

**GRADUATE STUDIES
IN
EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

The University of Alabama
in Huntsville



2008 – 2009

Department of Psychology

WELCOME

The Psychology Department of The University of Alabama in Huntsville is pleased to introduce you to the graduate program in Experimental Psychology. We hope that this guide will help you explore the many opportunities we can provide for your graduate education. This guide is also designed to answer questions you may have about earning a Master's degree in Psychology from UAH. If you have additional questions regarding the program, please feel free to contact:

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The UAH Psychology department is a small, cohesive department with a focus on Experimental psychology. We offer coursework at both the Bachelor's and Master's level that is oriented toward scientifically understanding the bases of behavior. Our research interests cover the primary components of experimental psychology, including developmental, social, cognitive, biopsychology, personality, and applied experimental psychology. We pride ourselves on being a department that interacts with our students, both undergraduate and graduate, while maintaining a strong focus on experimental research. Students are strongly encouraged to become involved with faculty research from the very beginning of their graduate careers.

The focus of the Department of Psychology is threefold: teaching, scholarship, and service. Consequently, the mission of the department centers upon development of students, development of faculty and scholarly activities, and service to scholarly and professional societies as well as to appropriate communities, including those within UAH.

The Department of Psychology supports the Mission of the College of Liberal Arts in a variety of ways. We provide close interactions between teachers and learners in our seminar courses, as well as in our research courses and internship opportunities. The Department of Psychology encourages personal and professional growth in its promotion of students' career exploration, knowledge acquisition, skill development (i.e., critical thinking, technical writing, oral communication, and statistical analyses), and valuation of diversity.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

The University of Alabama in Huntsville, founded in 1950, is an autonomous Ph.D. granting campus of The University of Alabama System dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and service. UAH serves 7,000 graduate and undergraduate students from around the nation and the world. The University is located in Huntsville, Alabama, a thriving, high-tech city of 170,000 located in northern Alabama at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Students are accepted into the graduate program during the fall and spring semesters. The typical full-time course load for graduate students is 9 hours per semester. Applications from students with Bachelor's degrees in areas other than psychology are accepted, pending departmental approval. In these cases, some undergraduate courses in psychology may be required prior to unconditional acceptance into the graduate program.

To be admitted unconditionally into the graduate program in psychology, students must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Have a minimum GPA of 3.25 in undergraduate courses, or a minimum of 3.25 for the last 60 hours of coursework.
2. Have a minimum combined score of 1000 on the verbal and quantitative portions of the GRE. The psychology GRE is not required for admission to the program.
3. Submit 3 strong letters of recommendation, at least one of which is submitted from a psychology faculty member. Ideally, all three letters will be from faculty members.
4. Submit a statement of intent for graduate study, indicating why would want to pursue a Master's degree in our department.
5. Submit a writing sample from undergraduate or previous graduate work, preferably empirical research in the form of a lab report.

International students whose native language is not English must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and score at least 500. In addition, international students must apply for admission to the program a minimum of 4 months prior to expected attendance date.

Students who do not meet these criteria, in special circumstances, may be admitted conditionally to the program with departmental approval. Conditional admittance requires both departmental approval and approval from the graduate dean. Students who are admitted conditionally must maintain a 3.0 average for the first 12 hours of graduate work. They must also satisfy any specific conditions of admittance during the first semester (e.g., re-taking the GRE to achieve acceptable scores). If students successfully meet this requirement, their status converts to unconditional admittance after 12 hours of graduate work. If students fail to meet the minimum GPA requirement, they will be dismissed from the UAH Psychology graduate program.

More information about graduate studies at UAH, including links to the UAH Graduate Student Handbook, is available at <http://www.uah.edu/HTML/Academics/Grad>.

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT FACULTY

SANDRA L. CARPENTER (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1983), Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology. Dr. Carpenter's research interests include cross-cultural comparisons and how team dynamics impact team performance. Her work has been published in *Social Cognition*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Journal of Social Issues*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, and *Teaching of Psychology*. She teaches graduate courses in the psychology of women and cross-cultural psychology.

