

Master of Arts Program Student Handbook 2026-2027

Department of Psychology California State University, Fullerton

Welcome to the Department of Psychology at the California State University, Fullerton.

This handbook contains information about the Psychology Department and Graduate Program relevant to your studies. The requirements and rules governing graduate students in psychology are provided. Information in this Handbook is **supplemental** to the University Catalog, which contains general University graduate degree program information.

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*Faculty of the Department of Psychology wish you success in your
graduate studies!*

Eriko Self, Ph.D.

Coordinator, MA Program

Contact Information

Psychology Graduate Office

Location: H835N
Phone: (657) 278-3589

M.A. Program Coordinator

Eriko Self, Ph.D.
Phone: (657) 278-8359
Office: H-710O
eself@fullerton.edu

Graduate Administrative Assistant
Psychology Graduate Office

Alyssa Raphael
Phone: (657) 278-3589
Office: H-830K
araphael@fullerton.edu

Department of Psychology

Location: H-830M/830L
Email: psychology@fullerton.edu
Web site: <http://psychology.fullerton.edu/>
Phone: (657) 278-3514
P.O. Box 6846, Fullerton, CA 92834-6846
800 N. State College Blvd.
Fullerton, CA 92831

Address:
Street Address:

Department Support

Yvette Campos
ycampos@fullerton.edu
Jocelyn Pulido
jlopezpulido@fullerton.edu
Noel Torres
noeltorres@fullerton.edu

Department Chair

Jennifer Trevitt, Ph.D.
Phone: (657) 278-3514
Office: H-835N
jtrevitt@fullerton.edu

Department Administration

Alan Garduno
Phone: (657) 278-4929
Office: H-835O
adgarduno@fullerton.edu

Information Technology

Daniel Sohn
Phone: (657) 278-3562
Office: H-830J
dasohn@fullerton.edu

University Office of Graduate Studies

Location: McCarthy Hall 103
<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/>
Phone: (657) 278-2618
gradstudiesrecept@fullerton.edu

Psychology Advanced Computer Lab

Location: H-607

Program Information

The MA in Psychological Research requires 36 units of approved graduate work, including the completion of a master's thesis.

Department Graduate Office

The M.A. Program Coordinator is responsible for advisement, supervision, and approval of students' study plans. The Department of Psychology Graduate Office (H830K), staffed by our Graduate Support Staff, is also a focal point for graduate student affairs. The Graduate Support Staff is familiar with all aspects of our program and is a valuable source of information. **Students are responsible for keeping abreast of requirements and deadlines. Failure to do so may delay graduation.**

Master of Arts Graduate Studies Committee

This committee is responsible for the administration of the Master of Arts Program. Student requests and petitions are reviewed and acted on by the Coordinator and/or Committee. However, it is important to know that the departmental Coordinator or Committee cannot override policies set by the university.

Time Limit

The MA Program is designed for completion in **two years (4 semesters)**. Students requiring more time to complete the degree requirements do not need to file a petition for extension. Tenure in the program, however, **cannot extend beyond five years (10 semesters)** from the date of admission unless approved by the University. A petition must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) and is available from that office.

Titan Degree Audit (TDA)

Titan Degree Audit (TDA) serves as a program-planning document and is a roadmap of degree requirements for each student. You can see your updated TDA through Portal at any time. **Students are responsible for checking their own TDA at least once a semester to ascertain they are making expected progress.** The MA Program Coordinator can help students choose courses that best fit their academic and career goals. The student is expected to complete all coursework and other requirements listed. **To continue in good standing, students must earn a grade of "B-" or higher in all Study Plan Graduate courses and they must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.0.**

Classified Standing

Participation in the Graduate Programs in Psychology requires Classified Status. The requirements are usually met as part of the admission procedures and include (1) official undergraduate transcripts that document appropriate course work completion in psychology; and (2) completion of program prerequisite courses.

Grades

Letter grades **must** be used for all classes listed on your MA study plan. Students should be careful not to choose CR/NC (Grade option 2) when registering for classes because it will delay graduation. Students must earn a grade of "B-" or above in all study plan classes. Students must maintain a minimum grade-point average of 3.0. MA Students with a grade-point average of less than 3.0 are subject to academic probation and dismissal from the program. **MA Students who receive lower than a "B-" must retake that class and receive a passing grade.**

GRADE	POINTS		GRADE	POINTS
A+	4		C+	2.3
A	4		C	2
A-	3.7		C-	1.7
B+	3.3		D+	1.3
B	3		D	1
B-	2.7		D	.7
			F	0

Admission to the Graduate Program does not assure students automatic "A" grades in coursework or thesis. The full range of grades may be used, and the faculty members are free to award grades within this range, based on student performance.

Academic Appeals

A description of the Academic Appeal process can be found in University Policy Statement (UPS) 300.030 *Academic Appeals*. Additional information regarding this process can be found here: <http://www.fullerton.edu/academicappeals/>

Academic Dishonesty

Cases of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) are viewed as a serious violation of the student code of conduct and will not be tolerated. If an incident of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be reported to the university. The instructor of the course will implement sanctions on the grade. Further, the university may determine additional sanctions which may include, but are not limited to, probation, suspension, or expulsion. See UPS 300.021 *Academic Dishonesty*.

