

**GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN  
EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

The University of Alabama  
in Huntsville



**2017 – 2018  
Department of Psychology  
MOR 335  
256-824-6191**

## 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 with specialization in Industrial/Organizational 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 Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences 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.

## 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 graduate and undergraduate students from around the nation and the world. The University is located in Huntsville, Alabama, a thriving, high-tech city located in northern Alabama at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. <http://www.uah.edu/>

### 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 - 11 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 300 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.

<http://www.uah.edu/HTML/Academics/Grad.>

## PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT FACULTY

**SANDRA L. CARPENTER** (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1983), Professor of Psychology. Dr. Carpenter's research interests include cross-cultural comparisons, how team dynamics impact team performance, and attacks on privacy on the internet. 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 on Industrial-Organizational psychology, Teamwork, the Psychology of Women, and Cross-Cultural Psychology.

**JEFFREY S. NEUSCHATZ** (Ph.D., SUNY-Binghamton, 1999), 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), Chair and Associate 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 teaches graduate courses in Aging.

**AURORA TORRES** (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, 1987), tenured Assistant Professor of Psychology, adjunct in Biological Sciences. Dr. Torres is a biopsychologist who studies responses to stress. She has published in *Behavioral Neuroscience*, *Physiology and Behavior*, *Pediatric Research*, and *American Journal of Physiology*. She teaches graduate courses in Experimental Design, and teaches several courses that are cross-listed with Biology (Psychobiology of Stress and Illness, Psychopharmacology, and Brain and Behavior).

**ERIC SEEMANN** (Ph.D., Louisiana Tech University, 2003), Associate 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. He teaches graduate courses in Abnormal Psychology, Psychometrics, and Clinical and Counseling Psychology.

**DIANHAN ZHENG** (Ph.D., University of Houston, 2015), Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Zheng is an Industrial/Organizational Psychologist with research interests in positive workplace relationships and occupational health psychology. Her research strives to understand important issues in organizations, such as employee-organization relationship, leadership, and employee well-being. Dr. Zheng teaches graduate I/O Psychology courses.

**KRISTIN WEGER** (imminent Ph.D., University of Bamberg, 2017), lecturer in Psychology. Ms. Weger is an Industrial/Organizational Psychologist with research interests in virtual teams and organizational efficiency. She has wide experience in field work in areas including developing leadership and organization culture, improving workstation efficiency, and human-machine interactions.

## RESEARCH FACILITIES

The Department of Psychology has laboratory and conference space on the first floor. Graduate students are encouraged to take full advantage of laboratory opportunities in conducting their thesis projects.

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

Computers, space for testing teams, videotaping equipment

Privacy in Cyberspace Laboratory (Director: Dr. Sandra Carpenter)

Computers, space for testing participants, eye tracking equipment

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

Computer, audio-visual equipment, space for testing participants

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

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

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

Videotape equipment, computers, intelligence and personality inventories

Biopsychology Laboratory (Director: Dr. Aurora Torres)

Biopac machine, blood pressure equipment, computers, scale

Employee Motivation and Productivity Laboratory (Director: Dr. Dianhan Zheng)

Equipped with computers and statistical software packages for the researchers to administer online surveys, run participants, manage, and analyze data.

Leadership and Organizational Behavior Laboratory (Director: Ms. Kristin Weger)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Teaching Assistants' Office: MOR 101B

I/O Teamwork Grad student space: MOR 101C

Psi Chi lounge: MOR 101E

Conference Room/Classroom: MOR 101A

Laptop with wireless, microphone, webcam, SPSS, Linguistic Inquiry & Word Count (LIWC)

### Computer Access

Wireless hub in MOR

Computers in Information Arcade in Salmon Library

Office of Information Technology for assistance with computer-related issues: [helpdesk@uah.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uah.edu)

<http://www.uah.edu/oit/getting-started/for-students>

### Reference Books: MOR 335

Graduate Schools, with special editions for Clinical Psychology and Neuroscience

Writing thesis, dissertations, and grant proposals; APA Publication Manual

Teaching Activities Handbooks

Research Support (funding)

## HELPFUL LINKS

### Office of Information Technology

Information regarding setting up campus wifi access, gmail, passwords, helpdesk  
<http://www.uah.edu/oit/>

### UAH Single-Sign On (SSO)

One secure login for all UAH services; uses Charger ID and Password  
UAH G Suite: gmail, calendar      Canvas: course management system  
Banner: student record, course grades, transcripts, employee information  
Qualtrics: online survey tool      Charger Card      OIT Services  
<https://sso.uah.edu/cas/login>