JEFFREY S. NEUSCHATZ (Ph.D., SUNY-Binghamton, 1999), Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Neuschatz studies the development and influence of false memories. Various projects have concerned the pervasiveness of these memories, their impact on decision-making, and their relation to other cognitive phenomena. His work appears in *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review*, *Memory*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, and *Journal of Memory and Language*. Dr. Neuschatz won a UAH foundation award for research in 2003. He teaches graduate courses in cognition, forensics, and statistics.

JODI PRICE (Ph.D., Georgia Institute of Technology, 2008), Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Price is an experimental psychologist with research interests in meta-cognition and knowledge acquisition. She studies how learning occurs in both college and senior citizen populations. She has one co-authored publication in *Developmental Psychology* and one chapter on problem-solving in an edited volume. She will teach courses in Lifespan, Development, and Meta-cognition in Learning.

AURORA TORRES (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, 1987), Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Torres is a biopsychologist who studies changes in cardiovascular responses to stress. She is also an adjunct faculty member in the department of Biological Sciences, and teaches several courses that are cross-listed between that department and psychology. Her research appears in *Behavioral Neuroscience*, *Physiology and Behavior*, *Pediatric Research*, and *American Journal of Physiology*. She teaches graduate courses in stress and illness, psychopharmacology, and brain and behavior.

ERIC SEEMANN (Ph.D., Louisiana Tech University, 2003), Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Seemann's research focuses on the description, measurement, and application of psychological constructs such as personality and cognitive ability (IQ). His research appears in such journals as *Personality and Individual Differences*, *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, and *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*. Dr. Seemann is a licensed psychologist in Alabama and has extensive experience in psychological assessment, forensic and correctional psychology, and individual psychotherapy. He maintains a small private practice that contributes to his research.

RESEARCH FACILITIES

The Department of Psychology occupies office space on the third floor of Morton Hall, and laboratory and conference space on the first floor. The faculty enjoys ample research space and resources, and graduate students are encouraged to take full advantage of laboratory opportunities in conducting their thesis projects.

Psychobiology Laboratory (Director: Dr. Aurora Torres)

Biopac machine, blood pressure equipment, computers, scale

Social Cognition and Teamwork Laboratory (Director: Dr. Sandra Carpenter)

Computers, space for testing participants, videotaping equipment

Memory and Cognition Laboratory (Director: Dr. Jeffrey Neuschatz)

Computer, audio-visual equipment, space for testing participants

Personality, Testing, and Assessment Laboratory (Director: Dr. Eric Seemann)

Videotape equipment, computers, intelligence and personality inventories

Life-long Learning Laboratory (Director: Dr. Jodi Price)

The testing room allows us to run experimental sessions with up to eight participants at a time using computerized and paper-based measures. The second room accommodates paper-based testing of five more participants as well as space for the researchers to score, analyze and securely store data.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate Student Lounge: MH 101B (Get code to lock box from Michelle Graham)

Computers and work space available

Computer Access

Wireless hub in MH (need XP or PRO)

Computers in Information Arcade in Salmon Library

Reference Books: MH 335

- Graduate Schools, with special editions for Clinical Psychology and Neuroscience
- Writing thesis, dissertations, and grant proposals
- Library and Computer use
- Teaching Activities Handbooks
- Membership Registers (APA & APS)
- Research Support (funding)

Books, Journals and Newsletters: Dan Hays Reading Room

- A variety of professional journals and newsletters of current and previous years
- A list of the holdings and years are posted in each room

UAH Salmon Library

Information about library resources can be accessed from the Library homepage:

<http://www.uah.edu/HTML/Library/index.html>

Our contact person for psychology is Linda Vaughan.

