The Graduate Program in Psychology offers a Ph.D. degree. Although students in the program have the option of obtaining an M.A. degree en route to the Ph.D., students are admitted to the graduate program only if they plan to obtain a Ph.D. degree. The program encompasses the broad field of psychology and its interactions with related disciplines. Resources and faculty are concentrated in five areas of specialization: Biological Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Social & Personality Psychology, Quantitative Psychology, and Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience. Each program faculty member is affiliated with one or more of these areas, and each student is admitted into one.

MASTER’S PROGRAM

1) Admissions requirements

Although students in the Psychology Ph.D. program can, if they choose, satisfy the requirements for the Master’s (Plan I or Plan II), the Graduate Program in Psychology does not admit students for whom this is the primary degree objective. The sections that follow explain how students can use the coursework and research project or preliminary exam of the Ph.D. program to earn an M.A.

2) Master’s Plan I (Thesis) or Plan II (Comprehensive Examination)

Plan I. This plan requires 30 units of graduate coursework and a thesis. At least 12 of these 30 units must be graduate work in Psychology.

Plan II. This plan requires 36 units of graduate work, of which at least 18 units must be graduate courses in Psychology. Not more than 9 units of research (299 or equivalent) may be used to satisfy the 18-unit requirement. A comprehensive examination is required of each candidate, and is taken as part of enrollment in Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (see section 3c in the Ph.D. requirements). No thesis is required.

3) Course Requirements (Plan I: 30 units total; Plan II: 36 units total)

a) Required Courses

For Plans I and II, Statistical Analysis of Psychological Experiments (PSC 204A)
For Plan II only, Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (PSC 298)

b) Elective Courses (26 units total for Plan I; 32 units total for Plan II)

Any graduate courses in Psychology or a related field, at least one of which is outside the student’s area of specialization, as determined by the Individual Advising Committee.

c) English Language Requirement Students who have not obtained a previous degree at an approved English-medium institution or demonstrated English-language
proficiency through an appropriate exam (e.g. TOEFL) are required to complete appropriate English-language courses, as described in the policy *Graduate Student Course Requirements – English as Second Language* (GC2018-02). Courses taken in satisfaction of this requirement do not count towards the units required for graduation.

d) Summary

Plan I requires 30 units of graduate courses which must include PSC 204A, at least one course outside the student’s area of specialization, and at least 12 units of graduate work in Psychology. Plan II requires 36 units of graduate courses, which must include PSC 204A and Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (currently PSC 298), at least one course outside the student’s area of specialization, and at least 18 units of graduate work in Psychology. The minimum course load is 12 units each academic quarter. Per UC regulations, students should not ordinarily enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses (200) or more than 16 units of combined undergraduate and graduate level courses (100, 200, 300) per quarter.

4) Special Requirements

None

5) Committees

See Ph.D. program requirements

6) Advising Structure and Mentoring

See Ph.D. program requirements

7) Advancement to Candidacy

Students should submit an official application for Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Psychology after completing at least one-half of their course requirements for this degree and at least one quarter prior to the quarter in which they will file their Individual Research Project paper to satisfy the thesis requirement for Plan I, which is normally in the 4th quarter, or complete Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (currently PSC 298) to satisfy the comprehensive exam requirement for Plan II, which is normally in the 7th quarter. The Candidacy for the Degree of Master form can be found on the Graduate Studies website. ¹A completed form includes a list of courses the student will take to complete degree requirements and, in the case of the thesis option, a list of the committee members. If changes must be made to the student’s course plan after he or she has advanced to candidacy, the Graduate Adviser must recommend these changes to Graduate Studies. Students must have their Graduate Adviser and, for Plan I, their IAC chair sign the candidacy form before it can be submitted to Graduate Studies.

¹ https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/forms-information#Masters
8) Comprehensive Examination and Thesis Requirements

a) Thesis Requirements (Plan I)
The Individual Research Project paper (described in section 4b of the Ph.D. Requirements) will serve as the thesis for students admitted to the Ph.D. program who choose to complete the M.A. in Psychology, Plan I.

a) Comprehensive Examination (Plan II)
The comprehensive examination for the M.A. in Psychology, Plan II will be the written work completed as part of the required course Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Sciences.

The goal of this course is for students to develop expertise in one or more areas of psychology relevant to their research and to demonstrate that expertise, through written work, to their IAC. At the end of the period identified by their IAC, students will enroll with their major professor in 1 Quarter of “Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science” (we will use PSC 298 as a placeholder until new course is approved). The timing of the course will vary from student to student but many students will complete it late in the second year or early in the third year, after the completion of most of the coursework.

To complete this course, students will identify topics relevant to their broad research interest and under the supervision of their IAC investigate these topics through reading original research articles and engage in extensive writing. Activities may include developing a reading list, extensive reading of texts and articles, and meeting with faculty to discuss topics and content of the reading. Assessment may include a proposal for a research paper, an annotated bibliography, timed written essays on the content, proposal of new research, and/or written papers.

Syllabus templates for “Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science” that have been approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee will be on file with the Graduate Coordinator. These templates will specify the breadth of research topics to be covered and types of activities and assessments that will be expected. During the annual advising meeting during the academic year before the student enrolls in 298, the student and IAC (which is chaired by the major professor) will develop a syllabus for this course based on one of these templates. If a student and IAC propose activities that deviate significantly from those in the approved templates it will require approval from the Graduate Adviser to make sure that the proposed deviations satisfy the program requirement and goals.

