistical analysis of the data. The faculty will invariably make specific suggestions for change in the research proposal. The student should take precise notes, and be sure these recommendations are understood before the end of the oral thesis proposal.

Upon approval, the student must follow any recommendations agreed upon by the faculty in the oral thesis proposal meeting. If minor changes are needed as the study progresses, they should be cleared with the thesis chair.

Once the proposal has been approved by the thesis committee, it must also be approved by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) if human participants are used in the conduct of the study. An IRB form for human subjects research must be completed and approved before collecting any data. Further information about research with human subjects may be obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies and Research (phone 552-2530) or online at <https://www.utpb.edu/university-offices/research-and-grants/human-subjects-in-research-irb>.

Research with animals must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), also called the Animal Care and Laboratory Facilities Committee at UTPB. Further information about research with animal subjects may be obtained from the Laboratories Office (phone 552-2278).

The student should consult his or her thesis chair for the appropriate forms that need to be completed and approved before commencing with any data collection. This review could take anywhere between seven to thirty calendar days. After obtaining IRB or IACUC approval, the student may begin collecting data. Collecting data beforehand is unethical and unprofessional.

(2) Step 2 of PSYC 6399, Master's Thesis: MA Thesis and Writing the Final Master's Thesis

There is not a set length for the thesis or the number of references that should be cited. But bear in mind that a double-spaced manuscript submitted for publication is generally 20-30 pages long.

- Your final master's thesis should be formatted using APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) with some notable exceptions as described below. The left-hand margin and top margin must be 1.5 inches. The bottom and right-hand margins may be 1 inch as per APA style. These expanded margins left and top are necessary in order that your final thesis manuscript may be bound in book-fashion and filed in UTPB's library. This is an exception to APA style.
- Include a signature page as per UTPB's *Instructions for Preparation of Master's Theses and Research Project Reports*. This page is not numbered and be sure to include the name of the fourth participant on your thesis committee at this time.
- Optionally, one may include a dedication page.
- The first numbered page should be a Title Page following APA Style. The Abstract will follow in page 2.
- The text will follow with page 3 with your introduction to the literature. This is the literature review that describes the topic in its historical and theoretical context. It addresses why the study is worth conducting, how it will add to the body of literature, and culminates with the hypothesis/hypotheses to be tested. It may run between 8-15 pages. Next is the Method section. This will include the participants, apparatus/materials/measures and procedure sections. All stimulus materials, instructions to participants, tests, questionnaires, informed consent forms, and so forth, should be included in Appendices. This section is usually 4-8 pages.
- The next section is the Results section where the main results of the statistical analyses are presented as clearly and concisely as possible. Note that the discussion of effect sizes is recommended. The use of tables and figures is encouraged. Tables and figures should be presented after the References section and before any Appendices (see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition)). This section, excluding any tables and figures, is usually about 2-6 pages in length, not counting tables and figures. Following the Results section is the Discussion section. Here the student presents the newly acquired results in light of the prior research and theory on the topic, comparing and contrasting methodology and theory. Based on the data and subsequent comparison of theory and methodology, etc., any conclusions and implications are to be presented and discussed. Methodological flaws and/or possible

improvements in the design of the research project should be pointed out, as well as ideas for future research. This section may run 5-10 pages in length.

- The References section will follow the Analysis section. This reference list should be prepared according to the instructions set forth in Chapters 9 and 10 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).
- Last, as appropriate, include any appendices and supplemental materials as per guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition). This includes information relevant to the methodology, but which would not normally be included in a Method section. If one is using questionnaires, surveys, and other materials, it is appropriate to present them in an appendix.

The process will involve writing preliminary drafts, rewriting, and so on. When the student believes that a draft manuscript has sufficient quality, it is presented to the thesis chair for review and comment. If the student intends to complete his/her thesis in a single semester, this should take place no later than by the midpoint of the semester.

Drafts of the manuscript often pass back and forth several times, depending on the extent of the needed revisions. At some point, the manuscript will pass muster and be in a state presentable to the two other two psychologists on thesis committee members in psychology and the fourth member of the thesis committee, the outside member. This manuscript becomes the draft of the master's thesis. It could take anywhere from half a semester to two-thirds of the semester to complete a polished, quality draft of the master's thesis. Again, if the student intends to complete his/her thesis in a single semester, this should take place no later than by the two-thirds point of the semester.