- PSYCINFO: The library homepage has web links to PSYCINFO, the primary web-based search engine for psychology abstracts.
- PSYCARTICLES: Full-text access to APA journals
- Interlibrary loan (through University of Illinois)
- Training courses for searches, Internet, etc.
- Graduate students are allowed to check out books for one semester

Other Libraries for UAH Student Use (with valid ID card)

Alabama A & M

University of Alabama - Birmingham (and Primary Care on Governor's drive)

University of Alabama - Tuscaloosa

Athens State University

Redstone Science Information Center on Redstone Arsenal (free copies)

(U.S. citizens only; security clearance through Research Institute, UAH)

Student Government

Graduate Student Association (located in University Center)

Recreational Facilities

Spraggins Hall: Racquetball courts (by appt.), pool, weight equipment, HPE courses

UAH Fitness Center: Free for graduate students (registration required)

Office of Student Development: UC 113 (phone x 6203)

Assessment and counseling services (provided as part of the university health fee).

Bulletin Boards outside Department Office

Job announcements

Newsletters from professional societies

Information about Ph.D. programs throughout the country and world

Courses and schedule information for the Psychology Department

Psi Chi - Psychology Honor Society

The *Psi Chi* chapter at UAH is highly active. Students obtain fundraising experience, attend professional conferences, and participate in community outreach activities throughout the year. If you were a member as an undergraduate, you are still a member (for life). Graduate students who wish to join *Psi Chi* should see Dr. Carpenter, the faculty advisor, for more information on membership.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Most graduate students receive a minimum of one year of financial support through departmental assistantships or tuition scholarships. Students who are awarded GTAs or GRAs are required to attend a Graduate Assistant Workshop offered through the School of Graduate Studies at the beginning of the Fall semester. Students wishing to be considered for financial aid must submit all of their application materials (e.g. GRE scores, letters of reference) by June 1. To be eligible for a tuition scholarship or teaching assistantship, the student must have unconditional status.

Tuition Scholarships

Tuition scholarships are often awarded for up to 9 credit hours of graduate tuition, but may vary depending on the financial resources available to the department. These scholarships are usually awarded during the 1st year of graduate study.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

These assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis to students in their 2nd year of the program. They are designed to support both teaching in the department and graduate students' professional development. GTAs normally work no more than 20 hours per week. GTA duties may include grading papers, guest lecturing, managing the department research participant pool, and/or other teaching-related functions. These assistantships cover tuition, as well as providing a stipend.

Graduate Research Assistantships

These assistantships allow students to perform research under the supervision of a faculty advisor. GRAs are typically funded from faculty members' grants and/or contracts, which vary in availability from semester to semester. Students are advised to consult with individual faculty members in the department regarding the availability of GRA funding. Students may receive GRAs in their 1st or 2nd year. These assistantships cover tuition, as well as providing a stipend.

Additional information about financial assistance, including loan, scholarship, and grant information can be obtained from Student Financial Services (UC 212, phone: 824-6241).

DEPARTMENTAL CORE CURRICULUM & ELECTIVE COURSES

The UAH graduate psychology program offers a Master's degree program in Experimental Psychology. Our program is designed to facilitate scholarship by allowing students to work closely with the faculty in small graduate classes and to conduct research with faculty members. By the end of their first year, master's students are encouraged to choose an area from Developmental, Social, Personality, Cognitive, Biopsychology, or Applied Experimental Psychology, although interdisciplinary interests are also encouraged. Students work directly with a faculty advisor towards the completion of an experimental thesis. The wide variety of research areas provides for a comprehensive background in Experimental Psychology. Many of our students go on to Ph.D. programs throughout the country in a variety of experimental psychology disciplines, while others find jobs in industry or the community.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:

Students must complete at least 30 hours of graduate work, including a minimum of 6 hours of thesis. Only 6 hours may be transfer courses, which must be approved by the graduate committee of the department. Non-thesis students must complete at least 33 hours of graduate work, including a minimum of 6 hours of supervised research.

Students are encouraged to choose courses that support their research interests in consultation with their faculty advisors. When appropriate, students may take up to 6 hours of graduate credit from other departments. The department graduate committee must approve these courses.

THESIS OPTION:

Thesis students are required to research, design, and complete an independent research project, in addition to completing the required graduate coursework. The primary requirements for obtaining an M.A. degree using the thesis option are

- a) Completion of 6 credit hours of thesis (PY 699)
- b) Submission of an approved thesis to the graduate committee and the School of Graduate Studies
- c) Successful completion of a final oral comprehensive examination which covers both coursework and thesis research
- d) The thesis process is not complete until the final copy is sent to the printers. Failure to achieve this goal means that the student must enroll in 1 hour of thesis in the subsequent semester.