9) Normative Time to Degree

The normative time to degree for an M.A. in Psychology is 6 quarters for Plan I and 7 quarters for Plan II.
10) Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 204A</td>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content Course</td>
<td>Content Course</td>
<td>Content Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance to candidacy for Plan I M.A. (if applicable)</td>
<td>IAC meeting to discuss progress</td>
<td>Advance to candidacy for Plan II M.A. (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submit Individual Research Project paper (thesis for Plan I)</td>
<td>PSC 298—Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11) Sources of Funding

Students in good standing in the Ph.D. program are funded with TA positions, GSR positions, or fellowships.

Student employment as a GSR or TA also requires that they maintain satisfactory performance during their appointments. Students receive evaluations by the instructor for each quarter they serve as a TA. Any student who repeatedly receives poor TA evaluations from instructors, and whose performance does not improve after constructive feedback and a probationary period, may not be hired as a TA even if they are in good standing in the program. Students who are informed in writing and/or verbally of deficiencies in their performance as a GSR may not be rehired if they are unable to remedy those deficiencies, even if they are in good standing in the program.

12) PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee Status

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found at the [Graduate Student Resource web page](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resource-web-page).²

---

² https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources
PH.D. PROGRAM

1. Admissions Requirements

Applicants for admission must complete the Office of Graduate Studies online application and must meet the University of California minimum requirements for admission. Acceptance into the Ph.D. program is based on a review of the applicant’s overall past academic performance. Other requirements for admission include:

- Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (General Test).
- English proficiency examination for international applicants who have not studied at an approved English-medium University: TOEFL or other University-approved examination. International applicants must meet the Office of Graduate Studies minimum TOEFL score requirement (or equivalent for other University-approved examination).
- A confirmed Major Professor: Prior to admission, a faculty member in good standing with the graduate program must confirm that he or she is willing to act as the student’s Major Professor.

Applicants are admitted into one of five areas of specialization:

- Biological Psychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Social & Personality Psychology
- Quantitative Psychology
- Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience

There are no prerequisite courses required for admission to the Ph.D. program.

2. Dissertation Plan

The Ph.D. program in Psychology offers Dissertation Plan B, which specifies a three-member (minimum) dissertation committee, an optional final oral examination (made on an individual student basis by the dissertation committee), and no exit seminar.


3. Course Requirements (53-61 units total)

The course requirements are schematically depicted in the figure below and described in more detail in sections a-c.
Upon arrival in Davis, students should consult with the program’s Graduate Adviser concerning the first quarter of academic work. In subsequent quarters and years, the Major Professor and Individual Advising Committee (IAC; see section 5b) will advise students on the appropriate courses to take.

**a) Content Courses (minimum of 21 units)**
Each student must complete at least six graduate-level courses or seminars (other than those satisfying the requirements in 3b, 3c, and 3d and variable-unit courses such as PSC 298 and 299).

- A minimum of three of the six courses or seminars must be offerings of the Department of Psychology.
- To ensure adequate breadth in the student’s coursework, at least one of the 6 courses must be outside of the student’s area of specialization; this breadth course could be a Department of Psychology offering in another area or a relevant graduate-level course offered by another department. The student’s IAC should determine which course the student can use to fulfill this requirement.
- It is strongly recommended that at least four of these courses be taken during the student’s first two years in the program.
- The six courses or seminars must total a minimum of 21 quarter units. Equivalent course credit from other institutions may be allowed for up to three of these courses or seminars. Students requesting that coursework from other institutions be used to satisfy this requirement should submit a request to the faculty member who is appointed Area Head in their area of specialization; this request should include supporting materials such as a syllabus and reading list from the course taken. The Area Head will evaluate such work, consulting with the instructor who teaches the equivalent course at UC Davis if appropriate, and submit recommendations for appropriate credit to the Graduate Adviser. The Graduate adviser will make the final decision about whether the student can apply that coursework to the degree requirements.
b) **Statistics Courses (15 units)**

Students are required to complete the following statistics courses (or their equivalents) with no grade lower than a B-:

- **PSC 204A**, Statistical Analysis of Psychological Experiments (5 units)
- two additional courses from the **PSC 204 series** (5 units each; 10 units total required).

The Graduate Adviser may determine that coursework taken in a previous graduate program is equivalent to one or more of these courses, based on consultation with the corresponding Area Head and with the faculty members who teach the relevant courses. Students may use no more than two equivalent courses to satisfy the statistics course requirement. If two semester long graduate courses provide coverage equivalent to the year-long 204 sequence, and at the appropriate level of depth, the entire statistics requirement may be waived.

On rare occasions, undergraduate coursework may be used to satisfy some portion of the statistics requirement; students whose undergraduate coursework is very advanced may be assessed by the Quantitative Area Head and/or the instructor of the relevant course to determine if the student’s mastery of the material is sufficient to waive any of the required courses.

If any of the statistics requirements are waived in recognition of coursework completed at a prior institution, the total number of quarter units required will be decreased accordingly (e.g., if only 204A is waived, students will be expected to complete 5 fewer quarter units as part of their degree).