Note that as drafts of the thesis proposal manuscript pass back and forth between the thesis chair and the student, the student should allow at least seven calendar days before expecting feedback. Draft manuscripts may be submitted in hardcopy or electronically, as specified by the thesis chair. It is worth repeating that the thesis chair is not responsible for correcting deficits in writing, statistical analyses competence, or APA style. The thesis chair is not an editor or proof reader, nor is the thesis chair expected to do the statistical analyses, much less compute or write the data analysis in a comprehensible form in the results section. In fact, thesis chairs and thesis committee members have the right to return documents without reading further upon encountering ten (plus or minus five) grammatical, spelling, inadequate/incomprehensible results, and/or APA style errors.

The Master's Thesis Oral Defense

Once a "final draft" of the master's thesis manuscript has been completed to the satisfaction of the thesis chair (this always takes several drafts), a formal oral defense meeting should be scheduled. The master's thesis oral defense provides an opportunity for the student and faculty to engage in a scholarly discussion of the merits of the master's thesis. The thesis defense is an open meeting that anyone (e.g., other faculty, other graduate students, etc.) may attend. It generally lasts about an hour. A PowerPoint presentation is encouraged.

There are at least five purposes of the master's thesis oral defense:

- To insure that student thoroughly understands the content area of the research project.
- To insure that the student has a sound background in research methodology.

- To insure that the student understands the implications of results for the topic field.
- To ensure that the student has the ability to report research in a clear and concise manner using the guidelines set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).
- To enable the members of the thesis committee to detect (and correct, if possible) any errors in the thesis manuscript, make suggested modifications, and hence strengthen the final master's thesis.

It is the student's responsibility to coordinate a date and time for the master's thesis oral defense that is acceptable to all members of the thesis Committee. The guidelines are similar to those followed to set up the oral thesis proposal, with the exception that the fourth committee member of the thesis committee, who is outside the Department of Psychology, is to participate at this time.

- The student should decide on a few dates when the meeting for the master's thesis oral defense. These dates should be at least two weeks into the future. Note that it is almost impossible to set up a meeting in the summer; do not plan to hold the oral defense in summer.
- The student contacts the faculty offering possible dates and times.
- The student schedules a room to hold the meeting for a 60 minute block of time. The committee chair will describe how the student may go about reserving a room. The student provides all four members of the thesis committee a hardcopy of the final "draft" of the draft of the master's thesis manuscript at least seven calendar days prior to the date of the oral defense. Some members of the thesis committee may prefer only an electronic copy, so you may ask each professor's preference. This seven day lead time is extremely important.
 - In general, students defending in the fall semester must submit the final "draft" of the master's thesis manuscript to the members of the thesis committee by November 15. Students defending in the spring semester must submit the final "draft" of the master's thesis manuscript to committee members by April 15. Check with the graduate studies office for "final" dates in the semester in which you wish to defend.
- Completion of master's thesis oral defense must occur 14 days prior to the last regular class day of the term in which the student plans to graduate.
- The very "FINAL" copies of master's thesis manuscript copies of the approved thesis/project to the Graduate Studies and Research Office is due no later than the last class day of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.
- The student and thesis committee members must attend the oral defense, but the student and thesis chair can agree to allow other members of the campus community to sit in on the master's thesis oral defense.
- The final "draft" of the master's thesis manuscript delivered to the committee should be free of typos, consist of properly spelled words, follow APA style exactly, and be grammatically correct.

As in the proposal oral presentation, in the meeting of the thesis oral defense the student will briefly provide a historical and theoretical context, specify the hypothesis/hypotheses, and summarize the methodology. Unlike the preliminary orals, however, the student now has the data, and the statistics. Thus a discussion of the results and their impact on the body of literature pertaining to the topic ensues. Throughout this discussion, members of the thesis committee are free to question the

student about any aspect of the research project. The student is encouraged to take notes of any recommendations that faculty may make.

