

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience

Graduate Handbook

2026–2027

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The Department of Psychology and Neuroscience offers a full-time Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Psychology and Psychology Neuroscience with multiple areas of specialization.

This handbook describes the Department's policies, procedures, and degree requirements. Students enrolled in the Clinical Psychology program should consult the **Clinical Area Handbook** for program-specific policies and requirements.

In addition to the policies described in this handbook, all graduate students must comply with the rules and regulations of Temple University's Graduate School, which are located here: <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/graduate-policies/>.

Most questions regarding program requirements can be answered by consulting this handbook, the Clinical Area Handbook, or the “Graduate Bulletin,” which is the university’s official web-based catalog of graduate programs and their requirements: <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/>

If additional clarification is needed, students should first consult their faculty advisor and, if necessary, their Area Director. Questions that can’t be answered by the Area Director should be forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies.

FUNDING

The Department of Psychology & Neuroscience is committed to providing financial support to doctoral students who are making satisfactory academic progress. Students admitted to the Ph.D. program receive a five-year funding package that typically includes:

- Full tuition remission for required degree coursework
- A 9-month stipend
- Twelve months of health insurance

Tuition Remission

The Department covers up to 9 credits per semester (12 credits per semester in years 1 and 2 for clinical students) before candidacy. After advancement to candidacy, tuition is provided only for the minimum number of credits required to maintain full-time enrollment and satisfy Graduate School requirements.

These limits refer to the number of credits the Department will fund, not the number of credits students may enroll in.

Students supported through external fellowships or grants should verify tuition policies with their funding agency, as benefits vary. Tuition remission generally applies only to Graduate School courses. Students wishing to enroll in courses outside the Department should confirm that the course is approved as a Graduate School course; otherwise, they are responsible for the tuition.

Students are generally permitted to take no more than two courses outside the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience with approval from their primary advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. To obtain approval, students must discuss the course with their advisor and email the Director of Graduate Studies explaining why the course is important for their educational program.

Sources of Funding

Stipend and tuition support are provided through several funding mechanisms, as detailed in the funding contract provided to students before each semester. If a student's assignment is known for the entire academic year, a single contract covering both the fall and spring semesters may be issued at the beginning of the academic year. The available funding mechanisms are summarized in the table below.

Funding Sources for Graduate Students

Funding Mechanism	Typical Source	Work Expectations	Tuition Remission	Notes
Teaching Assistantship (TA)	Department	Approximately 20 hours/week of teaching-related duties	Yes	Includes teaching, grading, laboratory instruction, or other instructional responsibilities. Covered by the TUGSA contract unless designated as Direct Academic Benefit.
Research Assistantship (RA)	Faculty research grants or Department	Approximately 20 hours/week conducting research	Yes	Duties typically support faculty research. Some RA appointments qualify as Direct Academic Benefit when the work directly contributes to the student's dissertation or other degree requirements.
University Fellowship	Graduate School	No formal employment assignment	Yes	Students devote their time primarily to research and professional development. Fellowship

				recipients are expected to remain actively engaged in research throughout the fellowship period.
External Fellowship (e.g., NIH F31, NSF Graduate Research Fellowship)	Federal agencies	Full-time research training	Typically provided by the fellowship (policies vary)	Students should consult the funding agency regarding tuition, fees, employment restrictions, and reporting requirements. Students supported by these fellowships are generally expected to devote full-time effort to research.

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

Teaching Assistantships require an average commitment of 20 hours per week in addition to full-time graduate study and are appointed by the Dean upon recommendation of the Department. Most TA appointments do **not** qualify as Direct Academic Benefit.

Graduate Teaching Assistants must be competent to perform their assigned duties. If, at any time, a TA is unable, unwilling, or deemed incompetent to perform their assigned responsibilities, they must be replaced immediately. If the TA cannot be reassigned to other appropriate duties, the assistantship should be terminated. Any action to terminate a TA appointment that is governed by the TUGSA agreement must comply with the terms of the TUGSA contract.

Teaching Assistants participate in required instructional training and are supervised by faculty members. Graduate Assistants assigned to assist faculty members in teaching must attend at least one complete offering of the course in which they are assisting. This requirement may be limited to one semester for students who assist with the same course for more than one semester.

Teaching Assistants must be able to communicate effectively in English. All non-native speakers of English who are awarded Teaching Assistantships must be tested for English proficiency through procedures established by the Dean's Office in consultation with the Graduate Committee. Students who require additional training in English for effective teaching must complete the training program provided by the College to ensure English proficiency. Until the required level of proficiency has been achieved, their teaching duties must be limited to those determined by the director of the College's training program to be appropriate for their level of English proficiency. Graduate Assistants who are required to participate in English proficiency training but fail to make satisfactory progress will be ineligible for Teaching Assistantships until they have successfully completed the College's training program.

Teaching Assistants must normally remain in residence at Temple University during the entire period of their assistantship.

Research Assistantships (RA)

Before signing their RA contract, students should have a discussion with their RA supervisor regarding whether their work as an RA qualifies as “Direct Academic Benefit.” This decision should not be made by the student alone.

Some RA appointments qualify as Direct Academic Benefit because the work directly contributes to a student's dissertation, predissertation research, or academic training. These appointments are not covered by the Temple University Graduate Students' Association (TUGSA) collective bargaining agreement. Students whose assistantship provides Direct Academic Benefit must complete the required university documentation when signing their contract at the beginning of the semester or academic year. Research Assistantships positions that do not qualify as Direct Academic Benefit are governed by the TUGSA collective bargaining agreement, similar to TAs.

Research Assistants must normally remain in residence at Temple University during the entire period of their assistantship. However, with approval from the Department and the Dean's Office, RAs who must perform some of their research at another institution may continue their assistantships during a temporary absence from Temple University. Normally, such an absence may occur only once and may not extend beyond one-half of one semester. Exceptions may be approved when justified by the nature of the research duties.