Students interested in developing their expertise in statistical analysis beyond what is required by this course requirement are encouraged to consider the optional minor in Quantitative Psychology described in the Appendix.

c) **Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (4 Units)**

The goal of this course is for students to develop expertise in one or more areas of psychology relevant to their research and to demonstrate that expertise, through written work, to their IAC. At the end of the period identified by their IAC, students will enroll with their major professor in 1 Quarter of “Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science” (we will use PSC 298 as a placeholder until new course is approved). This course must be completed before the student can schedule their QE; students may petition to enroll in this course during the quarter they are scheduled to take their QE. The timing of the course will vary from student to student but many students will complete it late in the second year or early in the third year, after the completion of most of the coursework.

To complete this course, students will identify topics relevant to their broad research interest and under the supervision of their IAC investigate these topics through reading original research articles and engage in extensive writing. Activities may include developing a reading list, extensive reading of texts and articles, and meeting with faculty to discuss topics and content of the reading. Assessment may include a proposal for a research paper, an annotated
bibliography, timed written essays on the content, proposal of new research, and/or written papers.

Syllabus templates for “Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science” that have been approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee will be on file with the Graduate Coordinator. These templates will specify the breadth of research topics to be covered and types of activities and assessments that will be expected. During the annual advising meeting during the academic year before the student enrolls in 298, the student and IAC (which is chaired by the major professor) will develop a syllabus for this course based on one of these templates. If a student and IAC propose activities that deviate significantly from those in the approved templates it will require approval from the Graduate Adviser to make sure that the proposed deviations satisfy the program requirement and goals.

**d) Other Required Courses (13-24 units)**

- **PSC 200, Proseminar (3 units).** This course introduces the research interests and activities of the faculty members in the Graduate Program in Psychology, as well as other issues related to professional development and the program. It must be taken in the fall quarter of the student’s first year.

- **PSC 202, Research Seminar (1 unit each; 6-9 units total).** This is an area-based colloquium series, known as the “area brown bag seminars”, in which students learn about research in their area of specialization and develop presentation and speaking skills through both observation and direct experience. Prior to passing the Qualifying Examination, during each quarter in which there is no schedule conflict with other required courses or teaching duties, students must enroll in and attend at least the section of PSC 202 that is associated with their area of specialization. They must also present their research to peers and faculty members at these seminars at least once per year. Students enroll in PSC 202 each quarter, using their Area Head’s CRN for course credit. First-year students may present plans for their Individual Research Project in this course. Students are encouraged to continue attending area brown bag seminars after advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D., although this is not required.

- **PSC 299, Research (minimum of 1 unit taken at least 2 of 3 quarters each academic year).** Because students are expected to be actively engaged in research, they are required to enroll in PSC 299 (for at least 1 unit) during a minimum of 2 of the 3 quarters each academic year, and to receive a grade of “S” in those quarters. Failing to enroll in PSC 299 for a sufficient number of quarters or receiving a grade of “U” in any quarter will trigger a progress review, to determine whether the student is making satisfactory progress.

**e) Summary**

Students must complete a minimum of 21 units of content courses, 15 units of statistics courses, and 13-24 units of other required courses for a total of 53-61 units.

Students must enroll in 12 units per quarter. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses (200) or more than 16 units of combined undergraduate and graduate level courses (100, 200, 300) per quarter.
4. Special Requirements: Individual Research Project

The goal of the Individual Research Project is for students to demonstrate their ability to conduct independent research prior to advancing to candidacy. Work on the Individual Research Project shall begin during the student’s first year in the program and should be completed before the student’s 8th quarter in residence. During the student’s progress meeting at the end of Year 1, the IAC will evaluate progress toward this requirement, and outline clear milestones and targets to evaluate student progress in future years.

a) Project Paper

The Individual Research Paper is a publication-quality paper reporting results from a research project that is carried out by the student. The project will be planned and conducted under the supervision of the Major Professor and the IAC, who will evaluate the final report. Because this research paper may serve as the Master’s thesis under Plan I, the scope of the project should be appropriate for that purpose. The Individual Research Paper can be an actual manuscript that has been submitted for publication or has been published, if the student is the first author of that publication. Alternatively, it may approximate a manuscript that could be submitted for publication if the paper has not yet been submitted or published, or if the student is not the first author on a submitted or published paper in which his or her project results are packaged with other work. In the latter case, a paper reporting on only the work completed by the student for the Individual Research Project should be prepared, in the style of a journal publication.

The completed research project paper should be turned in to both the Graduate Adviser and the student’s IAC before the end of the student’s 8th quarter in residence. The IAC will read and evaluate the paper within 4 weeks of receiving it and report to the Graduate Adviser whether the paper is (1) approved as is (this requires that 2 of the 3 committee members accept it as is), (2) approved with editorial revision, or (3) in need of additional work in order to satisfy the requirement. In the case of (2) or (3), the committee will report to the student and the Graduate Adviser the nature of the revisions required and the time frame for those revisions. If extensive work must be completed and an extended timeline is proposed, the committee should also make a recommendation about the timing of the Qualifying Exam.

