SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology Master's Program Student Handbook

Revised Fall 2016

Table of Contents

Contents

M.S. Program Objectives and Tracks

The Master's Degree in Applied Psychology prepares students for jobs that require the application of psychological knowledge to the workplace or to community settings. This involves training in theory, research, and practice. Although some students continue study for a Ph.D. degree, most accept challenging jobs in public, private, or non-profit field settings upon graduation.

The program has two tracks: a) Industrial/Organizational Psychology and b) Program Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. Both tracks are based on a scientist-practitioner model. Thus, graduates from the Applied Psychology program learn how to meet the opportunities and challenges faced by researchers working in the field, by participating in the design, conduct, communication, and application of results of research while working with practitioners and lay persons in applied settings. One key component of training in applied psychology at San Diego State University is a supervised internship involving the application of classroom learning and acquisition of new skills in a field setting. Students collaborate directly with psychologists and others working in the field.

The Master's program in Applied Psychology at San Diego State University provides advanced training both for recent graduates and for individuals who have been in the workforce for a number of years. The program is designed to take two to three years to complete. It is a full-time program, and therefore serious commitment to graduate training is expected. Funding in the form of assistantships is typically available so that students can give their full attention to their graduate studies.

M.A. Program Objectives and Emphases

The Master of Arts program offers students the opportunity to pursue their study of psychology at the graduate level and to prepare themselves for Ph.D. programs in a variety of areas. It is particularly appropriate for students who need advanced work to strengthen their profiles in preparation for application to Ph.D. programs or for those who wish to explore graduate level work before making a commitment to Ph.D. training. Note: Students completing the Master of Arts program will be treated fairly but in no special way with regard to their application to the SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology.

Students take seminars in major areas of Psychology and have the opportunity to develop an emphasis in a chosen area by additional course selection and research. Areas of emphasis include behavioral and cognitive neuroscience, learning and cognition, developmental psychology, social/personality, and physical and/or mental health research.

In general, the program is research oriented. It does not offer instruction in such technical skills as intelligence testing and does not have a counseling practicum for the development of clinical skills. There are many opportunities to gain valuable laboratory experience in conducting research, including experimental studies working with human participants in non-clinical areas. Funding in the form of assistantships is typically available so that students can give their full attention to their graduate studies.

Course Requirements for the M.S. Program

The Master of Science degree requires a minimum of 38 units of graduate-level course work, including required courses and electives. The required courses are designed to provide students with a thorough background in the major theories and findings in their chosen track (i.e., Evaluation or Industrial/Organizational Psychology), including research methods and statistics in psychology.

Students should take advantage of their electives to supplement effectively the curriculum offered in the Applied Psychology program. Students in Industrial/Organizational Psychology may find courses in Business, Educational Technology, and Statistics particularly relevant for their elective. Students in the Evaluation track have their choice of four electives, and are expected to use those electives to pursue a focused specialization. Relevant courses may be found in Social Work, Public Health, Education, and Public Administration. All students should consult with their major advisor to design a program of study that best matches their interests. The program of study must receive final approval from a Graduate Advisor.

Shared Requirements for Both Tracks:

PSY 600*	Research Orientation	2 units
PSY 670A-670B	Advanced Statistics	6 units
PSY 675	Seminar in Psychological Measurement	3 units
PSY 799A	Thesis	3 units

* PSY 600 is taken over 2 semesters in the first year

Required Courses for Industrial/Organizational Psychology Track:

PSY 621	Seminar in Personnel Psychology	3 units
PSY 622	Seminar in Organizational Psychology	3 units
PSY 630	Seminar in Program Evaluation	3 units
PSY 721	Adv. Seminar in Personnel Psychology	3 units
PSY 722	Adv. Seminar in Organizational Psychology	3 units
PSY 792	Internship in I/O Psychology	6 units
	Graduate Elective (in a focused applied area)	3 units

Required Courses for Program Evaluation Track:

PSY 621	Seminar in Personnel Psychology	3 units
OR PSY 622	Seminar in Organizational Psychology	
PSY 630	Seminar in Program Evaluation	3 units
PSY 791	Internship in Program Evaluation	6 units

Graduate Electives (in a focused applied area)**   12 Units

**Three units of PSY 797 Research units earned for your participation in your research lab can count as one of these electives. Others may be selected from any other 500-700 level Psychology classes or graduate classes from other departments in the University with the approval of a Graduate Advisor. See class schedule for current offerings.

Total Coursework Required for M.S. Program (Including Internship) = 38 Units

Timeline of Events for the M.S. Program

The following is a rough timeline describing significant events students will experience and activities they will participate in as part of the M.S. program in Applied Psychology. In addition to the courses and activities listed, there is an annual student review (usually in mid-April) for which students need to prepare a report and meet with program faculty to review progress, obtain feedback about performance and progress, and set goals for future progress. Note that each student's experience in the program is unique and is expected to deviate somewhat from the events listed below.