MS to MA Program Transfers

Students who find that the MS program is not a fit for their career goals and would like to switch to the MA program (at the end of their first fall semester or before spring semester of their first year) must obtain the approval of the MS and MA Coordinators. Students will not be considered enrolled in the MA program until they change their degree objective with the University and turn the completed paperwork into the Psychology Graduate Office. MS students wishing to transfer into the MA program after spring semester of their first year must apply formally to the MA program by the application deadline.

Advancement to Candidacy

University policy dictates that a student who has been granted classified standing is normally advanced to candidacy after a request is filed for graduation by the student and an affirmative recommendation is made by the Program Coordinator. A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (B) for all study plan course work is required; other scholastic, professional and personal standards, the passing of examinations, and other qualifications may be prescribed. Only those students who continue to demonstrate a satisfactory level of scholastic competence and fitness, as determined by the MA Graduate Committee, shall be eligible to continue in the graduate program.

Coursework

You need a minimum of 36 units

Core Classes

Students are required to take the following three-unit classes:

- PSYC 500 Issues & Perspectives in Psychological Research
- PSYC 510 Experimental Design
- PSYC 461 Psychological Testing and Assessment or PSYC 466 Adv. Computer Applications or PSYC 467 Multivariate Statistics for Psychology
- PSYC 598 Thesis Research
- PSYC 599 Independent Graduate Research

Graduate Seminar

Students must complete two seminars

- PSYC 520T Advanced Topics in Psychological Research (specific topics change every semester)

Content Classes

Students are required to complete 12-15 additional units that support their academic and career goals. These should be chosen in consultation with the Program Coordinator. The most common alternatives are listed below.

COGNITIVE		SOCIAL/PERSONALITY	
PSYC 414	Cognitive Neuroscience	PSYC 421	Psychology of Immigration
PSYC 415	Cognitive Processes	PSYC 430	Social Psychological Study in Ethnic Minority Behavior
PSYC 416	Psychology of Story	PSYC 431	Traditional Theories of Personality
PSYC 417	Psycholinguistics	PSYC 432	Evolutionary Theories of Personality
PSYC 472	Consciousness	PSYC 456	Psychological Study of LGBTQ
DEVELOPMENTAL		METHODOLOGY & ANALYSIS	
PSYC 437	Autism Spectrum Disorders	PSYC 461	Psychological Testing
PSYC 445	Dying, Death, & Bereavement	PSYC 466	Advanced Computer Applications in the Social Sciences
PSYC 464	Advanced Developmental Psychology	PSYC 520T	*Topic Dependent (need advisor approval)
VARIOUS		PHYSIOLOGICAL / BIOLOGICAL	
PSYC 410	History of Psychopathology	PSYC 473	Sleep, Dreams, & Behavior
PSYC 4**	New Specialty Topics	PSYC 474	Health Psychology
PSYC 520T	Various Topic Graduate Seminars	PSYC 475	Psychopharmacology
NON-PSYC	*Goal Relevant (need advisor approval)		

Elective Classes

Students may enroll in classes not required for the degree. If the student would like to complete only three units of Thesis Research rather than six, the three additional units must be made up of any 400 or 500 level course on the approval list.

Thesis Research

Students may choose to complete three units of PSYC 598 and a fourth content course (3units) or a maximum of 6 units for PSYC 598 (thesis research).

Second PSYC 599

Because research experience is essential for psychological science, students are expected to be engaged in research throughout the program. Thus, students are encouraged to take an additional three units in PSYC 599 (Independent Research) beyond the three units required in the Study Plan. Because these three units will not count towards the master's degree, students may take the second PSYC 599 either as a letter grade or as C/NC.

Courses from Other Departments

Depending on their research interest and/or thesis project, students may want to take course(s) from other departments. This is possible if the course is approved officially by TDA exception. If you find such a course, do the following.

[Before enrolling in the course]

1. Check the university catalog and make sure that the course is available for graduate credit. For example, MATH 439 is "Available for Graduate Credit," but HUSR 440 is "not available for Graduate Credit." If the course you are interested in is not available for Graduate Credit, we cannot submit TDA exception request. You may still take the course as an additional course beyond the required 36 units.
2. If the course is "Available for Graduate Credit," contact the MA Program Coordinator with the course number, course title, course description, and explanation of why the course would benefit you. The Coordinator will evaluate based on the information provided.
3. If the Coordinator tentatively approves, enroll in the course.

[After enrolling in the course]

4. Email the Coordinator with following information.
 - Your name
 - Your CWID
 - The course number
 - The course title
 - The reason why this course is beneficial for you in one or two sentences
5. The Coordinator will submit a TDA exception request to the OGS. When approved, the course will appear under "400-/500-level Content Courses" of your TDA. Please note that it will take about 3 weeks for the TDA exception to be approved.
6. If it is a 400-level course, do not forget to sign the contract for additional work with the instructor.