### UAH Salmon Library

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

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

- PSYCINFO: The library homepage has web links to PSYCINFO, the primary web-based search engine for psychology abstracts.
- Interlibrary loan
- Training courses for searches, Internet, etc.
- Graduate students are allowed to check out books for one semester

### Institutional Review Board

All human research studies must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

Forms, guidelines, and contact information

<http://www.uah.edu/IRB/>

CITI Training: Students must complete the Responsible Conduct in Research and Human Subject Research courses at <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>

### Office of Graduate School Student Services Building 222

Information regarding maintaining graduate status, deadlines, and forms

e.g., Program of Study – should be completed by end of first year

Notification of Thesis Defense – should be completed at least 2 weeks prior to oral defense date

<http://www.uah.edu/graduate/contact>

### Registrar's Office Student Services Building 120

Class Registration, Academic Calendars, Forms

<http://www.uah.edu/registrar>

### Bursar's Office Student Services Building 123

Manages student accounts, billing, collection of fees

<http://www.uah.edu/bursar>

### Graduate Financial Aid Student Services Building Suite 124

<http://www.uah.edu/admissions/graduate/financial-aid>

UAH Student Code of Conduct: Student Handbook  
<http://www.uah.edu/dos/student-conduct/handbook>

Student Success Center: First Floor North Wing Salmon Library (phone x 2478)  
Writing Center, Tutoring  
<http://www.uah.edu/ssc>

Disability Support Services Wilson Hall 128  
Information to request services, forms, etc.  
<http://www.uah.edu/dss>

Career Services: Student Services Building 205 (phone x6741):  
Resume and interview prep, career coaching, job lists  
<http://www.uah.edu/career-services/services>

Recreational Facilities  
UAH Fitness Center: Free for graduate students (registration required)  
<http://www.universityfitnesscenter.com/>  
Spragins Hall: Racquetball courts (by appt.), pool, weight equipment, HPE courses

Student Life & Organizations (Student Government)  
<http://www.uah.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-organizations>  
Graduate Student Association (located in University Center)  
<https://www.facebook.com/UAHGSO>

Counseling Center: Wilson Hall 329 (phone x6203)  
Individual counseling, Wellness Space  
<http://www.uah.edu/health-and-wellness/counseling-center>

Student Health Center: Wilson Hall 325 (phone x6775)  
Basic health needs  
<http://www.uah.edu/health-and-wellness/student-health-center>

Bulletin Boards outside Department Office MOR 335  
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. Zheng, ([dz0007@uah.edu](mailto:dz0007@uah.edu)) the faculty advisor, for more information on membership.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

**UAH Psychology Department website:** <http://www.uah.edu/ahs/departments/psychology>

Each year we take pictures of our graduate students to post to the department website, both as individuals and as a group. A waiver allowing us to use your picture will be available prior to the picture date. The website should contain information about faculty, curriculum, and events.

**UAH Psychology Department Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/UAHPsychology/>

Beginning in Fall 2017, the department now has a Facebook page. Information on events should be current. Invite your family and friends to like us on Facebook.

**Chargermail:** your UAH email address is the official notification system at UAH. You should use it consistently or have the email from it forwarded to your preferred email address. UAH uses gmail; thus, you have access to all relevant applications (google drive, google documents, google calendar, etc.).

**Charger Card and A-number:** the A-number is your personal identity with UAH regarding your student record; memorize it. The Charger Card function provides a means of paying for services on campus.

**SONA:** the participant management system. The system provides for laboratories to create online sign-up sheets to recruit participants for research activities. The Introductory Psychology TA is typically the person in charge of guiding you through the procedures and approving the recruitment announcement for studies.

**Canvas:** the course management system can be accessed via the UAH Single-Sign On (SSO). Your instructors vary in its use, but it can contain the syllabus, assignment information, discussion boards relevant to assignments, drop boxes for relevant assignments, quizzes, and grades. While Canvas will calculate a 'course' grade, keep in mind that not all instructors configure Canvas to push grades to Banner.

**Panopto:** a lecture capture system within Canvas. Your instructor might record lectures when traveling or if inclement weather strikes or record all lectures to accommodate students who are sick, travel, or want to review material again. Your instructor might assign you, as a graduate student, to provide a lecture to the rest of the class or record presentations of specific topics.

**Banner:** in the UAH Single Sign On, while not labeled as such, is the system that maintains your student records.

**Qualtrics:** an online survey system accessed via SSO. The system provides the ability to create surveys or present experimental stimuli online to participants.