Students who enter with a master’s thesis completed at another institution will generally be required to complete an Individual Research Project, although they may petition the IAC to consider whether the thesis can be used to satisfy some or all of the requirement. The IAC will forward the petition to the Graduate Adviser with its recommendation. The Graduate Adviser will allow the thesis to satisfy the requirement if a compelling case is made and if the IAC is unanimous in its recommendation.

b) Oral Presentation

The student shall make at least one public oral presentation on the Individual Research Project either during the planning of the project, while in the midst of data collection, or after its completion. The required presentation must be given prior to
the Qualifying Examination, as part of the student’s area brown bag seminar (PSC 202) or at a recognized professional meeting; a poster presentation does not satisfy this requirement. The faculty member assigned as Area Head for the student’s area of specialization is responsible for reporting to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser when the student has completed this portion of the requirement. At the start of each academic year, the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser will inform each Area Head of the students who have not fulfilled this requirement.

c) Optional Master’s
An Individual Research Project paper with signature approval by all members of the student’s Individual Advising Committee shall be accepted as meeting the thesis requirement for the Master’s Degree, Plan I (see M.A. requirements above). Although the project requirement for the program can be satisfied if two of the three committee members approve the research paper, the thesis requirement for the M.A. requires that all three committee members approve.

5. Committees

a) Admissions Committee
The Admissions/Fellowship Committee consists of the Area Heads, who are elected by the respective faculty members of the areas of specialization in Psychology (Biological Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Social & Personality Psychology, Quantitative Psychology, and Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience), along with the Graduate Adviser, who chairs the committee. The grades, GRE scores, personal statement, and other material for each applicant are reviewed. If a potential Major Professor is identified, the faculty in the relevant area of specialization discuss the candidate and make recommendations about offers of admission, which are forwarded by the appropriate Area Head to the Admissions Committee. These recommendations are reviewed by the Admissions Committee, subjected to a vote of the program faculty, and forwarded by the Graduate Adviser to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval of admission. Notification of admissions decisions are sent by Graduate Studies.

Applications are accepted in the current academic year for the following fall quarter’s entering class.
Recommendations for new and continuing student fellowships are also made by this committee.

b) Individual Advising Committee (IAC)
The IAC is responsible for guiding students through coursework, reading, research, and other activities, so that they may attain the background in general psychology needed for professional competence in their area of specialization. The role of the IAC is to advise students as they progress towards completion of program requirements. The IAC is expected to evaluate student progress, set goals and priorities for the next year, and guide the student through decisions with regard to program requirements (e.g., appropriate courses).

Students are expected to meet once per year with their IAC (typically in the winter quarter). During this in-person meeting, the student’s progress is evaluated in preparation for the annual review of progress by the program faculty (see section 6b). The IAC reviews and evaluates the online Student Progress Assessment (SPA)
together with the Major Professor in order to make a recommendation about the student’s annual progress in the previous year and to set clear goals and milestones for the following year.

During the annual meeting, the student and IAC should identify concrete goals and target completion dates for those goals to ensure satisfactory progress in the program. Specifically, each year, the IAC and student should discuss (a) coursework, including how the student will/has fulfilled the breadth requirement, (b) research progress, including 299 enrollment, presentation in PSC 202 and at conferences, and manuscript preparation, (c) the timing and preparation for PSC 298, and (d) progress toward completion of the individual research project. The goals should be explicitly described in the student’s progress report. These goals will then be used as the basis for the evaluation in the following year. During this annual meeting, the student and IAC should also discuss other aspects of the student’s career preparation, such as enrollment in the Teaching of Psychology course, internships, workshops, and further opportunities to acquire skills.

The IAC also has an evaluative role. This committee will read and evaluate the student’s Individual Research Paper and determine whether it meets the program requirements. This committee also will help the student develop a syllabus for Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science, support the student’s efforts in this course, and evaluate the written work that is produced for this course.

At the beginning of their second quarter in the program, students must select members of the IAC, which should include the Major Professor (who will serve as chair), and two other faculty members whose expertise will provide breadth in the area of specialization. Ordinarily, all members of the IAC must be members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology. A student may request that one member of the IAC be an individual who is not a member of the Psychology Graduate Program. To petition for inclusion of a non-graduate group member on the IAC, the student should provide information to the Graduate Advisor about why this faculty member is appropriate for the student’s committee, along with the proposed member’s experience supervising Ph.D. students at UC Davis. In addition, the student must verify that the proposed faculty member agrees to the roles and responsibilities of being on an IAC in Psychology.

The proposed list of IAC members is to be presented for approval to the Graduate Adviser, who will consult with the graduate program faculty as needed. Once the IAC is constituted, any changes require a petition from the student and approval by the Graduate Adviser.

Occasionally, a student may wish to have a fourth member on the IAC. In this case, the student should consult with his or her Major Professor and the Graduate Adviser about how the inclusion of the fourth member impacts the function of the committee. The Graduate Adviser may allow a fourth member if it is deemed necessary for the student’s development and planning. Students will be encouraged to meet with and collaborate with faculty members who are not members of their IAC, which usually makes the inclusion of a fourth member unnecessary in most cases.
The IAC is expected to meet as a group with the student at least once during the student’s second quarter in the program, and, thereafter, at least once a year during the winter quarter to plan the academic program for the following year. Although the student and the Major Professor are jointly responsible for organizing these committee meetings, the Major Professor is ultimately responsible for making sure that they occur and that a progress report is forwarded to the Graduate Adviser by the deadline (see section 6b). On the rare occasions when a committee member is unavailable (e.g., on sabbatical or doing field work at a distant location), the student should arrange a meeting with the two available faculty members, and a meeting with the absent faculty member should be arranged as soon as he or she becomes available. During quarters when meetings of the whole committee are not scheduled, students should meet at least once with their Major Professor prior to registration for the following quarter to plan an academic program for that quarter.