Class Scheduling

Below is a sample schedule for completion of coursework for the Master of Arts degree. Because research interest and career goals are unique to each student, and the available courses may vary, the schedule below does not have to be strictly followed. As far as you adhere to the guideline for the courses below (PSYC 461/466/467, 465, 500, 510, 599), you will be fine.

- PSYC 500: you must take it during your first semester.
- PSYC 465 (If you have not passed it yet): you must take it during your first semester because it is a prerequisite for the program.
- PSYC 599: you should take it during your first semester. If not, you should definitely take it during your second semester.
- PSYC 461/466/467: you should take it during your first year (fall or spring semester).
- PSYC 510: you are recommended to take it during your second semester. PSYC 465 is a prerequisite. If you cannot take it in your second semester, it is ok to take it in your third semester (Fall semester of your second year).

FIRST YEAR			
Fall Semester	(9 Units)		
	PSYC 500	Issues & Perspectives in Psychological Research	3 Units
	PSYC 599	Independent Graduate Research	3 Units
	PSYC 520T	Seminar	3 Units
		Or Prerequisite Course	
	PSYC 465	Advanced Statistics	3 Units
Spring Semester	(9-12 Units)		
	PSYC 510	Research Design	3 Units
	PSYC XXX	PSYC 461, 466 or 467	3 Units
	PSYC XXX	Content Course/Seminar	3 Units
SECOND YEAR			
Fall Semester	(9 Units)		
	PSYC 520T	Seminar	3 Units
	PSYC XXX	Content Course/Seminar	3 Units
	PSYC 598	Thesis Research (First Three Units)	3 Units
Spring Semester	(9 Units)		
	PSYC XXX	Content Course	3 Units
	PSYC XXX	Content Course	3 Units
	PSYC 598	Thesis Research (Second Three Units)	3 Units

The specific classes you will complete for your M.A. degree will be listed in your TDA, which is developed in consultation with the M.A. Coordinator.

Note that you will need to take four courses one semester if you have to take PSYC 465, because it is a prerequisite of the MA Program, and does not count as part of Study Plan Courses. It does not have to be the second semester of the first year.

Titan Degree Audit (TDA)

Below is a part of TDA if a student has not enrolled in any courses in the Psychology MA Program yet. After Note, Legend, Standing/Status, and Time Limit, it lists **Study Plan Courses**. You will need to take all the courses listed under the Study Plan Courses. All the courses that count towards the degree must be listed under Study Plan Courses. You track your progress by looking at your own TDA.

*****AT LEAST ONE REQUIREMENT HAS NOT BEEN SATISFIED*****

NOTE:

This TITAN Degree Audit (TDA) is provided to help you keep track of your progress toward a Graduate Degree. Although efforts have been made to ensure its accuracy, you must carefully review it and report any issues to your graduate advisor.

LEGEND:

NO(-) = Unfulfilled

OK(+) = Complete

IP = In-progress Course

RE = Duplicate/Retaken Course

>R = Repeatable Course

>D = Grade Included

(R) = Required Course/Requirement

Student Standing/Grad Checkout Status

**Student Standing Code: CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED

Time Limit for Completion

All requirements for the graduate degree should be completed within five years. This time limit begins with the semester of the earliest course used on the student's Study Plan.

✕ Study Plan Courses

✕ Required (18 units)

Take two seminars from PSYC 520T.

NEEDS: 18.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 461 OR 466 OR 467,500(R),510(R),599(R), PSYC 520T(R),520T(R)

✕ 400-/500-Level Content Courses (12-15 units)

Other courses may be selected with graduate adviser approval.

NEEDS: 12.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 410,414,415,417,421,431,432,445,456, PSYC 461,464,466,467,474,475,520T

✕ Thesis (3-6 units)

NEEDS: 3.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 598,598

Below is a part of TDA of a typical MA student in the first semester. The student is enrolled in PSYC 465, 500, and 599. Note that only PSYC 500 and 599 appear in the Study Plan Courses as “IP” – in progress. This is because PSYC 465 is a prerequisite for the program, thus is not a part of the Study Plan. However, if you scroll down to the last of the TDA, you will see three courses (PSYC 465, 500), 599 are listed as “IP.”

✖ Study Plan Courses

✖ Required (18 units)

Take two seminars from PSYC 520T.

FA26	PSYC 500	0.0	IP	Issues Psych Research
FA26	PSYC 599	0.0	IP	Independent Grad Research

NEEDS: 18.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 461 OR 466 OR 467,500(R),510(R),599(R), PSYC 520T(R),520T(R)

✖ 400-/500-Level Content Courses (12-15 units)

Other courses may be selected with graduate adviser approval.

NEEDS: 12.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 410,414,415,417,421,431,432,445,456, PSYC 461,464,466,467,474,475,520T

✖ Thesis (3-6 units)

NEEDS: 3.0 UNITS

TAKE==> PSYC 598,598



Thesis Publishing Confirmation

Thesis Publishing Confirmation - this is to confirm the student completed their Thesis requirements. Their paper was approved by the University Thesis/Dissertation Reader and was published.