Fellowships and Grants

Students supported through University Fellowships or external grants or fellowships are expected to participate actively in research throughout their graduate training. This work always qualifies as Direct Academic Benefit.

University Fellowships are generally awarded for two years through the Graduate School. During fellowship years, students devote their time primarily to research rather than assistantship duties. Fellowship-supported research activities are generally expected to require approximately twenty hours per week and will seldom involve fewer than ten hours per week. During years without fellowship support, funding typically consists of a Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship.

Recipients of external fellowships or grants (e.g., NIH F31 or NSF Graduate Research Fellowship) should follow all policies established by the funding agency regarding effort, employment, reporting requirements, and allowable activities.

Additional Employment

Students receiving university financial support through a fellowship or assistantship may not accept additional Temple employment during the academic year without prior approval from the Graduate School.

Students considering additional Temple employment should first discuss the proposed work with their faculty advisor and complete the required Graduate Student Request for Other Employment form through TUPortal. Requests should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies at least 21 days before the proposed employment start date.

Part-time employment outside Temple generally does not require approval, provided it does not interfere with academic progress or assistantship responsibilities.

Students supported through NIH or NSF fellowships are generally expected to devote full-time effort to their research training and should consult the terms of their award before accepting additional employment.

Leave of Absence and Funding

Students taking a leave of absence should understand that funding cannot automatically be deferred. Because departmental funding is allocated according to the annual funding matrix, a leave of absence may reduce the total number of years for which departmental funding is available.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, students re-enter the funding matrix based on their cohort year rather than the number of funded years previously received. Students returning after what would have been their fifth year in the program are considered outside the normal funding matrix.

Although the Department makes every effort to provide five years of support, funding beyond the standard funding period is considered on a case-by-case basis after funding commitments to students who remain within the active funding matrix have been met.

Travel Support

Graduate students are encouraged to present their research at professional conferences. Information regarding travel funding, application procedures, deadlines, and required forms is available on the Psychology Graduate Student Canvas site and through the College of Liberal Arts and the Graduate School.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete all degree requirements outlined in the Graduate Bulletin. There are separate pages for PhD in Psychology and the PhD in Psychology Neuroscience.

Psychology PhD - <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/scd/cla/psychology-phd/#programrequirements>

Psychology Neuroscience PhD - <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/scd/cla/psychology-neuroscience-phd/#admission>

General Requirements

Enrollment and Residency

Students must maintain full-time, continuous enrollment throughout the program, except during approved leaves of absence. A minimum residency requirement of **one year** must be fulfilled. (The minimum residency requirement for students in the Clinical Psychology area is **three years**.)

Timeframe for Degree Completion

All degree requirements must be completed within **seven years** of the student's first semester of full-time study in the Department unless an extension has been requested and approved.

Requests for extensions of time are reviewed by the Graduate School's **Graduate Committee Student Appeals Committee** and must comply with the guidelines published by the Graduate School. The **Extension of Time Request** form is available through **TUPortal** under **Student Tools** in the **University Forms** channel.

All requests for an extension submitted to the Graduate School must be accompanied by a plan of action that has been approved by the student's Doctoral Advisory Committee and approved in writing by the Director of Graduate Studies, the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Graduate Committee, and the Office of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Extensions are granted **one year at a time**. Students who receive a one-year extension and require additional time must submit a new petition to the Department Graduate Committee and the Graduate School for each subsequent extension.

Adherence to Ethical Standards

The Department of Psychology & Neuroscience subscribes in full to the professional ethics guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code.html>) and the Temple University Student Conduct Code (<https://www.temple.edu/secretary/sites/secretary/files/policies/03.70.12.pdf>) and expects all graduate students to comply with such guidelines in the conduct of research, teaching, or

clinical work. Knowing violation of these guidelines may constitute grounds for termination from the Graduate Program.

Academic Requirements

The table below summarizes the recommended academic milestones for students in the Developmental, Social, Cognition, and Neuroscience (DSCN) track.

	Expectations	Comments
Year 1	• Complete 2 graduate courses per semester (2 semesters of graduate statistics + 2 other graduate courses) • Develop and present an initial research project or proposal at an area meeting (check with your advisor/area director; expectations may differ across areas)	US Citizens and Permanent Residents should consider applying for an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship in the fall of Year 1 or 2.
Year 2	• Complete 2 graduate courses per semester • Present a poster/give a talk at a conference	
Year 3	• Complete (defend) preliminary exam by the end of this academic year • Submit a manuscript for publication • Present a poster/give a talk at a conference	US Citizens and Permanent Residents should consider applying for an F31.
Year 4	• Present a poster/give a talk at a conference • Present a completed "Pre-dissertation project" • Submit a manuscript for publication • Begin work on your dissertation proposal; by the end of the year, defend your proposal to your 3-person core committee	Consider applying for a university "dissertation completion grant" at the end of Y4.
Year 5	• Present a poster/give a talk at a conference • Submit a manuscript for publication • Prepare the written dissertation and orally defend your dissertation to your 6-person committee (core committee + readers)	Note: after Year 5 students are "out of matrix" and departmental funding (e.g. a TA contract) is not available. If you do not complete requirements within 5 years, you will need to secure your own funding through a grant/fellowship (e.g., F31) or some other source.

Students who do not meet these yearly expectations will receive a warning and may subsequently be placed on probation. Probation procedures outlined in the Graduate Handbook will be followed.

Students may choose to follow an accelerated timeline.