After questioning the student, the student will be asked to leave the room and the committee members will decide whether the thesis is acceptable and recommend revisions to be incorporated in a final version. Any visitors are also asked to leave the room. The student can trust there will always be recommendations and thus revisions to the manuscript will need to be made. These recommendations must be incorporated into the final thesis manuscript in order for the members of the committee to append their signatures to the final manuscript's title page. After committee deliberation, the thesis chair brings the candidate alone (no visitors) back to the room. The candidate is then informed of the outcome of the oral defense (e.g., pass or fail) and told what changes are needed in the thesis manuscript to make its content satisfactory to the members of the thesis committee. Be certain that your advisor has the final oral defense form at the thesis oral defense meeting and that it is signed, filled out correctly and turned into the Office of Graduate Studies and Research after the meeting.

The student is expected to make any changes requested by the committee, and then to show these changes to the thesis chair, and, if requested, to any committee member requesting change. A committee member has the right to not sign the final thesis until changes are made to his or her satisfaction. When all changes have been approved by the thesis chair (and any other committee member), the thesis document is ready to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for one more review. The Office of Graduate Studies and Research may ask for modifications of format and paper.

When there are no more edits to be made, the student is required to provide four copies of the final thesis document to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The paper must be at least 25% cotton bond. At this time, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research will phone or email the members of the thesis committee and tell them that the final thesis manuscript has been submitted and they may sign the title page. The student need not run around campus and get signatures on these pages. These copies will be converted into hard-bound copies by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

VII. The MA Non-Thesis "Project" Option (for those in the Clinical Concentration-- Practitioner Track)

Sometime in the second year of study the students in Clinical Concentration who opt to complete the project option should have a pretty good idea of who his or her permanent faculty advisor will be, and this faculty member will then serve as the chair of the student's project committee. The student should have a formal meeting with his or her faculty advisor and begin to explore topics/ideas for the project before enrolling in the actual course, PSYC 6398, Master's Project. The MA project is generally a critical review of the literature pertaining to a topic of interest. As described on page 8 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition), the project may be: a literature review; a theoretical article; a methodological article; or a case study. Most projects are literature reviews.

The steps the student takes for the project are similar to those described above for the thesis, so they will only be summarized below. The critical difference between the MA Thesis and the MA Project is that with the project, 1) data are generally not collected and analyzed and 2) no proposal meeting is necessary. The abbreviated components and steps of the project are:

- A. The project committee consists of the faculty advisor (who serves as chair), two full-time graduate faculty in the Psychology Department, and one other member of the graduate faculty who is not a faculty member in the Psychology Department. The member of the committee from outside the Psychology Department is generally selected from a slate of two or three faculty who are available, and is generally selected by the chair of the thesis committee in consultation with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research and the student.
- B. The chair of the project committee, or project chair, is expected to direct, supervise, and monitor the student's work. The project chair is expected to provide constructive, timely, written feedback on each completed draft of the thesis proposal and the final form of the thesis document. However, the chair is not responsible for correcting student skill deficits in writing, APA style, or motivational problems.
- C. The MA Project course proceeds in two steps: (1) MA project writing and final master's project; and (2) completion of the MA Project and oral defense. While enrolled in PSYC 6398, the student is responsible for keeping the thesis chair regularly informed of the progress. Early drafts of the project manuscript should be developed by the student in close consultation with the faculty project chair. These drafts are usually not shared with other members of the thesis committee unless requested or unless the student needs specific advice or help on portions of the manuscript.

1) Step 1 of PSYC 6398, Master's Thesis: MA Project Final Written Master's Project

- With the support and direction of your major advisor identify a problem of interest. This problem should be unique and provide psychologists with knowledge they did not previously have.
- There is not a set length for the project or the number of references that should be cited. Critical reviews, theoretical or methodological projects are typically double-spaced and 15-30 pages long.
- Your final master's project should be formatted using APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) with some notable exceptions as described below.
- The left-hand margin and top margin must be 1.5 inches. The bottom and right-hand margins may be 1 inch as per APA style. These expanded margins left and top are necessary in order that your final thesis manuscript may be bound in book-fashion and filed in UTPB's library. This is an exception to APA style.

- Include a signature page as per UTPB's *Instructions for Preparation of Master's Theses and Research Project Reports*. This page is not numbered and be sure to include the name of the fourth participant on your thesis committee at this time.
- Optionally, one may include a dedication page.
- The first numbered page should be a Title Page following APA Style.
- The Abstract will follow in page 2.
- The text will follow with page 3 with your introduction and discussion.
- The References section will follow your discussion.
- Drafts of the manuscript often pass back and forth several times, depending on the extent of the needed revisions. At some point, the manuscript will pass muster and be in a state presentable to the two other two psychologists on the project committee and the fourth member, the outside member. This manuscript becomes the draft of the master's project. It could take anywhere from half a semester to two-thirds of the semester to complete a polished, quality draft of the master's project. If the student intends to complete his/her project in a single semester, this should take place no later than by the two-thirds point of the semester.