**Psychology Department Graduate Research Fund:** graduate students can request up to \$100 to be reimbursed for materials needed to complete the thesis project. See appendix for the form.



## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Most graduate students receive some type 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. These decisions are made on a semester basis, but it is common for students to maintain the same funding.

### Tuition Scholarships

Tuition scholarships are often awarded for credit hours of graduate tuition with first year students who complete applications by the deadline given priority. The tuition waiver is from a minimum of 1 hr, with 3 to 6 hr being more common; the maximum is 9 hr. The number of awards vary depending on the financial resources available to the department. These scholarships are usually awarded during the 1<sup>st</sup> year of graduate study.

### Graduate Teaching Assistantships

These assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis to students in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the program or exceptional 1<sup>st</sup> year students. 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, but are expected to hold office hours equivalent to the 20 hr. 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. GTAs are not to hold employment outside of the GTA position.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Graduate Financial Aid Student Services Building Suite 124phone: 824-6241 <http://www.uah.edu/admissions/graduate/financial-aid>

## **EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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.

## **EXPECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**

We expect professional behavior in all areas of interaction with fellow graduate students, undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and visiting professionals.

1. Communication: expedient confirmation of emails, meetings, and notifying instructors in case of unforeseen circumstances that arise
2. Punctuality: a basic expectation for classes, meetings with faculty.  
If you run late, you convey the idea that your time is more important than others' time. Good time management is essential for success in graduate school.
3. Reliability: completing your work on time for either classes or research lab.
4. Independence and initiative: once trained, contribute to your research lab and initiate the next contribution to a research project. Your thesis is in part a test of your ability for independent thought within the specialty of your laboratory.
5. Presence: graduate school should be seen as a job regardless of whether you are a TA. Create office hours and research hours outside of your class commitments.
6. Collegiality: a positive, cooperative environment is best for meeting the challenges of a graduate program. Consistently complaining about demands is more likely to exacerbate rather than alleviate stress. Promoting discord among students or between students and faculty is clearly unprofessional conduct.
7. Affiliation: be involved in the social atmosphere of the department by supporting Psi Chi events, department events (eg, potlucks, speakers, thesis presentations).

## **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. 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. 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 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.

In exceptional circumstances, students may petition the department to be considered for a non-thesis option. As this MA program is experimental in nature, an empirical thesis is expected of all students. For the non-thesis option, however, students must complete 33 hours of graduate coursework, including PY 650 Supervised Research, and take both written and oral comprehensive examinations (PY 610, PY 611, and 2 additional courses).

## 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*

Students need 4 additional content courses, which 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:

### Social

PY 506: Psychology of Women

PY 507: Cross-Cultural Psychology

PY 502: Industrial/Organizational

PY 534: Psychology and Law

### Psychobiology

PY/BYS 505: Psychopharmacology

PY/BYS 537: Stress and Illness

PY 520: Brain and Behavior

### Industrial/Organizational Specialization

#### **Required:**

PY 502: Industrial/Organizational Psychology

PY 530: Psychometrics

**Electives:** (Choose 6 hours of electives; alternatives may be chosen)

A maximum of 6 hours can be taken outside the Psychology department

PY 508: Teamwork and Team Processes

PY 503: Human Factors

EM 664: Teams in Action

PY 520: Ethics in Counseling, Research, and the Profession

MGT 629: Leadership

PY 675: Internship in Applied Psychology

PY 650: Supervised Research

MGT 560: Employee Staffing and Development

PY615: Advanced Statistics

MGT 600: Organizational Theory, Behavior and Environment

ISE 790: Advanced Statistics (MA 508 pre-requisite: Applied Linear Algebra)

MGT 631: Strategic Human Resource Management in a Technological Environment

\*Faculty members receive no remuneration or credit 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. Finalize graduate advisor and begin work on projects in the designated lab.  
Make your presence known in the department by committing to office hours as well as research hours spent in labs in addition to being present for classes.  
Weekly meetings with your advisor are strongly advised.
2. Complete the CITI training with expediency (see pg 6 for link; pg 14 for details)
3. Complete PY 607, 608, 610\*, and 611.\*
4. Begin formulating a thesis project based on your advisor's research program.
5. Take PY 641\* (Concentrated Readings): this course is used to develop your thesis idea. The manuscript you create serves as the basis for your thesis prospectus document (APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition format). This will take several drafts.
6. File a Program of Study by end of second semester.
7. Choose committee members: graduate advisor plus two others. Send a short synopsis of your thesis project when you invite the faculty to be on your committee.
8. Complete the IRB forms for your thesis study and submit.
9. Send your thesis prospectus document (APA format manuscript) to your committee at least 1 week prior to your prospectus meeting date.
10. Propose thesis project to graduate committee ideally by the end of summer. Early fall of your second year is possible, but could delay your degree.