c) Examination Committees

1. **Qualifying Examination Committee.** The Qualifying Examination (QE) is conducted by the student’s IAC, augmented by two additional members. The membership of the IAC can be changed to reflect the more specific topics to be tested in the QE. All such changes must be submitted for approval to the Graduate Adviser, who may consult with the faculty as needed. Two additional members shall be chosen to serve on the QE committee. Per Graduate Council Policy (https://grad.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/users/gc2005-02_rev_07_doctoral_qualifying_examinations_policy.pdf), at least one member of the QE committee must be from another graduate program. Typically, this outside member is from another program on campus. Occasionally, a student may request that a faculty member from another institution serve as the outside member. Graduate Council policies on who can serve as a member of a committee can be found here (https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/grad-council/gc1998-01-uc-davis-graduate-council-policy-rev-06-final.pdf). Note that requesting that a faculty member who is not from the University of California requires an External Committee Membership Application, and a brief statement about the potential member including the special expertise or qualification of this individual that are not represented on campus. The chair of the QE committee must be a ladder faculty member from the Graduate Program in Psychology, but may not be the chair of the student’s Dissertation Committee. The proposed list of members will be submitted to Graduate Studies for official constitution of the Qualifying Examination Committee. Other Academic Senate and Graduate Studies requirements must also be met.

2. **Dissertation Committee.** Once the QE has been passed, the student submits a list of proposed Dissertation Committee members to the Graduate Adviser. The Dissertation Committee is appointed by Graduate Studies when the student advances to candidacy. The majority of members of the Dissertation Committee must be ladder faculty members of the Graduate Program in Psychology.
6. Advising Structure and Mentoring

a) Advisers and Mentors

**Major Professor:** The Psychology program has adopted an *apprenticeship model* to graduate training. The student’s Major Professor is the faculty member who supervises the student’s research and dissertation. The Major Professor must be a member of the Psychology Graduate Faculty and is identified during the admissions process. Thus, students enter the program with a Major Professor in place. Ordinarily, prior to candidacy, the Major Professor supervises the Individual Research Project, Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science, and is chair of the Individual Advising Committee. After the student has advanced to candidacy, the Major Professor serves as the chair of the Dissertation Committee.

Every student is required to have a Major Professor. Occasionally, over the course of the program, a student might wish to change Major Professors due to a change in research interest or fit. If the new Major Professor is a member of the Psychology Graduate Faculty, and if all parties are in agreement, the student can email the request to the Graduate Adviser for approval.

If the student and Major Professor agree that a student should find a new faculty member to serve in that role, but no new Major Professor is immediately identified, the student has until the end of the subsequent quarter to be in good standing in the program (e.g., if the student leaves a lab in the start of the Fall Quarter, he/she has until the end of the next Winter Quarter to find a new Major Professor). During the period in which the student does not have a major professor, they will be judged to be making unsatisfactory progress, as no progress on research can be made in the absence of a major professor. If the student fails to identify a major professor in the time allotted, the student will be recommended for disqualification.

The Graduate Adviser will advise the student and help identify potential new major professors. But the student will be responsible for finding a new Major Professor and lab that will meet their goals.

**Graduate Adviser:** The Graduate Adviser is appointed by the chair of the Psychology Department Chair and approved by Graduate Studies. This individual is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information, until the Individual Advising Committee is formed. The Graduate Adviser also provides consultation on evaluation of student progress and the formation of examination and advising committees, and signs official forms that are forwarded to Graduate Studies for approval. The Psychology Department Chair often designates the Graduate Adviser as the Psychology Graduate Program Chair. In this capacity, the Graduate Program Chair/Graduate Adviser also is responsible for approving all committees, petitions, course substitutions, etc.

**Individual Advising Committee (IAC):** The IAC serves as the student’s examination and project/thesis committees, provides advising on the plan of study, and evaluates progress on program requirements. The *Mentoring Guidelines* can be found on the Graduate Studies website.³

³ [https://grad.ucdavis.edu/mentoring](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/mentoring)
b) **Student Progress Reviews**

The progress of all students is reviewed by the faculty each year, using the following procedures.

1. Students should prepare a brief statement summarizing their progress toward fulfillment of program requirements and their scholarly and professional activities of the preceding year. By the end of the third week of the winter quarter, this statement must be given to the members of the IAC. At this time, students are expected to begin to discuss their progress with the members of their IAC, and to schedule a meeting of the committee as a group to discuss their progress and plan of study for the next year.

2. By the end of the last day of instruction of the winter quarter, the IAC meets with the student to discuss any apparent problems that there may be and his or her plans for the coming year. Prior to this meeting, the student with the Major Professor should complete the Student Progress Assessment (SPA) and any progress report documents required by the Psychology Graduate Program. During the meeting with the IAC, the SPA and progress report documents should be reviewed, and the IAC will make a recommendation to the Graduate Adviser regarding assessment of the student’s progress. The IAC will inform the student about their recommendation. The recommendation can be Satisfactory Progress, Marginal Progress, or Unsatisfactory Progress. In the case of Marginal or Unsatisfactory Progress, the committee will identify clear goals with target dates for the student to be reinstated to Satisfactory Progress. Although this is the only required meeting, the department encourages frequent communication among committee members and the student.