3) Step 2: The Master's Project Oral Defense

- Once a "final draft" of the master's project manuscript has been completed to the satisfaction of the thesis chair (this always takes several drafts), a formal oral defense meeting should be scheduled. The master's project oral defense provides an opportunity for the student and faculty to engage in a scholarly discussion of the merits of the master's project. The project defense is an open meeting that anyone (e.g., other faculty, other graduate students, etc.) may attend. It generally lasts about an hour, although a 60 minute block of time. A PowerPoint presentation is encouraged.
- There are at least five purposes of the master's thesis oral defense:
 - I. To insure that student thoroughly understands the content area of the project.
 - II. To insure that the student has a sound background in research methodology.
 - III. To insure that the student understands the implications of his/her review.
 - IV. To ensure that the student has the ability to report ideas and research in a clear and concise manner using the guidelines set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition).

V. To enable the members of the thesis committee to detect (and correct, if possible) any errors in the project manuscript, make suggested modifications, and hence strengthen the final master's project.

- It is the student's responsibility to coordinate a date and time for the master's project oral defense that is acceptable to all members of the project Committee. The guidelines are similar to those followed to set up the oral project proposal, with the exception that the fourth committee member of the thesis committee, who is outside the Department of Psychology, is to participate at this time.
- Throughout this discussion, members of the project committee are free to question the student about any aspect of the project. After discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room and the committee members will decide whether the project is acceptable and recommend revisions to be incorporated in a final version. Any visitors are also asked to leave the room. The student can trust there will generally be recommendations and thus revisions to the manuscript will need to be made. These recommendations must be incorporated into the final project manuscript in order for the members of the committee to append their signatures to the final manuscript's title page. After committee deliberation, the thesis chair brings the candidate alone (no visitors) back to the room. The candidate is then informed of the outcome of the orals defense (e.g., pass or fail) and told what changes are needed in the project manuscript to make its content satisfactory to the members of the thesis committee.

VIII. The Practicum for Students in the Clinical Psychology Concentration, PSYC 6392

Each student in the M.A. program in Clinical Psychology is required to complete 6 credit hours (two semesters) of practicum. The practicum experience includes a minimum of 450 training hours, or approximately 225 per semester. Of the total of 450 training hours, 100 to 150 are face-to-face direct service contact hours with clients. The remaining hours are in supervisory and other training activities, including test administration, scoring, and intervention/report writing. Overall, the practicum experience typically involves approximately 16 hours per week.

The following nine courses are prerequisite to enrolling in the clinical psychology practicum:

- PSYC 6305, Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy
- PSYC 6312, Group Psychotherapy
- PSYC 6321, Psychopathology
- PSYC 6322, Current Psychotherapies
- PSYC 6323, Individual Psychotherapy
- PSYC 6324, Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues
- PSYC 6325, Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Families
- PSYC 6350, Intellectual Assessment
- PSYC 6351, Personality Assessment.

In addition, the student must offer proof of liability insurance. Permission of the instructor is also required. Students must contact the practicum instructor the semester prior to enrolling to be sure all prerequisites are fulfilled for approval before enrolling. This course may not be offered in summer.

If it is offered, only continuing students may enroll; summer enrollment is not open to first-time practicum students.

One potential site of the practicum experience is providing supervised psychological services to clients in UTPB's Psychological Services Center. Off-site practicum placements may be required depending on enrollment and opportunities in the Psychological Services Center. Note that for those seeking LPA licensure, at any off-site placement there must be a Licensed Psychologist on the site (a Ph.D. level psychologist). If a student is already employed in properly supervised off-site clinical setting, that student may not obtain practicum hours while being paid a salary. One can, however, assume extra responsibilities or put in additional hours on the job, with site supervisor and practicum supervisor's permission.