NON-THESIS OPTION:

Students in our program are expected to complete a thesis, but under certain circumstances, students may choose or faculty members may advise the non-thesis option. In this option the student must complete 6 hours of supervised research in lieu of conducting an independent thesis project. The primary requirements for obtaining an M.A. degree using the non-thesis options are:

- a) Completion of at least 6 hours of supervised research (PY 650)
- b) Successful completion of both written and oral comprehensive examinations which cover coursework in PY 610, 611, and two content areas of the student's choice
- c) Taking a total of 33 hours of graduate credit hours

CORE CURRICULUM:

<u>Credits</u>	<u>Required Courses</u>
1	PY 607: Professional Development in Research and Teaching
1	PY 608: Graduate Practicum in Teaching and Career Exploration
3	PY 610: Experimental Design
4	PY 611: Graduate Statistics
3	PY 641: Concentrated Readings*
6	PY 699: Master's thesis*
	OR
9	PY 650: Supervised Research* (AND an additional content course)

Students need 4 additional content courses for thesis option, or 5 for non-thesis option. These courses may focus in a particular area of experimental psychology. Alternatively, students, in conjunction with their advisor, may create their own set of coursework.

Required courses are offered every year. Other courses are typically offered every two years.

POSSIBLE COURSE CHOICES:

Cognitive

PY 530: Psychometrics

PY 602: Proseminar: Cognitive

Developmental

PY 601: Advanced Developmental

ED 610: Psychological Foundations of Evaluation

Social

PY 506: Psychology of Women

PY 507: Cross-Cultural Psychology

PY 502: Industrial/Organizational

PY 537: Psychology and Law

Psychobiology

PY/BYS 505: Psychopharmacology

PY/BYS 536: Stress and Illness

PY 615: Brain and Behavior

Applied Courses

PY 502: Industrial/Organizational

PY 503: Human Factors

PY 530: Psychometrics

PY 537: Psychology and Law

PY 520: Special Topics: Personality & Counseling

ISE 624: Human Factors in System Design

MGT 600: Organizational Theory

MGT 560: Employee Training

*Faculty members receive no remuneration for supervising students in these courses. No faculty member is required to work with a particular student. Thus, faculty and students should attempt to match their interests and research styles early in a student's program of study.

RECOMMENDED CHRONOLOGY OF PROGRESS

Students are expected to take responsibility for meeting deadlines!!

First Year:

1. Complete PY 607, 608, 610*, and 611*
2. Begin formulating a thesis project based on their advisor's research program (thesis option) or conducting supervised research (non-thesis option)
3. Take PY 641* (Concentrated Readings)
4. File a Program of Study by end of second semester
5. Choose graduate advisor and committee members
6. Propose thesis project to graduate committee by end of second or third semester

Second Year:

- Complete 6 hours of PY 699 or 650
- Take additional courses in area of interest
- Conduct thesis project and write thesis* (thesis option)
- Submit Application for Advanced Degree to School of Graduate Studies (see Michelle for form) **at least 90 days prior** to the end of the term in which degree requirements are expected to be completed
- Send written notification of the time and place of final examination to the Graduate Dean **at least two weeks prior** to final examination
- Pass final oral examination (thesis option) or written and oral examinations (Non-thesis option). The final examination must be taken at least six weeks before the end of the semester in which you expect to complete degree requirements
- Submit final thesis (including revisions) to graduate committee and School of Graduate Studies
- Once you have enrolled in PY 699, you must continue to be enrolled in PY 699 (thesis) every fall and spring semester until the thesis process is complete (i.e., the thesis is printed and bound)

*Completion of PY 610, PY 611, and PY 641 is required prior to students' taking of thesis hours.