3. Prior to advancement to candidacy, the IAC will be charged with evaluating the following aspects of student progress each year: course completion, including fulfillment of the breadth requirement, completion of the individual research project, research progress, and progress toward completion of Advanced Inquiry of Psychological Science. Although the Individual Research Project does not have a formal deadline, students are expected to have begun work on this project by the time of their first IAC meeting in Year 1. If students have not yet made sufficient progress on the Individual Research Project, the IAC may deem that the student is making Marginal or Unsatisfactory Progress. Students are expected to have completed a significant amount of work on this project by the IAC meeting of the second year, and their progress will be evaluated with respect to timely completion of this project. In addition, the IAC will evaluate students’ research progress based on evidence of active engagement in research. Evidence of active research engagement includes, but is not limited to: publishing papers, presenting research results at conferences, submitting fellowship proposals, and presenting research results in PSC 202. Finally, starting no later than the second-year meeting, the IAC will discuss with the student the nature and content of Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science (described above in Section 3c). For students to complete this requirement on time, and be prepared for the Qualifying Exam by the end of the 9th quarter, the details of this course should be finalized during the winter or spring quarter of the second year.
4. By the end of the first week of the spring quarter, the IAC submits a copy of the student’s statement and its own recommendation regarding progress to the Graduate Adviser. **If no student statement or no IAC recommendation is received by the end of the first week of the spring quarter, the result will be an automatic initial motion for Unsatisfactory Progress at the progress review faculty meeting held in May.**

5. Following advancement to candidacy, students will meet annually with their dissertation committee, who will make a recommendation to the Graduate Adviser about student progress.

6. Students in their sixth year who have not completed the Ph.D. by the date of the progress review faculty meeting in May, or who have not completed most of the work (i.e., the Major Professor cannot confirm that the dissertation will be filed before the beginning of the fall quarter), will be judged to be making Unsatisfactory Progress.

7. In considering progress, faculty will take into account and allow up to three quarters of Planned Educational Leave (PELP) within the six-year period; these three PELP quarters will not be counted in the six-year period. Additional PELP quarters beyond the first three quarters may be approved for cause.

8. The faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology will meet in May for a review of student progress. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Adviser will review each student’s progress report from the IAC and the SPA, taking these into account, will prepare a recommendation.

In the event that either the IAC or the Graduate Adviser determines that a status of Satisfactory Progress is not warranted, The Graduate Adviser will present his or her assessment of the student’s progress to the faculty as well as the recommendation from the IAC, to which the student may respond. For students whose progress is not deemed Satisfactory after the faculty review, there are two possible outcomes:

- The student may be allowed to complete a course of remedial action to overcome the progress deficiencies within a reasonable time, as specified in recommendations from the Graduate Adviser and the IAC; this is the automatic outcome if it is the student’s first less than satisfactory report.
- If a student has received multiple unsatisfactory reports over the course of his or her time in the program, the faculty may decide against allowing a course of remedial action and may recommend that the student be disqualified.

In case a plan for remedial action is recommended by the Graduate Adviser and the IAC and accepted by the faculty, completion of the details of this plan will constitute binding criteria for removal of the deficiencies. The student’s progress in pursuing this plan will be reported to the faculty by the Graduate Adviser, by a date specified by the faculty. If either the binding criteria for removal of deficiencies are not met by the specified date or the faculty decide against allowing a course of remedial action, the Graduate Adviser will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be disqualified from the program, provided that this action is supported by a majority vote of all members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology, not just those present at the review.
c) Procedures for Appeals, Exceptions, and Deferrals
All appeals or requests for an exception to a requirement or a deferral for a deadline, should be made in writing to the Graduate Adviser. All exceptions to requirements or deferrals of deadlines should be accompanied by a written statement from the student’s Major Professor supporting the request. In most cases, the Graduate Adviser will make a decision about such requests. However, when the requested exception or deadline extension results in a significant delay in progress, the Graduate Adviser will solicit input from the graduate program faculty before making a decision about the request.

7. Advancement to Candidacy

After passing the Oral Qualifying Examination (see 8a below), the student is eligible for Advancement to Candidacy. This must occur no later than the student’s 10th quarter in the program. The student must file the appropriate paperwork with the Office of Graduate Studies.

8. Oral Qualifying Examination and Dissertation Requirements

a) Qualifying Examination (QE)
1. General Information and Timing.-The primary purpose of the Qualifying Examination (QE) is to validate that the student is academically qualified to conceptualize a research topic, undertake scholarly research and successfully produce the dissertation required for a doctoral degree. The QE must evaluate the student’s command of the field, ensuring that the student has both breadth and depth of knowledge, and must not focus solely on the proposed dissertation research. In addition, the QE provides an opportunity for the committee to provide important guidance to the student regarding their chosen research topic.

The following requirements must be satisfied before the QE can be taken: completion of the Individual Research Project (oral and written components), completion of all required coursework, and approval from Graduate Studies for constitution of the QE committee. It is the student’s responsibility to complete these requirements in a timely manner.

The QE should be taken no later than the end of the student’s 9th quarter in the program. Under some circumstances, the QE may be scheduled during a period other than the instructional weeks of a regular academic quarter, but only if the faculty members of the student’s QE committee agree. Faculty are under no obligation to schedule meetings during these time periods, and exams should only be scheduled during these time periods under exceptional circumstances and if all committee members are willing.

In order to formally schedule an oral exam date, the student, no later than four weeks before the examination date, must submit a petition to the Graduate Adviser listing the proposed members of the QE committee.