Coursework Requirements

Each Area of Specialization and the concentration in Quantitative Methods has specific coursework requirements as detailed in the Graduate Bulletin Pages:

Psychology PhD - <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/scd/cla/psychology-phd/#programrequirementstext>

Psychology Neuroscience PhD - <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/scd/cla/psychology-neuroscience-phd/#admissiontext>

Minimum grade requirements-The Psychology Department views a grade of B- as the minimally acceptable grade indicating satisfactory progress in graduate courses. No more than one grade lower than “B-” may be earned toward the degree in courses taken after acceptance into the program, and two grades below B- or one grade of F will be grounds for dismissal from the program. No candidate may graduate with a grade of I (incomplete) on their record. All graduate students must have at least a 3.0 grade-point average in order to receive the Ph.D.

Using Directed Readings to Meet Course Requirements - Any graduate student wishing to take a Directed Readings course for credit must submit a formal proposal to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval, including a detailed plan of study, before the beginning of the term in question. Directed readings courses count as electives but cannot be counted towards either the Neuroscience concentration or Quantitative specialization. The proposal should include the following: (a) a course title, (b) a statement of how the course fits into the student’s overall program of study (c) the name of the faculty member who has agreed to serve as mentor if the plan is approved, and (d) a one page contract signed by the student and faculty member that outlines the plan for the semester and the benchmarks on which they will be graded. A readings course provides an opportunity for a student to study a specialized topic not represented in the regular curriculum and unlikely to be presented in a topical seminar. Readings courses will be approved only when a coherent, specialized topic is being investigated, and when the course fills a gap in the curriculum. Readings course credit is not given for the initial exploration of a general area or for the exploratory reading that forms a typical part of the preparation for Dissertation or pre-Dissertation research proposals.

Transfer of Course Credits to meet Course Requirements -The Department of Psychology & Neuroscience and Graduate School permit transfer credits of no more than 9 course credits from either graduate level courses taken elsewhere or Temple courses taken prior to enrollment in the Ph.D. program. The “Transfer of Graduate Credit Request” is available in the University forms channel on TUPortal.

Transfer of credits is evaluated by the Dean of the Graduate School on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the appropriate Department Chair, Area Director, or Director of Graduate Studies. Individual Areas of Specialization may impose more stringent — but not less stringent — requirements than those imposed by the Graduate School. Below are the policies concerning transfer credits:

1. While we permit students to satisfy, by examination, particular program requirements that are typically satisfied through coursework, passing such examinations does not result in course credit. The advantage of fulfilling program requirements through examination is that of greater flexibility in the selection of courses.
2. A student enrolled in the Graduate Program in Psychology may transfer up to 9 credit hours of course credit for graduate courses taken elsewhere. To be so approved, those courses must be deemed appropriate to stand as part of the student's training in the Ph.D. program, and the student must have received a grade of B- or higher in the course(s). Students wishing to transfer course credits taken elsewhere will have to provide syllabi and other supporting documents describing the courses and transcript(s).
3. Students should consult with their mentors regarding courses that they would like to transfer. Students should determine which courses offered at Temple are similar to the courses to be transferred (course numbers can be found at <https://bulletin.temple.edu/courses/psy/> beginning at 8011). Students then provide the syllabus and appropriate course number to the relevant Area Director who will determine whether the course under consideration is sufficiently similar to courses offered in the Department; this decision is made in consultation with Area faculty who typically teach courses that are similar to the proposed transfer courses. I
4. If approved by the Area, the Director of Graduate Studies will review the syllabus and consult with the Graduate Committee as needed. Syllabi and transcripts reflecting the grades in the transfer courses must be submitted with the request to transfer courses, which can be found on TUPortal under "Student Tools;" scroll to the bottom of the page to the University Forms channel (center column), to Ms. Vanessa Allen-Smith.

Enrollment in Graduate Courses - All graduate courses in the Department are open to all graduate students in the Department who are in good standing unless otherwise noted. Courses involving direct clinical contact with clients, instruction in the practice of psychotherapy, or the discussion of confidential case material are open only to students enrolled in the Clinical Area. Courses involving the teaching of clinical assessment procedures are open to DSCN track students only by permission of the instructor.

All non-matriculated students must obtain the permission of the course instructor (or designee) in order to register for any graduate course in the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience. Most PhD courses are not open to non-matriculated students and are open to non-psychology Ph.D. students only with instructor's permission. Students not matriculated at Temple University are allowed to take a total of not more than three graduate courses in the Department except in rare instances, as approved by the Department Chair.

Dropping/Adding or Withdrawal from Graduate Courses - Keeping in mind the requirements for maintaining full-time status, students needing to modify their course roster should follow procedures outlined by the Registrar's office for dropping/adding a course and withdrawal from a course (<http://www.temple.edu/registrar/>). The Registrar's Office makes available an

academic calendar that includes the relevant deadlines: <http://www.temple.edu/registrar/documents/calendars/>

Auditing Courses - student may audit a course with the written permission of the instructor at the time of registration. For this purpose, a Special Approval Form must be signed by the instructor and submitted along with a Registration/Schedule Revision Form. The student must register for the course and pay the regular per-credit fee. The registration for any course may not be changed from audit to credit or vice versa after the second week of classes during the Fall or Spring term or after the first three days of classes during the Summer sessions. Audited courses do not meet prerequisite or graduation requirements.

Research Requirements

See research credit requirements in the Bulletin and in the Table above (A summary of academic expectations in the DSCN Track). Below are more details for each requirement.

Pre-dissertation research project

Clinical students should refer to the Clinical Area Handbook for specific instructions. For DSCN students this project should be completed in the first year and be developed in collaboration with the advisor. At the end of the 1st year students will present a project. The quality of the project must be such that, assuming the data are not equivocal, it can be submitted to a research journal at some point in time. These presentations will normally be made during the area meetings and must be presented to the advisor for the researcher's project and two other faculty members from within the program (at minimum). Continuation in the graduate program is contingent on successfully presenting this project.

Preliminary exam

Must be completed by the end of the 3rd year (i.e., the student's 6th semester) for DSCN students (clinical students should refer to the clinical area handbook for instructions on the preliminary exam and details regarding due date). The preliminary examination paper and oral exam are designed to assess students' progress, ability to synthesize material relevant to their area of research, and ability to effectively communicate the information both in writing and orally.