TAKE==> THESIS

-
-
-

COURSEWORK FROM FA2026 TO FA2026

Graduate Courses:

FA2026

FA26	PSYC 465	0.0	IP	Adv Psychological Stats
FA26	PSYC 500	0.0	IP	Issues Psych Research
FA26	PSYC 599	0.0	IP	Independent Grad Research

Registration Information

PSYC 500 (Research Issues) 3 Units Class must be completed in the first semester of your first year

PSYC 510 (Experimental Design) 3 Units should be completed the second semester of your first year. If that is not possible, take it in the first semester of your second year. Advanced Statistics (PSYC 465) is a prerequisite. If you completed Advanced Statistics at a University other than CSU, Fullerton, Please see Dr. Marelich to schedule a Placement/Waiver Exam.

PSYC 461 (Psychological Testing and Assessment) or PSYC 466 (Adv. Computer Applications) or PSYC 467 (Multivariate Statistics) 3 units

Class should be completed during the first year of the program

Content Courses 12-15 Units of approved 400 or 500 level courses – You are required to complete three content courses from any combination of areas and three units under the methodology & analysis category. If you choose to complete fifteen units (5 classes) of content course work, you will only register for three units of PSYC 598, Thesis Research. The fifth content course may be from content area. You may use seminar courses to fulfill Content Course requirements.

Master of Arts 400 Level Content Course Contract 400 level classes used for your study plan require an assignment above and beyond the class requirements for undergraduate students in the same course. Graduate students may complete an extra assignment that undergraduates do not do. Or, graduate students may complete an undergraduate assignment with added length, depth or complexity. An M.A. 400 Level Course Contract should be completed including a description of any extra paper or other work to be completed; it should be signed by the instructor and returned to the graduate office. 400 level classes will not be accepted for your study plan unless a contract is submitted.

PSYC 520T (Topical Seminars) Two seminars (6 units) must be completed to fulfill your seminar class requirement. Seminar courses may also be used to fulfill Content Course requirements. Seminar courses taken to fulfill seminar requirements may be from the same area. Contact the Graduate Staff prior to registration to be admitted to seminar classes as enrollment is limited.

PSYC 599 (Independent Graduate Research) 3 Units To receive Department credit for PSYC 599, please complete a Department of Psychology PSYC 599 Registration Form (available electronically from the Graduate Department Office), have it approved by your instructor and return the form to the Graduate Staff to receive a computer permit to register. A student may add three additional units in PSYC 599 (Independent Graduate Research) as C/NC.

PSYC 598 (Thesis Research) 3-6 Units To register ask your thesis chair to e-mail the Graduate Staff to issue you a permit to enroll in PSYC 598, Thesis Research. The Graduate Staff will issue a permit for you to register on the computer.

Registering for more than 12 Units You will only be allowed to register for a maximum of 12 units each semester. Please register for classes that may fill up and not be available. Postpone registering for thesis classes until the first week of the semester. If you have to register for more than 12 units, complete an additional units form available in the Graduate office or on the University Graduate web site, have it signed by the Program Coordinator, and take it to the registration counter in Langsdorf Hall during the first week of the semester. You will be given an online permit to register for more than 12 units.

Graduation Check

The application for a Graduation Check should be filed one semester prior to the semester you are planning to graduate. Graduate Checks is completed online through your portal. Refer to <https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/graduation.html> for directions. **Filing this Grad check late may delay your graduation!**

The Office of Graduate Office (OGS) receives your application, notifies the Department of your intention to graduate. The Department verifies completion or scheduled completion of coursework and sends their verification to the OGS. Students are officially advanced to candidacy for their degrees at this time (see Advancement to Candidacy). A final evaluation is conducted by the University Graduate Office. If everything is in order, your degree will be awarded at the next graduation (January, May or August). **Students must file their theses by appropriate deadlines for degree award. Students are responsible for knowing and meeting all deadlines.**

Continuous Enrollment

Students must maintain continuous enrollment at the University until their degree is awarded. Your place in the program will be forfeited if enrollment is not maintained. Application for re-admission would be required if a break in enrollment occurs; re-admission is not guaranteed. Apply for a leave of absence if you expect to be absent from the program for one semester or more.

GS 700

Students may enroll in GS 700 credit to sustain their enrollment. To enroll in GS 700, students must contact the OGS at gradstudiesrecept@fullerton.edu and request a permit for GS 700. Students should only enroll in GS 700 if all their coursework is completed, and they are only working on their thesis. During Summer, ONLY international students who are graduating in a summer semester are required to enroll in GS 700 to maintain continuous enrollment. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment will be dismissed.

Faculty Mentor Program

The Faculty Mentor Program facilitates students' early involvement in research, helps students develop their thesis topic, and provides academic and career counseling in areas of emphasis in psychology. New students are assigned to their mentors. They are strongly encouraged to take PSYC 599 with the mentor during the first semester to initiate the research activities. It is anticipated that students' mentors will serve as Thesis Advisors in the second year. All tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Psychology Department are qualified to serve as a Thesis Advisors. However, if you feel that working with your current mentor may not be very productive, talk with the M.A. Coordinator, including a possibility to find another mentor. Students may change mentors at any time by obtaining the agreement of the new mentor and informing the current mentor.