2. Form of the Exam. The QE shall include an oral examination of approximately 2-3 hours in length, with only the student and entire committee present, and the decision-making process immediately following. Non-voting faculty observers may
be invited with the unanimous consent of the committee and student. The QE must evaluate the student’s command of the field, ensuring that the student has both breadth and depth of knowledge.

3. **Outcome of the Exam.** The members of the committee should endeavor to reach a unanimous decision as to the qualifications of the student for successful completion of a doctoral program. They should include in their evaluation of the student such factors as relevant portions of the previous academic record, performance on specific parts of the exam, and overall potential for scholarly research as indicated during the exam. A committee, having reached a unanimous decision, shall inform the student of its decision as:

- **Pass** (no conditions may be appended to this decision),
- **Not Pass** (the chair’s report should specify whether the student is required to retake all or part of the examination, list any additional requirements, and state the exact timeline for completion of requirements to achieve a Pass), or
- **Fail**.

If the outcome is Not Pass or Fail, the Chair of the QE committee must include in its report a specific statement, agreed to by all members of the committee, explaining its decision, and must inform the student of its decision. Having received a Not Pass, the student may attempt the QE one additional time; only one retake of the QE is allowed and the QE report must list the specific conditions and timing for the second exam. After a second exam, a vote of Not Pass is unacceptable; only Pass or Fail is recognized. Should the student receive a Fail on the first or second attempt on the exam, disqualification from the program will be recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Under unusual and extenuating circumstances, the committee may suspend an exam in progress and request that it be considered a “No Examination.” If the committee wishes to make this request, the chair must indicate “No Examination” on the report of the outcome and inform the Dean of Graduate Studies of the reasons.

Passing this exam makes the student eligible for Advancement to Candidacy. Students are required to file the [form for Advancement to Candidacy](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/forms-information#PhD) for the Ph.D., Plan B, within one quarter after having passed the QE. Following the examination, students are required to file a copy of the signed dissertation proposal with the Graduate Adviser.

**b) Completing the Dissertation**

Once advanced to candidacy, satisfactory progress toward the dissertation and completion of the dissertation itself are the only requirements of the candidate. Satisfactory progress will be evaluated in an annual meeting with the dissertation committee.

When students advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree, Graduate Studies appoints a Dissertation Committee that assists them in developing and carrying out an empirical investigation of a significant problem in their area of specialization. This committee typically includes members who have served on the student’s Individual Advising Committee, but changes may be made, subject to Graduate Studies approval. The majority of members of the Dissertation Committee must be ladder faculty members of the Graduate Program in Psychology.

---

4 [https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/forms-information#PhD](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/forms-information#PhD)
The student will meet annually with the dissertation committee, during which time the student’s progress toward completion will be evaluated. This meeting should be an in-person meeting, ideally with all members of the committee present at once. If this is not possible due to scheduling constraints, individual in-person meetings may be arranged. If a committee member is unavailable for an in-person meeting, a special request for remote participation may be made to the Graduate Adviser. Such requests must include information about why the in-person meeting is not possible and what alternatives are proposed.

The first annual meeting of the dissertation committee will occur within 4 quarters of the QE, and no later than the student’s 13th quarter in residence. The main purpose of this meeting is to approve the student’s dissertation proposal. Thus, this meeting may occur soon after the QE, if the student is prepared. The format of the dissertation proposal will be determined by the dissertation committee and should be discussed at the time of the QE. The committee will require a written dissertation proposal, but the length and particular components required will be determined by the committee.

Dissertations in Psychology can take either the form of a traditional dissertation consisting of several chapters or sections describing a project (abstract, background, method, results, etc.) or as a compilation of published or publication-quality papers, with brief introduction and conclusion chapters. The student should be first author on any manuscripts or published papers included in the dissertation. See https://grad.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/grad-council/gc_2015-01_coauthorship_policy_-_approved_6-17-2015.pdf for guidance on including co-authored papers as part of the dissertation.

A candidate’s Dissertation Committee can require a defense of the completed dissertation in a final oral examination, according to the Plan B requirements. Committees are encouraged by the program to use this option under most circumstances. If this option is chosen by the Dissertation Committee, all members of the committee shall conduct the final oral examination, which consists of an oral presentation of the dissertation, followed by questions to the candidate from the committee members, based primarily on issues arising out of the relationship of the dissertation to the general field of study in which the subject of the dissertation lies.

Upon the Dissertation Committee’s acceptance of the dissertation, must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, following established procedures.

9. **Normative Time to Degree**

The normative time to advance to candidacy is 9 quarters. The normative time in candidacy is 6 quarters.
10. Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 204A</td>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content Course</td>
<td>Content Course</td>
<td>Content Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
<td>PSC 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial IAC meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
<td>Content course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advance to candidacy for Plan I M.A. (if applicable)</td>
<td>IAC meeting to discuss progress</td>
<td>Advance to candidacy for Plan II M.A. (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Submit Individual Research Project paper (thesis for Plan I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistics course</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 202</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>IAC meeting to discuss progress</td>
<td>Oral Qualifying Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Inquiry in Psychological Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual meeting with Dissertation Committee/Approval of Dissertation proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
<td>PSC 299D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
<td>PSC 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual meeting with Dissertation Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Oral Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Sources of Funding

Students are typically funded through a combination of TA positions, GSR positions, and fellowships.