### Second Year:

1. Complete 6 hours of PY 699 (thesis)\*
2. Edit thesis prospectus to fit with thesis format guidelines from Graduate Studies\*\*
3. Take additional courses in area of interest
4. Conduct thesis project and complete final thesis document in proper format.
5. 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
6. Send written Notification of Oral Exam/Defense to the Graduate Dean **at least two weeks prior** to final examination
7. Pass final oral thesis defense (Mid-March deadline for spring semester; late October deadline for fall semester)
8. Submit final thesis (including revisions) to graduate committee and School of Graduate Studies (Early April deadline for spring; Mid November deadline for fall)
9. 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., approved by Graduate Studies and uploaded electronically)

\*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: <http://www.uah.edu/graduate>

## THESIS GUIDELINES

### CITI Training for Ethical Research Conduct

We recommend that you complete the CITI training with expediency during your first semester.

<https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>

From the Office of Sponsored Programs website, the following applies to UAH research:

<http://www.uah.edu/osp/training/responsible-conduct-of-research-online-training>

Training in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR): All UAH faculty/ personnel members, postdoctoral scholars, graduate and undergraduate students involved in research are required to complete the CITI RCR training within ninety (90) days of initiating their research. RCR training certificates will be valid for four (4) years.

Training in the Protection of Human Subjects: All UAH faculty/ personnel members, postdoctoral scholars, graduate and undergraduate students involved in human subjects research as key personnel must complete the Basic Course in the protection of human subjects prior to Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of their protocol. Key personnel are defined as the Principal Investigator, co-investigators and research personnel who interact directly with human subjects or who have access to private information related to human subjects during the course of a research project. Key personnel also include faculty sponsors /advisors who provide direct oversight of research with human subjects or research using private information about human subjects. Certificate of completion of the basic course is valid for three (3) years.

### The Thesis Project: 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

You should enter our program with a designated faculty advisor who has accepted you into the laboratory. The overwhelming guide in your fit within a research lab should be commonality of research interest. You should schedule a time to discuss your interests with the faculty advisor and the feasibility of your potential topic. We recommend that students immerse themselves in the 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.

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 a thesis focus. 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.

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 IRB 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 UAH 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.

## Inviting Committee Members

It is advisable to provide committee members with the Purpose, Hypothesis, Procedures, and Instruments/Materials sections of the IRB Form 1 Application when you request them to serve on your thesis committee in order to provide a general synopsis of your thesis project. You are then expected to follow up with an APA format manuscript as your thesis prospectus at least one week prior to your committee meeting.

## IRB Submission

We recommend that you submit the thesis project to the Institutional Review Committee (IRB) prior to your thesis prospectus meeting with the expectation that you will make revisions to your IRB Form 1 if necessary once the prospectus meeting is completed. Typically, the thesis projects require IRB Form 1 Application with Form 2 for Expedited Review and the relevant consent form. Note that sample Materials are expected as an appendix to the IRB Form 1 Application. Expect up to one month before feedback from IRB and also be prepared to respond to comments before final approval by IRB is given. Note that you should keep a copy of the materials you submit to IRB. Furthermore, a copy of the approval letter and consent form is the norm as an appendix to your final thesis document.

## The Thesis Proposal/Prospectus

The thesis study must be developed in collaboration with your faculty advisor. 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.

Your thesis proposal should be in APA manuscript format. The Introduction should include a review of literature relevant to the study and hypotheses should be clearly stated. The Method section should include descriptions of participants or subjects, precise design, operational definitions of independent and dependent variables, and a detailed description of the experimental procedures. The Results section should describe the statistical analyses planned and can include figures/tables of expected results. 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. 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 prospectus is complete, a substantial portion of the thesis writing will have been finished.



## 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 (thesis prospectus or final thesis) at least one week in advance of the meetings.

**Prospectus Meeting:** This meeting should be held to review and approve the thesis prospectus, i.e., the 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.

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.

**Making Progress in Writing:** Students should convert their thesis prospectus from APA manuscript format into the Graduate Studies format while collecting the thesis data. This will alleviate some of the pressure of completing further revisions and adapting for different formatting styles. The thesis consists 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., IRB approval, consent form, scripts, materials) are typically included, but the thesis advisor should specify the content. For example, if the thesis used proprietary material, it should not be included in the final thesis appendix as that would violate copyrights.