Mentor's Responsibilities

1. Supervises PSYC 599 research during the first semester in the program. Tasks can include various phases such as library research, data collection, data analysis, and report preparation.
2. Provides you with academic and career counseling.
3. Helps you develop your thesis topic.

Your Responsibilities

1. Work with your mentor in a timely manner to complete the required PSYC 599 project.
2. Discuss the thesis project early because the whole process of the thesis project may take well more than a year.

You should formalize your agreement about your and your mentor's expectations in the PSYC 599 registration form. These expectations include how many hours of work you will be putting in per week, what tasks you will accomplish and how grades will be determined.

Several MA students do research in more than one lab. Students are encouraged to gain as much experience as their schedules will allow, particularly if their goal is to gain admission to a Ph.D. program.

Thesis

Thesis Chair Responsibilities

1. Supervises all aspects of the thesis.
2. Helps you select appropriate faculty for your thesis committee and develop a reasonable timeline for your project.
3. Helps you to select a suitable project design, and to execute the study. The advisor can also help you obtain any space, equipment, and administrative approvals necessary to conduct the project.
4. Serves as the editor on the thesis manuscript, which includes supervising the preparation of the initial drafts of the thesis prior to submission to the thesis committee. Students must receive approval from their Thesis Chair before submitting their thesis to other committee members. Expect to make numerous revisions of your thesis before it is approved.

Your Responsibilities

1. Work diligently towards preparation of a project that has a reasonable timeline for completion. Know important guidelines and deadlines posted on the OGS website (<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html>).
2. Keep your chair informed of your progress. Things may come up that prohibit you from making good progress. Be honest and communicate with your thesis chair frequently.
3. Coordinate with your thesis advisor and committee to schedule the two required meetings (proposal and final oral defense) in accordance with the guidelines. Keep in mind that faculty may not be available during summer and winter breaks.

Students may change thesis Chairs at any time. If students are considering changing, they should first discuss any concerns with their current Chair. The M.A. Coordinator may also be able to help you.

Thesis Committee

A thesis committee consists of a minimum of three members (full-time CSUF faculty), at least two of whom must be full-time tenured or tenure-track members from the Psychology Department. Tenured/tenure-track faculty from other departments may serve as the co-chair or a third member. In rare, special circumstances, lecturers from the Department of Psychology may serve as a committee member. You may have additional committee members who are not subject to the restrictions presented here (e.g., from outside the university). Students are encouraged to incorporate the assistance of committee members as they progress with their project.

Writing Thesis Proposal

The Thesis Proposal details the study you plan to complete, including rationale, theoretical and empirical background, participant recruitment, materials, and procedures, and proposed data analyses. Your Thesis Advisor will guide you in the preparation of this document and provide you with specific guidance concerning length and format. The first draft of your proposal is submitted to your thesis advisor for review and editing. You may need to go back and forth with your advisor multiple times, revising your proposal. **After your Thesis Advisor has approved your draft, you may schedule your proposal meeting. You MUST send your proposal to your committee members at least 14 days before the proposal date. Notify the Graduate Support Staff about your proposal and obtain a signature page you will need to be completed after the proposal.**

Thesis Proposal Meeting

You will present your proposal to all the committee members at the thesis proposal meeting. After your presentation, the committee members will ask you questions.

At the conclusion of this meeting, your committee may:

1. Approve your thesis proposal as presented;
2. Request that you document, in writing, modifications to your thesis that were agreed to at the meeting and submit to your thesis committee chair for approval;
3. Require that you make revisions in your proposal and resubmit the proposal for committee review;
4. Go back to the drawing board.

Thesis plans are rarely approved without modification. Thus, the second alternative listed above is typical for well-conceptualized projects. Your thesis advisor will help you draft the memo detailing changes agreed to at the meeting. **You may begin your thesis project only after you collect signatures of all the committee members on the signature page and submit it to the Graduate Administrative Assistant.**

Thesis Timeline and PSYC 598

Thesis planning usually begins in your second semester. By the third semester, you should be ready to enroll in your first three units of Psychology 598 (Thesis Research), which allows unit credit for thesis planning and proposal. A second three units of Psychology 598 accompanies the data collection and thesis write-up. All phases of your activities are conducted in consultation with your Thesis Advisor. Keep them informed about your progress! Ask your thesis chair to e-mail the Graduate Support Staff with permission to issue a permit for you to enroll in PSYC 598, Thesis. Deadlines governing the filing of your thesis with the University OGS are posted in the Psychology Graduate Office and are available on the OGS web site. Consult these deadlines and plan accordingly!

For any information about the thesis at the university level, visit the Thesis website of the University OGS: <https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html>

It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of thesis guidelines and timeline.

Equipment

Use of departmental equipment is coordinated with Daniel Sohn, the Department's Instructional Support Assistant.

IRB / IACUC INFORMATION

Studies involving human or animal subjects must be reviewed by either CSUF's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research involving human subjects, or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for research involving animals. BEFORE submitting an application to the IRB or IACUC, researchers MUST complete ethics training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI; see https://www.fullerton.edu/doresearch/compliance/irb_citi_training.php for details). IRB and IACUC applications are submitted electronically via Cayuse (see <http://www.fullerton.edu/doresearch/compliance/> for details). All research projects including the thesis require approval from your advisor before being submitted through Cayuse.