The UT Permian Basin Psychological Services Center provides free counseling and psychological services clientele from the Permian Basin community, who pay a nominal fee for services. All clients are real people with real issues and problems, and students enrolling in practicum are to do their best to assist them. Regardless of the location of your practicum site, PSYC 6392 should not be considered as just another graduate class in psychology. The practicum experience requires a great deal of responsibility. Responsibility includes being on time for appointments and not rescheduling or canceling appointments, returning phone calls promptly, generating thoughtful and thorough treatment plans and reports in a timely manner, dressing professionally, maintaining client confidentiality, and so on, at all times.

The clientele includes, but is not limited to, individual, group, family, and couples therapy. Psychological and educational assessments for evaluation are provided in the areas of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disorders, and careers and other mental health concerns.

In addition to working with clients at UTPB's Psychological Services Center or an off-campus location, the student is required to attend supervision once a week. Supervision sessions usually entail 2 hours of face-to-face supervision with the practicum supervisor and other students enrolled in PSYC 6392 during that semester. These weekly sessions are crucial to attend because students receive feedback from the supervisor and fellow students, as well as direction on treatment regimens, test scoring, ethical considerations, and so forth.

IX. Graduate Assistants

Psychology offers 1-3 graduate assistantships each year for both incoming and continuing students enrolled in the clinical and experimental programs. Assistantships are competitive and require full-time enrollment in the graduate program.

Graduate assistants may be assigned to specific faculty or perform general departmental duties. Work activities can include assisting with all aspects of research, including literature reviews, running participants, coding and analyzing data, and writing reports. Other activities may include teaching and general office assistance. Graduate assistants work nineteen and a half hours per week, beginning the week before classes and ending the week after classes. Students who are unable to commit to a workload of 19 and a half hours per week should not apply for a graduate assistantship. Further, graduate assistants are generally not allowed to work other jobs concurrently and must seek

permission to do so. Tuition waivers and stipends depend on funding and generally only apply for the 9 month academic year (September through May).

If one is interested in a graduate assistantship, please talk with the graduate program head in psychology and complete the Application for a Graduate Assistant application from the UTPB Graduate Studies and Research Office. Although applications are taken all year, the deadline for consideration is in early March.

X. Psychology Department Course Offerings by Semester (subject to change)

Fall Course Options

16 week face-to-face

PSYC 6302, Research Methods
PSYC 6371, Advanced Social & Cultural Psychology (even years)
PSYC 6350, Intellectual Assessment (even years)
PSYC 6351, Personality Assessment (odd years)
PSYC 6375, Psychology & Law (even years)
PSYC 6389, Gender Studies (odd years)
PSYC 6392, Practicum
PSYC 6398, MA Project
PSYC 6399, MA Thesis
COUN 6371/PSYC 6324, Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues
COUN 6378/PSYC 6312, Group Psychotherapy
COUN 6377/PSYC 6323, Individual Psychotherapy

16 week online

PSYC 6322, Current Psychotherapies
PSYC 6305, Ethical Foundations & Cognitive Therapy

Spring Course Options

16 week face-to-face

PSYC 6304 Advanced Statistics ANOVA (even years)
PSYC 6314, Advanced Statistics Regression (odd years)
PSYC 6341, Lifespan Developmental
PSYC 6321, Psychopathology
PSYC 6392, Practicum
PSYC 6398, MA Project
PSYC 6399, MA Thesis
COUN 6381/PSYC 6381, Trauma, Crisis, & Grief
COUN 6377/PSYC 6323, Individual Psychotherapy
COUN 6378/PSYC 6312, Group Psychotherapy
COUN 6371/PSYC 6324, Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues

16 week online

PSYC 6321, Psychopharmacology
COUN 6372/PSYC 6372, Multicultural Counseling

Summer Course Options

16 week online

COUN 6373/PSYC 6378, Career Counseling and Development
COUN 6376/PSYC 6302, Research Design
COUN 6307/PSYC 6307, Addictions Counseling

* Note, courses in which COUN is listed first are generally taught by faculty in the Education Counseling Department. Students are encouraged to enroll in courses taught by the Psychology Department faculty when possible (note, especially with regard to research methods; take this course rather than research design to ensure one knows the expectations for MA thesis or MA project completion in the department).

XI. Disclaimer

The information in this *handbook* is provided to aid graduate students in the Psychology Department at UTPB. It is intended as a guideline, not as the law. Policies and procedures are always being examined and reexamined. This means that they may be changed or modified at any time. Consequently, some information in the current handbook may be missing or need updating. The Graduate Faculty in Psychology will try to keep students informed of changes/corrections to this *handbook* as they occur.