The preliminary exam will be a paper chosen from one of two models: A synthesis of existing research literature or a development of a theoretical approach to a problem. Typically, the paper is related to the dissertation, and the topic and scope is developed with guidance from the primary advisor and advisory committee. The paper is part of the exam process and thus must be written independently, without feedback from faculty or students. A target length for the preliminary exam paper is 40 double-spaced pages. Students should schedule an oral presentation and defense of their preliminary paper, as detailed elsewhere in this Handbook.

Doctoral Advisory Committee is typically formed when the student is working on the Preliminary exam and typically remains constant for the Dissertation proposal and Dissertation defense. The student initiates the committee formation process by selecting a Doctoral Advisory Committee chairperson, typically the mentor or major advisor. The candidate, in

consultation with the Committee chairperson, will select the remaining Doctoral Advisory Committee members. The student presents their preliminary exam to this committee, which also supervises the development of and approves the Dissertation Proposal and oversees the Dissertation research (described below). It is not necessary to form a Doctoral Advisory Committee until the student is ready to begin work on the Preliminary Examination and/or Dissertation Proposal.

Preparing for the Preliminary Examination Meeting - Students must provide their Doctoral Advisory Committee their full written document at least 2 weeks (10 business days) prior to the oral defense. Guidelines for the oral defense are the same as those for the dissertation defense – a short presentation of the materials is followed by questions and generally last 1-2 hours. The acceptability of the Preliminary Examination and its oral defense shall be determined by the Doctoral Advisory Committee. A student whose Preliminary Examination or defense is not acceptable may retake the examination, although the defense in whole or in part cannot be re-taken more than once.

Upon passing the examination, the “Preliminary Examination Report for Doctoral Students” is signed by the Committee members. Upon review by the department Chairperson or Director of Graduate Studies, the “Preliminary Examination Report for Doctoral Students” is submitted to the College of Liberal Arts. The form is available through TUPortal under “Student Tools,” scroll to the bottom of the page to the University Forms channel (center column). See the checklist of required forms below.

DSCN students who do not complete their preliminary exam by the end of their 3rd year may be placed on probation if deemed necessary by the DSCN faculty.

CHECKLIST OF FORMS FOR THE PRELIM AND DISSERTATION

#	WHEN TO COMPLETE	FORM TO COMPLETE	CHECK WHEN COMPLETED
1	 After passing the preliminary exam	 Preliminary Examination Report for Doctoral Students	☐
2	 Within 30 days of successful completion of the dissertation PROPOSAL	 Dissertation Proposal Transmittal for Elevation to Candidacy along with evidence of IRB approval	☐
3	 15 days before Dissertation Oral Defense Exam	 Announcement of Oral Defense Form	☐
4	 After the dissertation oral defense	 Final Examination Report for Doctoral Candidates	☐
ADDITIONAL FORMS (NOT REQUIRED FOR ALL)			
5	 Before Proposal or Oral Defense Exam	 Nomination for Service on Doctoral Committee	☐
6	 After Proposal meeting	 Request for Change in Dissertation Committee Form	☐

Dissertation Proposal and Proposal Meeting

A written proposal for the Dissertation research must be presented to the student's Doctoral Advisory Committee during a proposal meeting. The Dissertation Proposal and meeting must be successfully completed by the end of the 4th year.

Guidelines for preparing the Proposal Document- The proposal literature review should be succinct and directly related to the study being proposed (a broader review of the literature is not required). The proposal should include a list of hypotheses to be tested. There may be exploratory analyses. The proposal should also include a section on the data analytic plan that fully details the proposed analyses to be undertaken in the evaluation of the study hypotheses. This section might be substantially more detailed than would appear in a journal article. Students who do not complete their dissertation proposal by the end of their 4th year may be placed on probation if deemed necessary by the faculty.

The Dissertation Proposal is meant to be an agreement by the student and the committee on what will be done prior to the final Dissertation Oral Defense.

Guidelines for the Proposal Meeting - Students must provide their Doctoral Advisory Committee their full written document at least 2 weeks (10 business days) prior to the proposal meeting. The acceptability of the Dissertation Proposal and its oral defense shall be determined by the Doctoral Advisory Committee. Students will often have to make edits to their document following the defense.

In some cases, the Committee may choose to defer approval of the proposal until the requested edits have been made. Substantive changes to the proposed research that are being considered after approval of the dissertation proposal must be communicated to the committee for their approval. As stated, the dissertation proposal occurs after the student has passed the Preliminary Examination.

Proposal Paperwork for the Graduate School - Within 30 days of successful completion of the proposal meeting, the student must submit the Dissertation Proposal Transmittal for Elevation to Candidacy form found in TU Portal.

Composition of the Doctoral Advisory Committee (Core Committee) - The Doctoral Advisory Committee (also known as the Core Committee) consists of three graduate faculty members with either primary or secondary appointments in Temple University Department of Psychology & Neuroscience. Any student who wishes to form a committee whose composition differs from these requirements must receive approval from the Psychology Department Graduate Committee and the Dean of the Graduate School. The composition of each student's Doctoral Advisory Committee must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Prior to the preliminary exam meeting, students must have the DGS sign their preliminary exam form.

Appointments of non-Temple faculty members to a Doctoral Advisory Committee must be approved by the Graduate School in writing using the "Nomination for Service on Doctoral Committees" form. This form may be found on TUPortal under "Student Tools" tab in the

University Forms channel. See below for additional requirements for faculty outside of Temple University.

Once the Doctoral Advisory Committee has been formed, it should not be changed except in rare circumstances (e.g., a committee member withdraws). All changes in committee composition must be approved in writing by the Chair of the Department or the Director of Graduate Studies using the "Change in Dissertation Committee Request" form. This form may be found in TUPortal under "Student Tools" tab in the University Forms channel.