Please see the UAH Graduate Studies website for more details:

www.uah.edu/HTML/Academics/Grad/grad_general/master_general/checkpoints.html

THESIS GUIDELINES

First Steps

The process of developing a thesis study is more than a rite of passage required for the completion of the Master's degree. It is, in fact, a process that is 1) fueled by your scholarly curiosity and enthusiasm and 2) gently coaxed within realistic boundaries by your advisor/mentor. The following guidelines developed by the faculty of the Department of Psychology provide an initial framework for students and advisors. For the purpose of these guidelines, full-time graduate student status is assumed.

Let us begin with a very clear statement: **An empirical thesis is expected.** While an empirical study is not imperative, such a study is best suited to the spirit of the program and consequently best fits and evaluates your training. In addition, the thesis work should be theory-driven and should have the potential for publication.

The Concentrated Readings course (PY 641) should be utilized for reviewing the literature in the identified thesis area. You are expected to develop a literature review paper or thesis proposal that demonstrates breadth of knowledge of the literature concerning the thesis topic (approximate length = 30 pages). This paper should not be a history of the topic, but should present literature and arguments that provide the logic for the intended thesis study.

The Faculty Advisor

Beginning with the first term of graduate school, students should seek potential topics for thesis investigation via ideas discussed in classes, reading of journals, pondering with faculty, debates with other students, etc. By the end of the first year of graduate study, you should be able to identify both a thesis focus and a faculty advisor. The thesis topic must be within the interest and expertise of the faculty advisor and is therefore based upon the advisor's area of specialty. The overwhelming (perhaps sole) guide in selecting your advisor should be commonality of research interest. Once you have tentatively identified an advisor, schedule a time to discuss your desire to work with that faculty member and the feasibility of your potential topic. Often, students will work in an advisor's lab for a semester, to become familiar with the research paradigm prior to developing their thesis. In the vast majority of cases, the thesis project is a derivative or "spin off" of the ongoing research in the advisor's lab.

Although the role of the advisor is multi-faceted throughout the thesis process, a central task of the advisor is to keep students focused and the investigation limited within reasonable time and resource boundaries. This focusing responsibility is more accurately described as a shared responsibility that is mutually beneficial to both the student and the faculty advisor. Regular student-faculty advisor interactions tend to be conducive to the progress of thesis students.

The Thesis Committee

It is important that you identify members of the thesis committee while the proposal is being written. The committee will consist of three members who must be in full or associate standing within the Graduate College. A thesis Advisor who is a full-time member of the Psychology Faculty and Graduate College must chair each committee. One additional member

must also be in full standing with the Psychology Faculty and Graduate College. The third member can belong to a different department or to a UAHuntsville research center and can have associate status within the Graduate College. *Ex officio* members (additional members serving only in advisory capacity) of the thesis committee may be designated when the information provided by such members is relevant to the successful completion of the thesis research. You should select committee members whose area of interest would complement some aspect of the proposed study. It is advisable to share an early draft of the research design with committee members so that suggestions can be incorporated early in the process of developing the study.

The Thesis Proposal

The thesis study must be developed in collaboration with your faculty advisor. Your thesis proposal should be in the format specified by the UAH School of Graduate Studies. The Introduction should include a review of literature relevant to the study and hypotheses should be clearly stated. The Method section should include precise operational definitions, descriptions of participants or subjects, identification of independent and dependent variables, and a detailed description of the experimental procedures. The Results section should describe the statistical analyses planned. The Discussion section should address the utility of the investigation and interpretations of data (e.g., which data would support the hypotheses; how null results would be interpreted; alternate hypotheses, etc.). Appendices may be used to include material your faculty advisor deems necessary (e.g., consent form, inventories, stimuli used, etc.). The thesis proposal should be a polished and complete document, of which you are proud. It will serve as the introduction and method sections of the final thesis, so all of the relevant literature and methodological issues should be addressed in the proposal document. In addition, the statistics that will be used to test each hypothesis must be described. This will provide a template for all the analyses to be performed after the data are collected. Thus, when the thesis proposal is complete a substantial portion of the thesis writing will have been finished.