Appendix A. Sample degree plan in Clinical Psychology concentration with intention of LPA and/or LPC licensure, Doctoral Preparation Track or Practitioner Track

Name	Student ID	Date Accepted to Graduate Study
Degree: Master of Arts in Psychology	Option: Thesis or Project (non-thesis)	
Master of Arts		
Clinical Psychology Concentration (with intent to pursue the LPA and/or LPC)		
Major Field	Dr.	Dr.
Major Advisor	Committee Member for Thesis or Project	Committee Member for Thesis or Project

Discipline	Number	Course Title	Site	Date	Credits	Grade
		Core Requirements (9 hours)				
PSYC	6302	Research Methodology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6304	Advanced Statistics: ANOVA	UTPB		3	
or PSYC	6314	Advanced Statistics: Regression				
PSYC	6324	Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues	UTPB		3	
		Clinical Psychology Concentration (39 hours)				
PSYC	6305	Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6306	Psychopharmacology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6307	Addictions Counseling	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6312	Group Psychotherapy	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6321	Psychopathology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6322	Current Psychotherapies	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6323	Individual Psychotherapy	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6325	Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Families	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6350	Intellectual Assessment (Tests & Measurements is corequisite)	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6351	Personality Assessment (Tests & Measurements is corequisite)	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6392	Practicum (total of six hours). Prerequisites: PSYC 6305, 6312, 6321, 6322, 6323, 6324, 6350, and 6351; 24 hours toward graduate degree; proof of liability insurance	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6392		UTPB		3	
		Other Required Psychology Courses (9 hours)				
PSYC	6371	Social and Cultural Psychology	UTPB		3	
or PSYC	6372	Multicultural Counseling				
PSYC	6341	Lifespan Development Social & Personality	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6378	Career Counseling and Development	UTPB		3	
		Master's Thesis or Master's Project (3 hours)				
PSYC	6398	MA Project [Prerequisites: permission of advisor].	UTPB		3	
or PSYC	6399	MA Thesis [Prerequisites: permission of advisor].				
		Undergrad pre-requisites, if applicable				
PSYC	4351	Tests and Measurement (corequisite for PSYC 6350 & 6351; take ASAP)	UTPB		3	
PSYC	4304	Physiological Psychology	UTPB		3	
or PSYC	6306	Psychopharmacology [also required above under "concentration" courses]				

**THIS FORM MUST BE PROCESSED THROUGH THE GRADUATE STUDIES OFFICE BEFORE IT BECOMES OFFICIAL.
Any changes after initial processing must be on a CHANGE FORM. No modifications may be made directly on a completed degree plan.**

NOTE: The master's degree must be completed within 8 years. The eight year period begins at the date of completion of the first course to be applied toward degree requirements. No course more than 8 years old at the time of graduation may be applied toward requirements for the degree

NOTE: When all work on the Degree Plan has been completed, you are eligible to apply for your Master's Degree. It is not awarded automatically. The student must enroll in the semester that the degree is to be awarded, pay the graduation fee, and turn the completed "Application to Graduate" form in to the Registrar's office by the due date printed in the course schedule.

Your degree must be completed by _____

Student	Date	Program Head	Date
Major Advisor	Date	Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies	Date
Committee Member if thesis; Not Applicable if non-thesis	Date		

Appendix B. Sample degree plan in Experimental Psychology Concentration

Name	Student ID	Date Accepted to Graduate Study
Degree: Master of Arts in Psychology		Thesis required
Master of Arts		
Experimental Psychology Concentration		
Major Field	Dr.	Dr.
Major Advisor	Thesis Committee Member	Thesis Committee Member

Discipline	Course No.	Course Title	Site	Date	Credits	Grade
		Core Requirements (18 hours)				
PSYC	6302	Research Methodology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6304	Advanced Statistics : ANOVA	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6314	Advanced Statistics: Regression	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6371	Social and Cultural Psychology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6341	Lifespan Development Social and Personality	UTPB		3	
		Electives, which may include PSYC 6391 (12-15 hours)				
PSYC	6375	Psychology and the Law	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6378	Career Counseling and Development	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6391	Independent Research	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6389	Selected Topics	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6395	Seminar on Selected Topics	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6321	Psychopathology	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6322	Current Psychotherapies	UPTB		3	
PSYC	6305	Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy	UTPB		3	
PSYC	6306	Psychopharmacology	UTPB		3	
		Master's Thesis (3 hours)				
PSYC	6399	Thesis [Prerequisite: permission of advisor].	UTPB		3	
		Undergrad pre-requisites, if applicable				
PSYC	4304	Physiological Psychology				
or PSYC	6306	Psychopharmacology	UTPB		3	

Any changes after initial processing must be on a CHANGE FORM. No modifications may be made directly on a completed degree plan.