Final (Completed) Dissertation Document and Oral Dissertation Defense (also called Dissertation Defense or Oral Examination)

After you have completed your proposed dissertation, you must write up your results and a discussion in a final dissertation document and present the study to a committee in a meeting called the Oral Dissertation Defense.

The format of the Dissertation must follow the format approved by the Graduate School. For information on formatting, please see:

<https://grad.temple.edu/resources/dissertation-thesis-handbook>

Composition of the Oral Dissertation Defense Committee- The Dissertation Defense Committee conducts the Oral Defense meeting described below. The Dissertation Defense Committee consists of the three members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee plus three additional faculty members who serve as Readers of the dissertation (minimum of six committee members). One of these Readers must be an external member from either outside the student's Area.

External readers can include individuals from outside the department or even outside of Temple University. However, Temple faculty members who are not designated as graduate faculty in the Graduate Bulletin and anyone outside of Temple must meet specific requirements and be approved in writing to be allowed to serve on the Dissertation Defense Committee. To check whether faculty are designated as Temple University Graduate Faculty (see the current Graduate Faculty listing at: <https://bulletin.temple.edu/faculty/>). If they are not included in the list, then they must be approved in writing using the **Nomination for Service on Doctoral Committees** form (available through TUPortal under **Student Tools** in the **University Forms** channel). Submit the form along with the proposed committee member's curriculum vitae (CV) to Vanessa for signatures and processing. The **Nomination for Service on Doctoral Committees** form and CV is also required for any non-Temple faculty member on the Dissertation Defense Committee.

Each Dissertation Defense Committee may include only **one designated external reader** from outside Temple University. However, up to **two committee members** may be from outside the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience, provided that the majority of committee members remain faculty with primary or secondary appointments in the Department.

Exceptions to this policy may be requested. Students seeking an exception must email the Director of Graduate Studies **before scheduling the defense** and provide a clear rationale explaining why additional expertise cannot be obtained from Temple faculty.

Timeline for the Oral Dissertation Defense - Scheduling your Dissertation Oral Defense as early as possible is critical for meeting Graduate School deadlines. The Dissertation Oral Defense must be scheduled at least two weeks before the deadline for uploading the final defended dissertation to ProQuest. These deadlines are typically three weeks before graduation.

Current deadlines are available in the Graduate School Academic Calendar:

<https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/academic-calendar/>

Your dissertation advisor must approve the completed written dissertation at least **six weeks** prior to the scheduled Oral Dissertation Defense Meeting. Although six weeks represents the minimum time required, additional time may be necessary depending on the extent of revisions requested by the committee.

After your advisor's approval, the dissertation is then distributed to the Doctoral Advisory Committee, whose members are given a minimum of **two weeks (10 business days)** to review and comment on the document. The candidate should complete any revisions requested by members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee within **two weeks**.

Once the Doctoral Advisory Committee has approved the written dissertation, it is distributed to the remaining members of the Dissertation Committee, who should be given at least **two weeks (10 business days)** to review the document before the Oral Dissertation Defense Meeting.

Dissertation Oral Defense Timeline

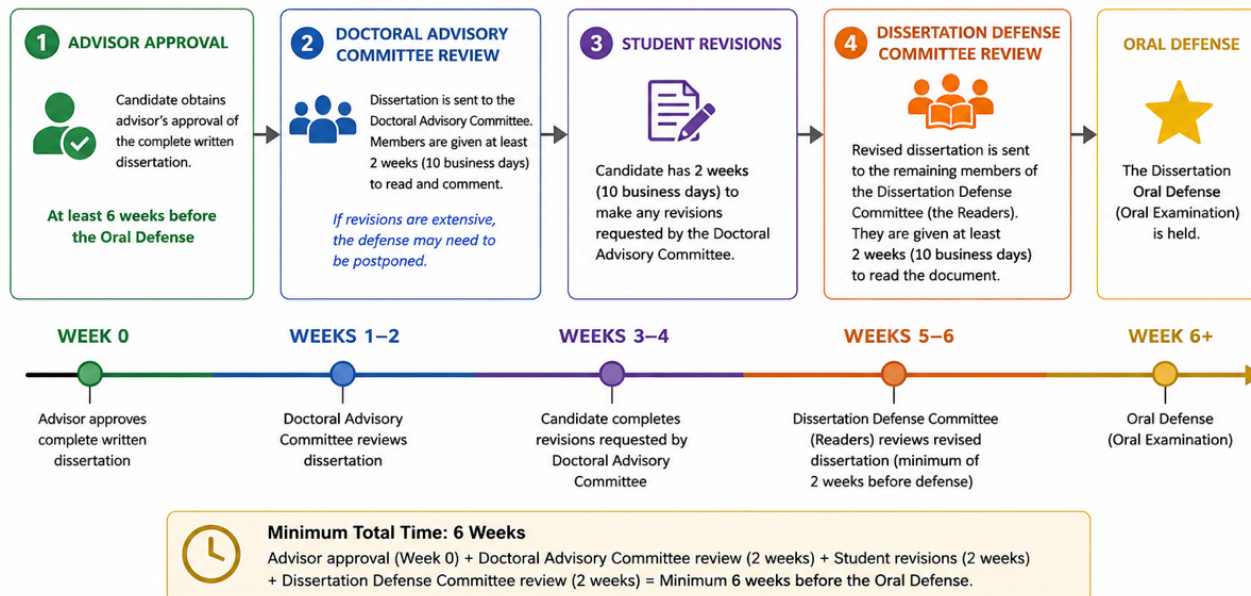
Minimum Time Required: Six Weeks from Advisor Approval to Oral Defense



Schedule your Oral Defense at least 2 weeks before the deadline for uploading defended dissertations to ProQuest.