The thesis study should be more in-depth and rigorous than an undergraduate senior level research study (for example, PY 498 at UAH). The thesis project is conducted by a single student. This does not, however, preclude the possibility of a few students working on individual pieces of a coordinated body or sequence of research.

The written report of the thesis study is perhaps best conceptualized as an “expanded” journal article. A lengthy thesis is not an appropriate goal within our program. In fact, long theses are typically indicative of an insufficiently focused study or wordy writing. Set a target of 60 data collection hours in the laboratory and 60 tightly written and productive pages in your thesis document.

Committee Meetings

Each student is responsible for contacting all committee members and scheduling committee meetings. You are responsible for providing each member of the committee with a copy of the materials at least one week in advance of the meetings. One meeting, the Proposal Meeting, should be held to review and approve the thesis research proposal. You should be prepared to make a brief presentation (about 20 minutes); however, the purpose of the meeting is not to “grill the student” but to offer comments and provide guidance in the research. It is in the interests of both you and the committee to ensure that the quality of the research is optimal. At

the same time, you must be aware of limitations in resources. You should not submit the thesis proposal and consent form to the Institutional Review Committee (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) until the thesis committee has approved the thesis proposal. It is advisable to provide committee members with a revised copy of the thesis proposal in which issues discussed during the proposal meeting are addressed.

Additional meetings of the thesis committee may be called to discuss issues regarding data interpretation or if significant changes to the original proposal are made. The recommendations offered by the thesis committee should be followed in conducting the thesis research under the supervision of the faculty advisor. Deviations from the proposal must be discussed with the advisor prior to their implementation. Significant deviations require a resubmission of the proposal to the IRB.

The final meeting of the thesis committee, the Thesis Defense, will consist of the presentation of the thesis data by the student and the defense of the thesis. The oral presentation of data (approximately 30 minutes) is open to anyone interested in the research. Committee members, as well as audience members can ask questions. In addition to committee members, an independent observer from another department will be present to ensure all appropriate procedures are being followed. The general audience will then be excused, so that the student and thesis committee can continue the defense in closed session.

Final Submission

The UAH Library and the Graduate Studies web site have copies of guidelines for the structure of the thesis (see <http://grad.uah.edu/thesismanual.php>). These are detailed instructions; however, a brief summary is offered here. The thesis shall consist of several chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, Methods, Results, Discussion) whose sections are more detailed than those in reports submitted for publication. Although APA format is not used throughout the text, APA format should be followed for citing references and statistics. Appendices that contain relevant material (e.g., inventories, descriptions of scenarios, data) are typically included, but the thesis advisor should specify the content. The Dean of Graduate Studies must review final thesis submissions, and any necessary changes must be made in order to receive your Master's degree.

Publication Concerns and Authorship Issues

The ultimate goal of the thesis research is publication. You should discuss publication issues with your thesis advisor prior to the thesis defense.

a) Authorship

The APA Publication Manual states that,

“Authorship is reserved for persons who make a primary contribution to and hold primary responsibility for the data, concepts, and interpretation of results for a published work (Huth, 1987). Authorship encompasses not only those who do the actual writing but also those who have made substantial scientific contributions to a study . . . To prevent misunderstanding and to preserve professional reputations and relationships, it is best to establish as early as possible in a research project

who will be listed as an author, what the order of authorship will be, and who will receive an alternative form of recognition.” (p. 4)

Following APA guidelines, professors will be expected to discuss authorship for a research project with the students working on that project as early as possible. It will generally be accepted that students who contribute a significant amount of work to a project, including ideas, data collection, analyses, interpretation, and/or writing, will be included as authors. If a student is only involved in data collection, it is unlikely that he/she will be considered an author, but instead will be acknowledged as a technical assistant in the Author’s notes. It is possible that after authorship has been discussed, someone will contribute more or less than was expected to a project. In such cases authorship may need to be changed, and will need to be discussed again by the faculty members and students working on that project. If a student has any questions regarding authorship, he/she should ask the faculty member with whom he/she is working.

b) Master’s Theses

Graduate students are expected to adapt their Master’s thesis into a manuscript to be submitted for publication within 18 months of the thesis defense. Assuming the idea for the Master’s thesis was at least partially the student’s, and that the experimental design, data collection, analyses, and writing were mostly the student’s, the graduate student should be the first author on the manuscript based on his or her thesis. If a graduate student chooses not to submit a manuscript for publication (or present at a professional meeting) within 18 months of the defense, the faculty advisor may choose to write the manuscript and be designated as the first author. Additionally, if a student presents the work at a professional meeting, but chooses not to submit a manuscript for publication, the advisor may choose to write the manuscript and be designated as the first author.