NOTE: The master's degree must be completed within 8 years. The eight year period begins at the date of completion of the first course to be applied toward degree requirements. No course more than 8 years old at the time of graduation may be applied toward requirements for the degree

NOTE: STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

When all work on the Degree Plan has been completed, you are eligible to apply for your Master's Degree. It is not awarded automatically. The student must enroll in the semester that the degree is to be awarded, pay the graduation fee, and turn the completed "Application to Graduate" form in to the Registrar's office by the due date printed in the course schedule.

Your degree must be completed by _____

Student	Date	Program Head	Date
Major Advisor	Date	Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies	Date
Committee Member	Date		
Committee Member	Date		

Appendix C. Course Listings and Course Descriptions

PSYC 6302 Research Methodology (3). Foundations of research planning, methodology, analytic techniques, interpretation and reporting in the fields of psychology and education.

PSYC 6304 Advanced Statistics: Analysis of Variance (3). Conceptual foundation in experimental hypothesis testing and data analysis using ANOVA. Topics include one-way and factorial ANOVA, repeated measures, mixed designs, and ANCOVA.

PSYC 6305 Ethical/Professional Foundations & Cognitive Therapy (3). Ethical, professional, and legal standards of practice, including therapist role identity, within traditional and emerging cognitive/behavioral treatment interventions.

PSYC 6306 Psychopharmacology (3). An overview of psychopharmacological medications, their basic classification, indications, contraindications, and side-effects will be provided. The goal of this course is to introduce the students to the basic terminology and models of pharmacokinetics as they relate to clinical mental health counseling and pharmacological treatment.

PSYC 6307, Addictions Counseling (3). This course is designed to investigate physiological, emotional, social, and physical aspects related to addictions including but not limited to substances abuse. Topics will include treatment interventions, legal and ethical issues, prevention, and applied recovery techniques. Prerequisites: PSYC 6322 and PSYC 6305 or 6305.

PSYC 6312 Group Psychotherapy (3). A study of group development and group therapy, with consideration of group leadership styles, methods and skills, including ethical concerns in group work. Group dynamics will be demonstrated through student participation in an experiential growth group. Prerequisites: PSYC 6322, PSYC 6324, and PSYC 6341.

PSYC 6314 Advanced Statistics: Regression (3). Conceptual foundation in correlational hypothesis testing and data analysis using linear regression. Topics include multiple regression, mediation, moderation, and path analysis procedures.

PSYC 6321 Psychopathology (3). A survey of the manifestations of abnormal behavior and psychological processes. Detailed analysis of the clinical and experimental literature concerning psychological and psychiatric disorders and their etiology. Diagnostic criteria and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders are discussed.

PSYC 6322 Current Psychotherapies (3). A survey of the major theories and techniques in psychotherapy, including their historical development, key concepts, therapeutic process, and application for appropriate treatment intervention.

PSYC 6323 Individual Psychotherapy (3). Review and training in the basic methods and techniques of individual psychotherapy knowledge and skills for treatment intervention. Prerequisites: PSYC 6341, PSYC 6322, and PSYC 6324

PSYC 6324 Advanced Ethical and Professional Issues (3). An exploration of the professional, ethical, and legal issues that affect the client and therapist in treatment intervention in applied settings. The ethical codes and laws regulating psychotherapeutic relationships will be examined.

PSYC 6325 Counseling Children, Adolescents, and Families (3). An examination of the principles and techniques associated with counseling of children, adolescents, and families. Content includes developmental phases, family considerations, theoretical models, multicultural issues, and skills needed to work with children, adolescents, and their families. Prerequisites: PSYC 6322, PSYC 6324, PSYC 6341

PSYC 6341 Lifespan Development Social and Personality (3). An overview of processes, stages, theories and research of human intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development from prenatal origins through adulthood.