Deadlines are typically 3 weeks before graduation. See current dates:

<https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/academic-calendar/>



Dissertation Oral Defense Meeting Procedures – The Oral Examination should be accompanied by presentation slides. The presentation should be approximately **20–30 minutes** in length. Faculty members will ask questions throughout the presentation, and the total examination typically lasts **1–2 hours**. Students should reserve a room for **2 hours**.

The Dissertation Oral Defense meeting is run by the Dissertation Examining Chair and not the Dissertation Advisor.

- **Dissertation Advisor** (i.e., Chair of the Doctoral Advisory Committee) – The faculty member who supervised the student's research and dissertation. This person is not in charge of running the Defense meeting.
- **Dissertation Examining Chair**- The Dissertation Oral Defense is chaired by a member of the Dissertation Defense Committee other than the Chair of the Doctoral Advisory Committee (i.e., the dissertation advisor). The Chair of the Dissertation Defense Committee is responsible for calling the meeting to order and overseeing the examination process. When submitting the final defense paperwork, students should ensure that the individual designated as Chair of the Oral Defense is **not** the Chair of their Doctoral Advisory Committee.

Graduate School/Paperwork Requirements for the Dissertation Defense Meeting- The Graduate School requires a minimum of **15 days' advance notice** to schedule Dissertation Oral Defense Examinations. Accordingly, students must notify the Psychology Department Graduate

Coordinator **at least 30 days** before the scheduled defense date to allow sufficient time for the Department to submit the required paperwork to the Graduate School and distribute the announcement of the oral defense. The **Announcement of Oral Defense** form is available through **TUPortal** under **Student Tools** in the **University Forms** channel.

The Graduate School will not approve Dissertation Oral Defenses that do not meet these scheduling requirements. Students should also schedule the Dissertation Oral Defense **at least two weeks before** the Graduate School deadline for uploading the final defended dissertation to ProQuest to allow sufficient time for revisions.

Evaluation of the Dissertation Defense- The oral defense constitutes the final doctoral examination. A student will either **pass** or **fail** the oral defense.

A student will not pass the oral defense if **more than one member** of the Dissertation Defense Committee votes against passage. The Dissertation Defense Committee may identify deficiencies in one or more of the following areas:

Research quality. The research methods, analyses, or theoretical framework do not meet acceptable standards of scholarship. This may require additional research, analyses, or writing. At the committee's discretion, an additional oral defense may be required.

Presentation of the dissertation. The student has not adequately analyzed or presented the material. The committee may require another examination meeting or may grant a conditional pass. If the dissertation is passed conditionally, the committee will provide written documentation describing the conditions that must be satisfied for final approval, including, if necessary, an additional oral defense.

Oral defense performance. Although the written dissertation is acceptable, the student's oral defense is judged to be inadequate. In this case, the student must complete a second oral defense before the same committee. The second defense must occur within **90 days** of the original defense.

After completing the defense, the student must submit the **Final Examination Report for Doctoral Candidates** form, which is available through the **University Forms** channel on TUPortal.

Visitor Guidelines for Oral Dissertation Defense Meeting - All faculty members and graduate students in the Department are invited to attend the Dissertation Oral Defense. Oral defenses are also open to members of the Temple University academic community. If an individual outside the Temple University academic community wishes to attend as a guest, the Dissertation Defense Committee is responsible for determining the appropriateness of the request and making the final decision.

Members of the Temple academic community are welcome to attend doctoral dissertation defenses. Friends and family of the candidate are also welcome to attend, if room capacity permits. By allowing visitors to attend, the Department seeks to maintain a respectful,

professional, and supportive environment for the candidate while preserving the integrity of the academic examination.

Following the student's presentation, audience members may be invited to ask questions at the discretion of the faculty member chairing the defense. Questions should be relevant to the dissertation topic, and the Chair of the Dissertation Defense has the authority to limit or conclude audience questions at any time.

Visitors will be asked to leave the room during the committee's discussion with the candidate and during the committee's final deliberations.

Scheduling Rooms for Oral Defense Meeting (Preliminary Examinations, Dissertation Proposals and Dissertation Defenses). - See the Meeting Room Reservation information on the Graduate Student Canvas page for information on reserving a room. Students should reserve the space for a total of 2 hours.

Filing Your Final Dissertation Document – After your Oral Defense Meeting you will finalize your dissertation document and then send it to the grad school for formatting review and filing. The final, formatted document must be uploaded to ProQuest. As noted earlier, Guidelines for formatting can be found in the Graduate School's Dissertation and Thesis Handbook: [https://grad.temple.edu/sites/grad/files/media/document/Dissertation%20and%20Thesis%20Handbook%202024-2025%20\(1\).pdf](https://grad.temple.edu/sites/grad/files/media/document/Dissertation%20and%20Thesis%20Handbook%202024-2025%20(1).pdf)

There are important deadlines regarding the filing of the final dissertation and the timing of graduation that are noted in the Graduate School Academic Calendar: <https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/academic-calendar/>

STUDENT STATUS DESIGNATIONS

All students in the program must meet the requirements for **full-time student status**. The requirements for maintaining full-time status change as students progress through the program and complete major milestones. Because student status changes over time, certain administrative policies, including course enrollment requirements and tuition remission, also change.

There are **three stages** of student status:

1. Prior to completing the Preliminary Examination
2. After completing the Preliminary Examination but before advancement to candidacy
3. After advancement to doctoral candidacy

Prior to Completing the Preliminary Examination

- To maintain full-time status, recipients of Graduate School Fellowships must be enrolled in the number of credits required to make satisfactory progress in the program until all required coursework has been completed.
- To maintain full-time status, graduate students holding an assistantship that requires at least **20 hours of service per week** must be enrolled in **at least 6 credit hours** until all required coursework has been completed.
- Students who have completed all required coursework and are preparing for the Preliminary Examination may maintain full-time status by enrolling in **at least one credit hour of PSY 9994 – Preliminary Examination Preparation**.