Financial Support of Research

A final comment regarding the financial cost of research seems appropriate. While the department would like to fully subsidize student research, the departmental budget does not enable us to cover these costs. We do, however, have a Student Research Fund that is designed to support students’ research costs and travel to conferences to present the results of their research. There is a maximum award of \$100 per student per semester. Deadlines for grant proposal submission are September 1 for Fall, February 1 for Spring, and June 1 for Summer. Students are additionally encouraged to apply for student research grants when available and appropriate, and to utilize departmental laboratory space and equipment.

NON-THESIS OPTION

Students are expected to complete a thesis in this program. In special circumstances, however, students (after consultation and approval of their advisor) may choose the non-thesis option. In such cases, students must take an additional course to complete their degree (a total of 36 hours). Students choosing this option would take 6 credit hours of PY 650: Supervised Research, rather than PY 699: Thesis. Non-thesis students take written exams in PY 610, PY 611, and in two additional courses of their choice. A week later, students defend their answers in an oral follow-up exam.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. We expect graduate students to design, initiate, and complete a research project.
2. We expect graduate students to do a comprehensive literature review.
3. We expect graduate students to write papers and research reports in APA style.
4. We expect graduate students to enter data and conduct appropriate statistical analyses.
5. We expect graduate students to know where to look for resources to solve problems or answer questions (e.g., by asking the appropriate faculty member, by using Psycinfo, by reading the literature).
6. We expect graduate students to have a working knowledge of research ethics.
7. We expect graduate students to be able to give a lecture to undergraduates on a topic in their area of study.
8. We expect graduate students to be able to design a syllabus and assignments for a course.
9. We expect graduate students to be able to write a grant proposal.

YEARLY EVALUATIONS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

At the end of each Spring semester, the department faculty meet to discuss all graduate students in the program. We review the quality of several student characteristics and behaviors (which are not limited to the following list). The purpose of this review is to provide the student with an evaluation that will help the student be effective and successful in our Master's program. Specifically, the review will provide each student with:

- an update on his or her progress and suggestions for improvement
- a clear statement of the faculty's perspective of the student's accomplishments
- an indication of the likelihood of the student's successful completion of the program

Following the departmental discussion, each student's primary advisor writes a letter to the student indicating the student's strengths and weaknesses, as a function of the following criteria. If the student has any questions about or objections to the review letter, she or he should have a discussion with her or his primary advisor or the chairperson of the department.

1. Commitment to the program is evaluated through:
 - Consistent and on-time attendance in all classes
 - Presence on campus, in labs and other venues
 - Participation in departmental functions
 - Spring undergraduate conference
 - Helping to "cover" classes when faculty members are absent
2. Oral and critical thinking skills are evaluated through:
 - Formal oral presentations in courses
 - Informal questions and comments made during PY 607 & PY 608 meetings
 - Thesis proposal meeting presentation
3. Written skills are evaluated through:
 - Research proposals written for courses
 - Papers written for courses
 - Essay exam responses
 - Manuscript written for the PY 641 (Concentrated Readings) course
4. Research and statistical skills are evaluated through:
 - Formal oral presentations in courses
 - Informal questions and comments made during PY 607 & PY 608 meetings
 - Thesis progress
 - Research proposals written for courses
 - Papers written for courses
 - Essay exam responses
 - Manuscript written for the PY 641 (Concentrated Readings) course