General information about research at CSUF, including research competitions and select current research projects can be found at <https://www.fullerton.edu/doresearch/>. Students are encouraged to explore the resources available at CSUF.

Data Collection and Analyses

For experimental designs, data collection for your thesis may commence **only after** your thesis committee approves your proposal.

During data collection, consult with your thesis chair and/or committee members about data analysis plan. Students are expected to know/learn how to use the statistical packages and processes necessary to carry out their data analyses.

Use of Archival and Secondary Data for Thesis

The use of previously collected archival or secondary data for one's thesis is up to the discretion and judgment of the thesis committee. The terms "archival" and "secondary" are very similar, and hence are inclusive (but not limited to) available statistical archives (e.g., data from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research – ICPRS), survey archives (e.g., National Opinion Research Center), verbal and personal records (e.g., interviews, public documents, correspondence, etc.), and mass communications (e.g., content analysis of television shows, newspapers, etc.). When considering this decision, remember that the goal of the Master's program is to make all students competent with the entire research process (e.g. research design, data collection, analysis, and presentation).

Thesis Preparation and Thesis Defense

Your thesis must be prepared according to the ***Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association and Format Guidelines*** published by the University OGS available at <https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html>.

Following data collection and analyses, you will prepare a draft of your thesis for your Advisor's review. A number of revisions may be necessary before it is distributed to the members of your Thesis Committee. After the committee reviews your thesis draft (you must provide at least **two weeks**), the **oral examination** is held. You need to schedule this meeting in consultation with your thesis advisor and thesis committee members. **At least two weeks before the date of your defense, email the Graduate Support Staff the thesis title, abstract, date/time, and the location (and/or Zoom link) of your meeting.** Your thesis meeting is **open** to all interested faculty and students. Thus, the Department Graduate Office needs to send out your thesis defense announcement well before your defense meeting.

At the thesis oral defense meeting, you will report your research findings. Emphasis is placed on presenting research results, interpretation, and conclusions. You will be asked questions about your project by your committee members. Your thesis is officially approved when all members of your thesis committee members sign off your thesis, which will be conducted online by the OGS (see "Thesis Checklist" section).

There are three typical outcomes to a final thesis meeting:

1. Pass the oral defense: Your thesis committee approves your thesis as is.
2. Minimum revision required: Minor revisions are required after the thesis meeting. You make those revisions to your thesis and submit it to your thesis advisor. Your thesis advisor will notify that you completed all the revisions suggested during the thesis meeting.
3. Substantial revision required: A second oral defense meeting is necessary.

After your thesis has been approved by your thesis committee, you must submit your final thesis to the University Office of Graduate Studies, for review and approval. Formatting and other editorial revisions may be required. For more information: <https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html>

Summer Completion of Thesis

Summer completion of thesis cannot be guaranteed. It will depend on availability of faculty on the thesis committee. Unless faculty are teaching summer school, they are not being paid during the summer. Thus, any supervision of thesis work during the summer typically is as an unpaid volunteer. In addition, faculty may have other commitments during the summer. If you plan to finish your thesis during the summer, you should coordinate this with your thesis advisor and committee members well in advance of the summer.

PSYC 598 (Thesis Research) Grading Policy

First Three Units

RP (Satisfactory Progress)	Student has made reasonable progress toward completing thesis proposal
I (Incomplete)	Student has begun thesis work but has not made reasonable progress toward completing thesis proposal
U (Unacceptable)	Student shows little effort toward making progress on thesis

Second Three Units

RP (Satisfactory Progress)	Thesis proposal is approved and on file in the Department's Graduate Office
I (Incomplete)	Thesis Proposal not Completed
U (Unacceptable)	Student has not made reasonable progress on the project

Note: PSYC 598 final letter grade(s) will be issued only after you have successfully defended your thesis and have submitted the final version your thesis to the OGS online.

Thesis Checklist

- **Thesis Chair:** Choose a thesis Chair to supervise PSYC 598.
- **Enroll in PSYC 598 (Thesis) first 3 units:** Ask your Chair to e-mail the Graduate Support Staff requesting that you be permitted to register for thesis units.
- **Thesis Committee and Scheduling Proposal Meeting:** With your Chair's guidance, choose two other faculty to serve on your thesis committee. Once your Chair has approved your thesis proposal, submit it to your entire committee and schedule a proposal meeting. **Your proposal must be submitted to all committee members at least 2 weeks prior to your proposal date.** Bring a cover sheet to be signed by the committee to signify passing your proposal.
- **Reserve a room for your proposal:** Email psychology department psychology@fullerton.edu
- **Proposal Meeting:** After the proposal meeting, make any revisions specified by the committee and **submit a copy of your title page signed by all the members of your thesis committee to the Department Graduate Office.**
- **Submit IRB application** and obtain an approval to begin collecting data.
- **Enroll in PSYC 598 (Thesis) second 3 units:** Ask your Chair to e-mail the Graduate Support Staff requesting that you be permitted to register for thesis units.
- **Planning the Thesis Defense Meeting:** When your Chair approves your thesis draft, send your thesis draft to all the committee members and decide on the date, time, and location of your defense meeting. If you need a room reservation, email Psychology Department <psychology@fullerton.edu>. **You must send your thesis draft to all the committee members at least 2 weeks before the date of your thesis defense meeting.**
- **Email defense information to the Department Graduate Office:** **Email the Department Graduate Office at least 2 weeks prior to your thesis defense meeting** with following information:
 - Thesis title
 - Abstract
 - Date, time, and location (or Zoom link) of your defense

If the information is not received by the department Graduate Studies Office, necessary documentation to process thesis grades and graduation will not be submitted.