**Thesis Defense:** The final meeting of the thesis committee will consist of the presentation of the thesis data by the student and the defense of the thesis. The oral presentation of data (approximately 20-30 minutes) is open to anyone interested in the research. Audience members can ask questions at the end of the presentation. The general audience will then be excused, so that the student and thesis committee can continue the defense in closed session.

## Final Thesis 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>). The Members of the Committee, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the College must sign the document. The Dean of Graduate Studies must then review final thesis submissions, and any necessary changes must be made in order to receive your Master’s degree. The final submission of the thesis is digital.

## 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.

### 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.

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. Students are additionally encouraged to apply for student research grants when available and appropriate, and to utilize departmental laboratory space and equipment.

## 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, the student should have a discussion with the primary advisor or the chairperson of the department.

1. Commitment to the program is evaluated through professionalism:
  - Consistent and on-time attendance in all classes as well as participation in discussions
  - Presence on campus, in labs and other venues, beyond the minimum required for classes
  - Collegiality that fosters a positive, cooperative atmosphere to focus on meeting the challenges of graduate school rather than enabling a negative environment that exacerbates stress where the focus is on complaining
  - Participation in departmental functions
    - Social events sponsored by department, Psi Chi, CAHS, or UAH
    - 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

<b>Faculty:</b>	<b>Office:</b>	<b>Lab:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Dr. Sandra Carpenter	MOR 333 824-2319	MOR 128 MOR 101C	<a href="mailto:carpens@email.uah.edu">carpens@email.uah.edu</a>
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Dr. Eric Seemann	MOR 319A 824-2323	MOR 114 824-4588	<a href="mailto:seemane@email.uah.edu">seemane@email.uah.edu</a>
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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/>

## FAQs

**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 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: 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.

**8. 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.

**9. 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 the 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 the Chair and the parties involved. As a student, you have the right to learn in an environment that is supportive, enlightening, and non-hostile.

**10. 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.

# UAH Psychology Photo Release Form

## **Undergraduate Students:**

The Psychology Department at UAH would like to take or use previously taken photographs of its students to appear in our department website. These include group pictures and individual pictures that highlight activities in the department or individual pictures used in your university photo identification. The group photos are likely to be labeled with the names of the students in them.

## **Graduate Students:**

In addition to the goals listed for the undergraduate students, graduate students will have both group and individual pictures taken for the department website. Group pictures will be taken in the fall semester as a class photo. Group photos may include those pictures taken at conferences, social events, or in your laboratory.

The individual pictures will be sorted by lab and be labeled with your name only, but not your email, while you are in the Master's program at UAH. This conforms to expectations of many graduate program websites. If you prefer we use the photo associated with your UAH ID after you review the ones taken at the beginning of the semester by the department, indicate this to us. Your faculty, although reluctant as any to have pictures taken, have conformed to this model. The photograph on the department website should lend validity to your good standing in our program.

Please note that websites can be viewed throughout the world, not just in the United States where US law applies. If you elect not to have your photograph on our website, but the photograph is of a group shot, then your face will be masked to prevent recognition.

If you give us permission to use your photo and the ability to label your name, please indicate this, then date, and sign below. If you decline, then also date and sign.

***[ ] Yes, I agree to the photo and to be labeled.***

***[ ] I agree to the photo, but decline to be labeled.***

***[ ] No, I decline both photo and label***

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## UAH Psychology Graduate Research Fund

Requests are limited to fully admitted Psychology graduate students in good standing.

Requests for Materials are limited to one for each research project in a laboratory in a year. These funds can be used to purchase special materials (e.g., software) related to the project not to exceed \$100 or can be collectively submitted by students in a lab for common use items such as paper, toner, participant stipends\*.

We cannot pay for copying, but can supply paper and toner.

Special Materials must first be purchased by the applicant, then the applicant will be reimbursed to the maximum award once the receipt is presented to the PY department office.

\*Requests for Participant Stipends can be pooled by submissions of eligible graduate students in a laboratory for the same project in a year, but each student must submit an individual request not to exceed \$100. The funds will be used to purchase gift cards that serve as participant stipends.

No travel requests will be funded.

Submit request to your faculty advisor for approval with copy to Dr. Torres ([torresa@uah.edu](mailto:torresa@uah.edu)).

### Request for Funding

#### Applicant Information

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last* *First* *M.I.*

Laboratory:

Supervisor

Title of

Project

Purpose	Category	Special Materials	Participant Stipends
Thesis Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> (software, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Common Use (paper, toner)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Description of Materials & Cost of unit:

#### Approval

Awarded:  Yes  No Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Department Electronic Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*