CONTACT INFORMATION

Faculty:	Office:	Lab:	Email:
Dr. Sandra Carpenter	MH 333 824-2319	MH 128	carpens@email.uah.edu
Dr. Jodi Price	MH 329 824-3321	MH 136	Jodi.Price@uah.edu
Dr. Jeffrey S. Neuschatz	MH 321 824-2321	MH 135 824-4589	neuschaj@email.uah.edu
Dr. Eric Seemann	MH 319A 824-2323	MH 136 824-4590	seemane@email.uah.edu
Dr. Aurora Torres	MH 327 824-2320	MH 108A & B	torresa@email.uah.edu

Departmental Assistant:

Michelle Graham	MH 335 824-6191	grahaml@email.uah.edu
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Additional information about the Department of Psychology at The University of Alabama in Huntsville can be found at our web site, <http://www.uah.edu/colleges/liberal/psychology/>

FAQ'S

1. Q: How important is it for me to keep in regular contact with my faculty advisor?

A: In our experience, students who keep open lines of communication with their faculty advisors are much more successful in graduate school. Email, phone, and office visits are all wonderful ways to keep in touch. You should also communicate regularly with the Chair of the department for information about deadlines, GTA & GRA requirements, available resources in the department, etc.

2. Q: When should I start working on my thesis?

A: As soon as possible after you have completed PY 610 and PY 611. Once you have narrowed down your research interests to a specific area or problem you'd like to solve, you should pick a faculty advisor, take PY 641, start writing your manuscript, and design your study.

3. Q: When should I file my program of study?

A: Before you have completed 12 graduate credit hours (usually prior to completion of your second semester in graduate school).

4. Q: Can I work off-campus and still hold an assistantship?

A: No. According to School of Graduate Studies, if you hold a 20-hour assistantship, you may not hold additional employment.

5. Q: I found out I have an assistantship, but have no idea how to be a GTA/GRA. Where do I go to find out?

A: All GTAs/GRAs are required to attend the Graduate Studies Training Workshop. This workshop is usually held two or three days prior to the start of each Fall semester. At this Workshop, GTA/GRA duties are covered and relevant employment forms are completed. Plus, you will have a chance to meet other graduate students and people from the Graduate School. Additionally, you'll receive training from your faculty supervisor in the psychology department.

6. Q: How many professors should be on my thesis committee?

A: You need at least 3 committee members, 2 of whom must be Graduate PY faculty.

7. Q: Why should I choose the thesis option? It seems like a lot of extra work to me.

A: Generally speaking, Master's degrees in which a thesis was written are more highly valued by the professional community than non-thesis Master's degrees. The primary benefit of writing a thesis is that you have a final written document which shows potential employers or Ph.D. programs you are capable of conducting independent research. Your written communication skills, research proficiency, organizational abilities, and professionalism are highlighted in your final thesis document. Having documented evidence of these skills enhances your chances of continuing your education at the doctoral level or obtaining employment upon graduation from UAH. (The alternative to the thesis is an additional 3 credit hour graduate course, as well as comprehensive written and oral exams.)

8. Q: What happens if I fail my final oral examination?

A: Students who fail their final oral examinations may take the final oral or written examination no more than twice.

9. Q: How long do I have to finish the program, after enrolling at UAH?

A: All requirements for the Master's degree must be completed within 6 years of originally enrolling in the graduate program.

10. Q: I'm having some problems with a particular faculty member or fellow student. What should I do?

A: First, you should try to work it out with that person. Use your knowledge of psychology and interpersonal dynamics to aid you. Should this prove ineffective, you should voice your concerns to Dr. Carpenter, Chair of the department and ethics advisor. The purpose of graduate school is to enhance your research skills, learn how to become a psychology professional, and broaden your education. As a department, we strive to provide a positive and interpersonally rewarding educational environment. Interpersonal conflicts do occasionally arise, however, so if they do, avoid political turmoil if possible. Conflicts can usually be resolved in consultation between Dr. Carpenter and the parties involved. As a student, you have the right to learn in an environment that is supportive, enlightening, and non-hostile.

11. Q: Where can I get more information about research and ethical standards?

A: A copy of the *Policy Regarding Ethical Standards in Research and Other Scholarly Activities at UAH* is available in the Psychology Department Office.