PSYC 6350 Intellectual Assessment (3). An examination of the principles and methods of assessing intelligence in both children and adults. Corequisite: Tests and Measurement and permission of instructor (Tests and Measurement must be taken prior to, or concurrently with PSYC 6350).

PSYC 6351 Personality Assessment (3). An examination of the principles and methods of assessing personality. Corequisite: Tests and Measurement and permission of instructor (Tests and Measurement may be taken prior to, or concurrently with PSYC 6351).

PSYC 6371 Social and Cultural Psychology (3). An overview of research and theory in social psychology. Students will learn about how gender, culture, and context affect our interpretation of the social world. Social, cultural, and family issues are discussed as well as the issues related to the intersections of race, class, and gender.

PSYC 6372 Multicultural Counseling (3). An examination of multicultural issues, theory, research, and practice relevant to treatment intervention. Cultural identification and exploration of one's heritage and how it impacts the therapeutic process will be explored. Prerequisites: PSYC 6322, PSYC 6324

PSYC 6375 Psychology and the Law (3). An overview of the application of psychological science and theory in the legal system. Topics may include the use of psychological science in the courtroom, criminal profiling, miscarriages of justice, malingering and lie detection, risk prediction, the legal system and minorities and children, and the psychology of juries and judges, PSYC 6371 or undergraduate social psychology course recommended.

PSYC 6378 Career Counseling and Development (3). A survey of theory and techniques of career planning and counseling. Includes strategies for career choice, career counseling, and sources of occupational and educational information throughout the lifespan.

PSYC 6381 Trauma, Crisis, and Grief Counseling (3). An examination of theory, methods, and techniques to effectively intervene in critical situations and to help individuals who are experiencing crisis events and grief reactions. Prerequisites: PSYC 6322, PSYC 6324

PSYC 6389 Selected Topics (3). Graduate courses which will be offered only once, will be offered infrequently or are being developed before a regular listing in the catalog.

PSYC 6391 Contract Study/Directed Research (3). Under the direction of a faculty member, design and conduct a research project, analyze data, and submit a finding for presentation or publication. Prerequisite: admission to Psychology Graduate Program and permission of instructor.

PSYC 6392 Practicum (3). Three semester hours (225 clock hours) of supervised practical experience in an appropriate clinical or research setting (depending on area of concentration). Prerequisites for clinical M.A. students: PSYC 6305, 6321, 6323, 6324, 6325, 6350, and 6351; 24 hours towards graduate degree; proof of liability insurance; and permission of instructor. Students must contact the practicum instructor the semester prior to enrolling to be sure all prerequisites are fulfilled. This course is not available in summer to first-time enrollees. This course may be repeated for a total of six maximum hours. Practicum will be graded by S for satisfactory and U for unsatisfactory. The S does not calculate in the GPA; but the grade of S does indicate satisfactory completion of 3 credit hours of practicum experience. The U calculates as a failing grade in the GPA.

PSYC 6395 Seminar on Selected Topics (3). Seminars on topics to be explored in depth as selected by individual professors. Course may be repeated on different topics.

PSYC 6398 Master's Project (3). The student will engage in one of several activities, including a critical review of the literature on a topic related to clinical psychology. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. The Master's Project will be graded by S for satisfactory upon completion of all the requirements of the project. The S does not calculate in the GPA. If, at the end of the semester the student has not completed all of the requirements of the thesis but has made satisfactory progress, a grade of Z will be reported, which translates as "work in progress." The Z does not calculate in the GPA. Students desiring to complete the thesis requirements must reregister in the course the following semester. Students must contact the practicum instructor the semester prior to enrolling to be sure all prerequisites are fulfilled. This course is not available in summer to first-time enrollees

PSYC 6399 Master's Thesis (3). Research and preparation of the master's thesis. Prerequisite: permission of the thesis advisor. Thesis will be graded by S for satisfactory upon completion of all the requirements of the thesis. The S does not calculate in the GPA. If, at the end of the semester the student has not completed all of the requirements of the thesis but has made satisfactory progress, a grade of Z will be reported, which translates as "work in progress." The Z does not calculate in the GPA. Students desiring to complete the thesis requirements must reregister in the course the following semester.