Student employment as a GSR or TA is dependent on satisfactory performance during their appointments. Students receive evaluations by the instructor for each quarter they serve as a TA. Any student who repeatedly receives poor TA evaluations from instructors, and whose performance does not improve after constructive feedback and a probationary period, may not be hired as a TA even if they are in good standing in the
program. Students who are informed in writing and/or verbally of deficiencies in their performance as a GSR may not be rehired if they are unable to remedy those deficiencies, even if they are in good standing in the program.

12. PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee status

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found at the Graduate Student Resources website.5

13. Leaving the Program Prior to Completion of the Ph.D. Requirements

Students who leave the program prior to completing the requirements for the Ph.D. may still be eligible to receive the Master’s if they have fulfilled all the requirements (see M.A. section). Students can use the Change of Degree Objective form available from the Office of the Registrar.6

---

5 https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources
6 https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources/academic-information-and-services/changes-major-or-degree
APPENDIX: Optional Minor in Quantitative Psychology

Any graduate student may obtain a Minor in Quantitative Psychology by satisfying the following requirements.

- Complete three of the four courses in the sequence of Quantitative courses required of all students in the Ph.D. program (PSC 204A, 204B, and 204D).
- Complete at least two of the courses in the sequence of advanced Quantitative courses (currently PSC 205A, 205B, 205C, and 205D; additional courses may be added to the PSC 205 sequence in the future and may be used to satisfy this requirement).
- Enroll in and attend the Quantitative brown bag seminar (PSC 202) for at least three quarters.\(^7\)
- Complete a minor exam/project, with both written and oral presentation requirements, under the supervision of a three-member committee of faculty from the Department of Psychology.

A minor designation will not appear on the diploma; a record of satisfaction of minor requirements will be retained in departmental records.

Research Paper

Students should consult with faculty members serving on their Quantitative Minor Committee (see below) in choosing a topic and developing a proposal for the research paper requirement of the Minor in Quantitative Psychology. The actual project will vary between students in terms of its content, and the degree of quantitative sophistication should be decided upon in consultation with committee members.

Previously submitted papers intended to meet Ph.D. degree requirements cannot be used to meet the requirements of this research project, unless they involve substantial revisions to the methodological portion, such as in cases in which the quantitative contribution is new to the research area. Thus, the student should make clear how the proposed project represents an advance over his or her previous work.

While there is a great deal of flexibility in what will satisfy the research paper requirement, the paper should generally fall within one of the two following categories.

1. Theoretical Quantitative Paper

Papers that fall within this category involve advancements in quantitative psychology, such as investigations of the properties of estimators or statistical tests under particular research settings encountered by researchers working in the student’s area of expertise. Monte Carlo studies in which data are simulated, for example, may be used to investigate the properties of statistical procedures under special circumstances that pose analytic difficulties in the student’s area of specialization. A comparison could then be made

---

\(^7\) For students whose area of specialization is not Quantitative Psychology, enrolling in the Quantitative brown bag version of PSC 202 does not satisfy the PSC 202 course requirement discussed in section 3c of the Ph.D. Requirements. Since the Office of the Registrar prevents simultaneous enrollment in more than one section of PSC 202, students may receive credit in the same term for both the brown bag seminar in their area of specialization and the Quantitative brown bag seminar by enrolling in PSC 202 for the former and PSC 298 (Group Study) for 1 unit, using the CRN of the Quantitative Psychology Area Head, for the latter.
between data conditions that meet the statistical assumptions of a particular method and those conditions that routinely arise in the student’s area.

2. *Applied Quantitative Paper*

A second project type is one in which the student uses a sophisticated analytic procedure to address a research question of substantive interest in psychology. In most cases, the analytic procedure used will be one that is covered in a course from the PSC 205 advanced quantitative series. In any case, the student should be clear about the appropriateness of the chosen analytic procedure in addressing the research question of interest. The student may discuss, for example, how the chosen procedure addresses any shortcomings of procedures typically applied to such data or how the procedure allows researchers to address new aspects of a common problem. Alternatively, a research paper may be one in which a student develops a theoretical model and provides a quantitative framework by which the substantive model may be evaluated.

**Meeting the Project Requirements**

1. *Timing of the Project*

In many cases, students will satisfy course requirements for the Quantitative Minor in advance of completing the research paper. Students are encouraged, however, to discuss with faculty members possible research projects as soon as possible, so that a suitable project may be carefully developed, and to begin work on the project prior to completing all course requirements for the minor, although courses directly relevant to the chosen research project will generally be completed prior to developing a project proposal.

2. *The Quantitative Minor Committee*

The Quantitative Minor Committee, which approves and evaluates the project, consists of at least three faculty members selected by the student, of which two must be from the Quantitative area in Psychology. This committee does not need to be the same as the Individual Advising Committee, although it may be.

Students are expected to consult with committee members in developing a research project proposal that will satisfy the paper requirement. They will produce a written project proposal that details the type of paper (e.g., from the types described above) and how the paper will satisfy the requirements of the particular project (e.g., if an applied quantitative paper, the student might describe how the proposed work will address any analytic shortcomings of procedures commonly applied in their area of specialization). Upon approval of the project by the Quantitative Minor Committee, the student will work independently to perform the research and write the paper. This provides students the opportunity to work through problems on their own and helps to ensure that they develop a deep understanding of the methods studied.