After Completing the Preliminary Examination but Before Advancement to Candidacy

Students who have successfully completed the Preliminary Examination but have **not yet advanced to candidacy** (i.e., students who have completed all coursework, but whose Dissertation Proposal has not yet been approved) may maintain full-time status by enrolling in **at least one credit hour of PSY 9998 – Dissertation Proposal/Candidacy**.

After Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy

After completing all required coursework and predissertation requirements, students are **advanced (or elevated) to doctoral candidacy** and are formally recognized as doctoral candidates.

A student is advanced to candidacy after:

1. Successfully defending the Preliminary Examination;
2. Receiving approval of the Dissertation Proposal from the Doctoral Advisory Committee;
3. Submitting the research protocol to the appropriate Temple University **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** or **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**, when applicable; and
4. Completing all required didactic coursework.

Students may be advanced to candidacy while IRB or IACUC approval is still pending. However, the approved Dissertation Proposal and the approved IRB or IACUC documentation (when applicable) must be submitted to the Graduate School within **30 days** of the proposal's approval by the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

The **Dissertation Proposal Transmittal Form for Elevation to Candidacy** is available through **TUPortal** under **Student Tools** in the **University Forms** channel.

- Students who have advanced to candidacy (i.e., completed all coursework, passed the Preliminary Examination, and had their Dissertation Proposal approved) maintain full-time status by enrolling in **at least one credit hour of PSY 9999 – Doctoral Dissertation** during the dissertation phase of the program.
- Students who have advanced to candidacy should **not** enroll in **PSY 9991 (Research)** or any additional coursework unless specifically approved.

Other Considerations

- International students may maintain full-time status by completing the **Confirmation of Full-Time Status** form, obtaining their advisor's signature, and submitting the form to the **Office of International Services (OIS)**. The form is available through the **University Forms** channel in TUPortal.
- **Grades in PSY 9994, PSY 9998, and PSY 9999:** If a student does not complete the required milestone during the semester in which they are enrolled in one of these courses, they will receive a grade of **R (Registered)** and must enroll in the course again during a subsequent semester. Once the milestone is completed, a grade will be assigned only for the semester in which the requirement is completed. The **R** grade from the previous semester will remain on the transcript but will not be included in the calculation of the student's GPA. This policy applies equally to **PSY 9994, PSY 9998, and PSY 9999**.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Feedback from Faculty Regarding Progress

Feedback is provided in the form of grades for coursework, comments from meetings with faculty advisors, and formal written feedback each year.

Coursework - The possible grades for graduate courses are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, R and F. The grade of D is not used at the graduate level. In cases where letter grades are inappropriate and a pass/fail system is implemented, the letter "P" will be used for passing, and "F" for failing. More than two grades below B-, or one grade of F, will constitute grounds for termination from the Graduate Program.

Meetings with Faculty Advisors - Students must have a primary doctoral advisor who has a primary appointment in the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience. By the end of their first year, students must choose a secondary mentor. Students shall meet with their primary advisor regularly and their secondary advisor and Doctoral Advisory Committee, once formed, at least annually. The student is responsible for convening such meetings.

Formal Written Feedback after Full Faculty Meeting – The faculty shall meet formally every semester to evaluate each of their students. The emphasis of the evaluation is on pooling

information and ideas on outstanding accomplishments, achievements, problem areas, and general progress toward fulfilling the Ph.D. requirements. Information shall be provided by the student's primary advisor and other faculty members with direct knowledge of the student's performance. Students who wish to contribute information concerning their progress may do so.

Written feedback based on the faculty discussion shall be provided to each student on at least an annual basis. Such feedback shall provide information on problematic and/or commendable performance in graduate study and indicate whether the student is making satisfactory progress toward the Degree.

Current student records and alumni records are housed on a shared network drive to which only program faculty and select staff can access. All student records are kept at least 15 years after graduation given the potential need to find information in the future for licensure. Because the records are stored on a private network folder where access can be limited, all information is confidential.

Unsatisfactory Progress

In cases where the Graduate Area faculty believe that a student's work or progress is unsatisfactory, the letter shall specify areas of deficiency, suggest a timetable and standards for subsequent evaluation of the student's performance and progress, and specify the possible consequences of failure to satisfy those recommendations. In the Clinical Area, this will be accompanied by a "Letter of Concern" by the DCST and will also include (in addition to the specific areas that need to be addressed) specific steps needed to remedy the situation and a request that the student meet with their faculty mentor to develop a specific plan for such remediation.

Academic Probation- In cases in which the graduate faculty determine that a student's progress is especially worrisome, and where termination from the program seems to be a possible course of action, the student may be placed on probation. The student shall be notified in writing of such action, and the letter shall explicitly note deficiencies in the student's performance that led to the student's being placed on probation. The letter shall also state the accomplishments the student must demonstrate to return to good standing. If, after one semester of probation, a student's progress continues to be unsatisfactory, probation may be continued or a warning of termination shall be communicated to the student in writing. If, after one semester following a warning of termination, a student's progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the faculty in the student's Area of Specialization may recommend termination from the program. A student who has received a warning of termination should understand what actions they must take to remedy their situation. If there is doubt, the student's advisor should be consulted for clarification. A student may appeal a formal action by meeting with the faculty in order to ask questions, present evidence of satisfactory progress, or provide any

other information that in the student's view might lead to a more accurate assessment and convince the faculty to reverse or alter the previous decision.

Termination - Recommendations for student termination shall be directed to the Graduate Committee, which will ensure that appropriate departmental procedures have been followed, will vote on Area faculty recommendations, and, in cases in which termination is recommended, notify the Graduate School of such action.

Policy Regarding Plagiarism

The Department of Psychology & Neuroscience adheres to the policies of the College of Liberal Arts regarding the definition and appropriate response to plagiarism by graduate students. According to college guidelines, plagiarism includes (1) direct quotation or paraphrasing, or use of a structure of ideas, without proper credit (in general, presenting the work of others as one's own); (2) turning in a paper or other written assignment all or part of which has been copied from a print source, downloaded from the Internet, copied from other student papers, or bought from a term paper mill; and (3) turning in the same paper for two courses without receiving approval in advance.