- **Thesis Submission to Office of Graduate Studies and Thesis Verification (online):** After you successfully defend your thesis, you need to submit your thesis to the OGS at the link below.

<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html>

Scroll down and click on "CSUF Thesis/Dissertation Submission Form."

Once you submit this online form, the Thesis Verification Form will be emailed to your committee members asking for their signatures. Any communication will be sent to your CSUF email address. Thus, it is important that you check your CSUF email account regularly.

Additional thesis information: Besides this document, see the OGS Thesis website (above) and the CSUF University Catalog.

The university no longer requires students to obtain physical copies of the thesis from the bookstore.

Student Affairs

Graduate Assistants (GA's)

Several Graduate Assistantships are available each semester. Assistantships are awarded on a semester basis to full-time students in good standing.

Open GA positions are emailed to students. Faculty members requiring a Graduate Assistant interview candidates and recommend appointments to the Graduate Administrative Assistant. Both the faculty member and student agree to workload and responsibilities **prior** to commencement of the assistantship.

Financial Aid

The University Financial Aid Office (GH 146; 657-278-3125) provides information about student loans and funds available through Work Study Programs <http://www.fullerton.edu/financialaid/>.

Student Research Grants

- **The University Interclub Counsel, the parent group of PDSA**, provides funds for activities of the Associated Students. Each year, some of these funds are set aside for student research, including travel funds to participate in professional conferences and conventions. Contact your student PDSA representative for more information.
- **The Department of Psychology** also provides an opportunity for students to be reimbursed for conference registration fees. An announcement and applications are available each year from the department's main office.
- **CSUF Undergraduate Research Opportunity Center (UROC)** offers travel grants to graduate students as well as undergraduate students. Visit their site for more information.
<https://www.fullerton.edu/uoc/for-students/funding-opportunities.html>
- Students are encouraged to seek out other university or external funding sources. Doctoral programs are likely to view receipt of scholarships and grants favorably.

Outstanding MA Student

Selection of the Outstanding Master of Arts Student(s)

Nominations: In April, a memo is circulated to the faculty to solicit nominations. The memo includes a roster of graduating M.A. students with their overall GPA in graduate school. To be qualified for this nomination, the M.A. student must be advanced to candidacy and be near completion (June, August, or previous December) of their thesis. Faculty choosing to nominate a M.A. student must write a nomination letter. Letters in support of the nominee may be submitted as well. The nominated student must provide a CV that will be included with the nomination.

Voting: A folder with the nomination letters, a vita, and a copy of the study plan will be prepared and retained in the Psychology Graduate Office. The awarded winner will be determined by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Recipients of the Outstanding MA Student Award

1982	Cheryl Beauvais	2006	Joh Baello
1983	Kathleen Brown	2007	Zelida Keo
1984	Barbara Throckmorton	2008	Kris Gunawan /Jessica Tessler
1985	Rana Matteson	2009	Amy Ho
1986	Stewart Donaldson	2010	Bonifacio Arrieta
1987	Joan Tucker	2011	Erin Arruda/Jeffery Hunger
1988	Curtis Harden	2012	Anthony Rodriquez
1989	Joni Radio	2013	George Romero
1990	Barbara Cherry	2014	Laura Minero
1991	Beverley Sale	2015	Danielle Delaney
1992	Sharon Connelly	2016	Jessica Ayers/Sam Handelman
1993	Jaki Coffman / Mark Whatley	2017	Jonathan Park
1994	Pam Oliver	2018	Kristen Phillips
1995	Shelby Taylor	2019	Christopher Campbell
1996	Colette Lay /Heidi Weller	2020	Phuong Nguyen
1997	Sandra Fluck/Patric Giordani/Colleen Killian	2021	Courtney Scaramella
1998	Gina Armendariz /Sherry Yeary	2022	Richard Chang
1999	Craig Baker	2023	Julien “Rou” Rouvere
2000	Gayle Dow/Paul Kieffaber/Michelle Ramos	2024	Ellie Nisbet
2001	Pam Drake /Makeba Parramore	2025	Sara Fardeheb
2002	Lawrence Wright	2026	Kaitlyn Keys
2003	Monica Coto /Sandra Wakcher		
2004	Andrew Kleerer		
2005	Sarah Wong-Goodrich		