Graduate students are expected to familiarize themselves, as well, with appropriate APA procedures for the citation of work written or conducted by others. An example of a questionable practice is the paraphrasing of a cited source that comes too close to the original language. In these situations, the main consideration is whether the student's act was done with the intent to deceive the reader. Repeated instances of sloppy citation or inappropriate paraphrasing may, under some circumstances, be treated as plagiarism.

If a faculty member suspects that a graduate student has committed plagiarism, the student shall be notified immediately. If, after discussing the matter with the student (to ascertain "intent to deceive"), the faculty member believes that plagiarism has been committed, the Chair of the department shall be notified. The Chair, in consultation with the faculty member, and the student's Area Director, will determine the appropriate response, which may include an academic sanction (e.g., a grade of F in the course), a disciplinary sanction (e.g., referral to the University Disciplinary Committee, the Graduate School, or the Department Graduate Committee), or both. In general, the Psychology Graduate Committee recommends that a student who has committed plagiarism be issued a grade of F in the course, which, under rules described in this handbook, is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.

Policy Regarding use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.)

Graduate students are expected to follow the APA professional standards for generative AI. As A.I. is an evolving technology, we suggest you monitor the guidelines as they are likely to change. It is important to recognize that feeding data into a third-party app should not be done without permission of your advisor as there could be privacy issues to consider. If you do use

A.I. for any aspect of your work products as part of the PhD program (i.e. preliminary exam, proposal, dissertation, manuscripts), you must disclose this in the methods or acknowledgements section and should discuss this with your advisor ahead of time.

Evaluation of TA/RAs with Non-Direct Academic Benefit

Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Research Assistants (RAs) whose appointments do **not** qualify as Direct Academic Benefit are expected to perform their assigned responsibilities in a professional, competent, and timely manner.

Supervising faculty are responsible for monitoring assistantship performance and providing feedback throughout the appointment. Performance may be evaluated on factors including reliability, professionalism, quality of work, communication, adherence to assigned responsibilities, and compliance with Departmental and University policies.

The Department maintains documentation of TA/RA performance. These records may be reviewed if concerns arise regarding a TA/RA's performance or competence, including concerns raised through student complaints or faculty observations.

TA/RAs are expected to be familiar with and comply with all applicable Department, College, and University policies relevant to their responsibilities. These include, but are not limited to, policies regarding grading, attendance, course withdrawals, academic integrity and plagiarism, research involving human participants, the Privacy Act (FERPA), and other policies governing teaching and research activities. Graduate Assistants are responsible for reviewing all materials and guidance provided by the Department and the University.

The Department maintains records of all assistantship appointments and reports appointment information to the Dean's Office as required for university monitoring and compliance in line with TUGA policies.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The Department of Psychology and Neuroscience is committed to resolving student concerns in a fair, timely, and constructive manner. Students are encouraged to address concerns as early as possible through informal discussion whenever appropriate.

Grievances Related to Departmental Policies

1. Students with concerns regarding a general Department policy should first present the issue to the appropriate Department committee or to the Graduate Committee.

2. If the concern is not resolved, the Department Chair will appoint a Grievance Committee. The committee will gather information from the student and the appropriate Department committee, review the issue, and submit a written report and recommendations to the Department faculty for consideration. The student will be kept informed of the progress of the grievance.

Grievances Related to Individual Faculty Members

1. Students who have a concern regarding a specific faculty member should first make every reasonable effort to resolve the matter directly with that faculty member. Students who would like assistance during this process are encouraged to consult their faculty advisor, secondary advisor, and/or Area Director. Additional information is available through the College of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Grievance Procedures.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved through direct discussion, the student should meet with the Department Chair or the Director of Graduate Studies. Based on discussions with both the student and the faculty member, the Chair or Director of Graduate Studies will attempt to facilitate a resolution and may make recommendations to both parties.
3. If either party is not satisfied with the proposed resolution, the Department Chair will appoint a Grievance Committee to review the matter and recommend a resolution.
4. If the Grievance Committee is unable to resolve the matter, or if the faculty member chooses not to accept the Committee's recommendations, the Committee will submit a written report of its deliberations to the Graduate Committee.

Student Rights

Although students are encouraged to use the Department's grievance procedures whenever appropriate, they are not required to do so. Students retain the right to file grievances directly through the appropriate College or University procedures.

Additional information is available through the following University resources:

- **College of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Grievance Procedures:**
<https://liberalarts.temple.edu/about-us/resources/graduate-students/graduate-student-grievance-procedure>
- **Graduate School Appeals and Due Process Policies:**
<https://bulletin.temple.edu/graduate/graduate-policies/#appealstext>
- **Graduate School Student Rights and Responsibilities:**
<https://grad.temple.edu/resources/policies-procedures>
- **Temple University Non-Discrimination Policy:**
<https://www.thefire.org/sites/default/files/2003/02/30121045/04.81.11.pdf>
- **Temple University Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Statement:**
https://diversity.temple.edu/sites/diversity/files/TEMPLEUNIVERSITYNONDISCRIMINATION_rev021417.pdf

Exceptions to Department Regulations

Students may petition the Graduate Committee for any matter. A petition is required for requests involving deviations from Department regulations or in any instance in which this Handbook specifies that a petition is necessary.

No special petition form is required. Instead, students should submit an email to the Director of Graduate Studies clearly describing the request and the rationale for it. The student's faculty mentor should be copied on the email to acknowledge awareness of the petition.

Students wishing to submit a petition to the Graduate School should obtain the appropriate forms through the **University Forms** channel in **TUPortal**.

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AI was used to generate the figures included in this handbook.

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