Graduate Program Forms

FORMS	WHEN / HOW TO SUBMIT
Titan Degree Audit (TDA)	You can access it through Portal at any time.
Request for Excess Units https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/forms.html	Enroll in more than 12 units of course work. The Program Coordinator's approval is required. The online form is available at the OGS website.
Independent Study (PSYC 599) Department of Psychology H-830M	To receive Department credit for Independent Study. Complete the form, sign have your instructor approve, sign and return to the Graduate Staff. You will receive a permit on the computer to register.
MA Elective Course Contract Dept. Grad Office H-830K	To receive graduate credit for an approved 400 level course
Thesis Manual https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/thesis.html	Published by the University Office of Graduate Studies. Contains information regarding thesis formatting guidelines.
Request for Leave of Absence https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/forms.html	If you are unable to attend classes for a semester, you need to apply for a leave of absence. Unless an official leave of absence is granted, you will be disenrolled from the University. Readmission to the Program is not guaranteed once you are disenrolled.
Application for a Graduation Check	Graduation checks will be completed by scheduling an advising appointment with the M.A. Program Coordinator.
Change of Graduation Date https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/forms.html	If you have applied for a Graduation Check, but are unable to complete requirements by your scheduled date, you must officially change your date of graduation to remain eligible and to register for classes or GS 700.
GS 700 Extended Education Enrollment	If you have completed all required course work, but have NOT completed your thesis, you may enroll in GS 700 to complete your thesis for a minimal fee. Discuss this option with the M.A. Program Coordinator.
Petition for Extending Time Limit https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/forms.html	If you have not graduated within the five-year limit, you may petition for extending your time limit up to two years. Students will need to document their timeline for thesis completion for the extension to be approved.

In general, you can access various forms from the University Office of Graduate Studies at this link.
<https://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/current/forms.html>

Program Learning Objectives and Assessment

MA Graduate Studies Committee

Overview: The MA Program provides students with an opportunity for advanced study in the field of Psychology. Both breadth and depth of knowledge are emphasized along with building research competence and critical thinking skills. Students are prepared for further study at the doctoral level or for careers upon graduation at the master's level. Professionalism, responsibility, and community awareness are integral components of the program.

Goals and objectives: Students are expected to develop several specific skills, including oral and written communication, statistical expertise, critical evaluation, research and computer competence, synthesis of information, and an appreciation for cultural diversity. The faculty is committed to ongoing assessment and evaluation to improve teaching and learning.

Specific goals and objectives

- ✓ Demonstrate professionalism in the field
- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of the ethics and standards of the profession
- ✓ Demonstrate in-depth knowledgeable of two content areas of psychology
- ✓ Critically evaluate published research
- ✓ Distinguish between credible and pseudo research
- ✓ Critically evaluate popular media's presentation of research
- ✓ Design a research project or program
- ✓ Analyze data

Assessment procedures currently employed

- ✓ On-going evaluation by Graduate Coordinator: Students' progress is monitored throughout the program. Professionalism, standards, and responsibility are emphasized in the first semester of the program in the core class required by all students. Both the Graduate Coordinator and the students' mentors oversee their conduct during their tenure in the program. Formal assessment procedures are under consideration.
- ✓ Original research project (Master's Thesis): This project requires students to demonstrate in-depth knowledge in a specific area chosen by the student in conjunction with his or her thesis advisor, critically evaluate published research, design a research project, analyze data, and present the entire project both orally and in written form. A minimum of three faculty members evaluates each student's performance.
- ✓ Thesis defense: Students undergo oral examination during their thesis defense concerning their project and must demonstrate a cogent understanding of the issues, explain their results, and provide a knowledgeable interpretation of the data. Their performance is evaluated by a minimum of three faculty members.
- ✓ Curriculum Vitae: Students prepare a curriculum vita during the first semester of the program. Each student's mentor, often in conjunction with the Graduate Coordinator, tracks the student's progress and assists in providing the types of experiences that will allow the student to become a potential candidate for doctoral programs or a sought-after entry-level employee in a variety of professions.
- ✓ University and community involvement: Such involvement may be demonstrated in several ways, including representing CSUF at professional conferences, participating in Psychology Day, being an active member of student organizations (e.g., peer mentoring), attending department colloquia, and serving on department and university committees.

Library Information

Resources for Department of Psychology Students

Pollak Library supports the Department of Psychology's learning outcomes for students. Through its reference and instruction services, they strive to assist you in the development of your information literacy skills, such as:

1. Identifying resources that will best meet your information needs	3. Evaluating your resources • Understanding the nature of peer-reviewed, scholarly articles • Recognizing the unique features of empirical studies • Identifying popular sources (both print and online)
2. Conducting effective searches using various resources (especially the online databases) • Finding books and other resources using the library's catalog • Effectively searching PsycINFO • Acquiring search strategies for PubMed • Locating and searching other relevant subject-specific databases	4. Acquiring tools to properly cite your sources • Formatting citations in APA style • Navigating and effectively using RefWorks • Understanding the importance of academic integrity

Please visit the Pollak Library homepage to access their many services, including links to the library's online catalog, online databases, research information, subject guides, library blog, live help features, policies and guidelines, and more: <https://www.library.fullerton.edu/>