SAMPLE TIMELINE AND GOALS
(Note: Timelines for individual students may vary)

Fall of Year One	
Typical Courses: I/O	**Typical Courses: Program Evaluation**
PSY 600 (one unit)	PSY 600 (one unit)
PSY 670A	PSY 670A
PSY 621 (or 622)	PSY 621 (or 622)
PSY 797 (lab research)	PSY 797 (lab research)

Fall of Year One Semester Goals (I/O and Program Evaluation tracks):
- Meet with faculty to discuss research opportunities and thesis topics by mid-semester
- Review literature relevant to possible thesis topics by mid-semester

Spring of Year One	
Typical Courses: I/O	**Typical Courses: Program Evaluation**
PSY 600 (one unit)	PSY 600 (one unit)
PSY 670B	PSY 670B
PSY 721 (or 722)	PSY 630
PSY 675	PSY 675
PSY 797 (lab research)	PSY 797 (lab research)

Spring Semester of Year One Goals (I/O and Program Evaluation tracks)**:**
- Identify internship opportunities in the beginning of March
- File Official Program of Study (POS) by the end of the semester
- Decide on topic area/method for thesis project by the end of the semester
- Participate in annual student progress review by the end of the semester
- Write formal thesis proposal draft by the end of the semester

Summer Year One Goals (I/O and Program Evaluation tracks):
- Begin internship in June
- Select other members of thesis committee by the end of summer
- Complete thesis proposal by the end of summer (See "Thesis M.A. and M.S." and
- "In Pursuit of the Master's Degree" sections of this Handbook)
- Obtain IRB clearance by the end of summer (save all e-mail correspondence from IRB)

Fall of Year Two

Typical Courses: I/O	Typical Courses: Program Evaluation
PSY 622 (or 621)	Elective
PSY 792 (internship)	PSY 791 (internship)
PSY 797 (lab research)	PSY 797 (lab research)
Elective	Electives (6)

Fall Semester of Year Two Goals (I/O and Program Evaluation tracks):
- Schedule thesis proposal meeting early to mid-semester (send abstract to Admin Coordinator at least two weeks/10 business days prior—see **Diagram A**)
- Submit Internship report and evaluations early to mid-semester
- Collect and Analyze thesis data mid-to-late semester

Spring of Year Two

Typical Courses: I/O	Typical Courses: Program Evaluation
PSY 722 (or 721)	Elective (3)
PSY 630	PSY 797 (lab research)
PSY 797 (lab research)	PSY 799A (thesis)
PSY 799A (thesis)	PSY 791 (internship)
PSY 792 (internship)	Elective (3)

Spring of Year 2 Semester goals (I/O and Program Evaluation tracks):
- Check Academic Calendar for Division of Graduate Affairs deadlines prior to beginning of semester
- Register for PSY 799A in the first three weeks of semester
- Apply for graduation in the very beginning of the semester
- Write results and Discussion sections of thesis early to mid-semester
- Schedule final thesis oral defense meeting mid-to-late semester (send abstract to Admin Coordinator at least two weeks/10 business days prior—see **Diagram B**)

M.S. Internship

An essential component of graduate training in Applied Psychology is an internship experience, which provides students with an opportunity to apply their classroom training in an actual field setting and gain new skills. The Internship Coordinator (contact 594-5359) works with students throughout the internship process, initially by providing leads, position openings, and contacts in local organizations. The Internship Coordinator also helps put a site agreement in place with new internship sites. After the internship is over, students and supervisors send the Internship Coordinator performance and site review documentation. Parallel to this effort, students work on developing leads for possible internships. After companies have been identified, students work with the Internship Coordinator to take the steps necessary to secure an interview.

There are two criteria for an opportunity to meet the requirements of an internship: 1) it must be related to the student's degree objectives, and 2) the site supervisor needs to be a specialist in program evaluation, organizational development, human resources, industrial/organizational psychology, or organizational behavior. Interns work with other psychologists and practitioners in the field, while working under the direct supervision of an internship site supervisor. Students in both emphases are required to work a minimum of 300 hours in an approved internship site to earn 6 units of credit (usually two 3-unit 791 or 792 courses). The internship is typically completed during the summer months. For more details regarding the internship process refer to the Student Internship Guide.

M.S. Program Post-Graduate Opportunities

Graduates will be prepared to enter rewarding professional careers.

Those who choose the Industrial/Organizational track may work for corporations or consulting firms in positions involving the development, delivery, and evaluation of human resources interventions. Examples include personnel selection, training, motivation, job design, and quality of work-life interventions, satisfaction/climate surveys or larger-scale organizational change and development efforts.

Students who choose Program Evaluation find employment in such settings as health care, education, community- based programs, mental health settings, or government agencies. They perform such functions as: needs assessment, program implementation, program monitoring, feasibility studies, survey design and administration, impact evaluations, formative evaluation and cost benefit analysis. They communicate and use evaluation findings to effect change.

These jobs tend to be intellectually exciting, and the rewards include having an impact on people's lives. Students in either track may also choose to pursue doctoral-level training in related areas of psychology after completing their M.S. degree.

Course Requirements for the M.A. Program

The Master of Arts degree requires a minimum of 30 units of graduate-level course work, including required courses and electives. The required courses are designed to provide students with a thorough background in the major theories and findings in their chosen emphasis (e.g., developmental, social/personality, behavioral and cognitive neuroscience, learning and cognition, physical and mental health), including research methods and statistics in psychology.

Students should take advantage of their elective to supplement effectively the curriculum offered in the M.A. program. Students may find courses in Biology, Social Work, Public Health, or Education, particularly relevant for their elective. All students should consult with their major advisor to design a program of study that best matches their interests. The program of study must receive final approval from the Graduate Advisor.

Required courses:

PSY 600**	Research Orientation (1 unit per semester)	2 units
PSY 610	Advanced Research Methods	3 units
PSY 670A/B	Advanced Statistics (3 units per semester)	6 units
OR PSY 770A/B	Advanced Statistics (3 units per semester)	6 units
PSY 675	Seminar in Psychological Measurement	3 units
PSY 797	Research	1 unit
PSY 799A	Thesis	3 units
	Graduate Elective	3 units

** PSY 600 is taken over 2 semesters in the first year

Three **core courses** from below are also required (others from this list may be used as electives):

One of the following two classes (3 units):

PSY 561	Seminar in Neuropsychology	3 units
OR PSY 760	Seminar in Physiological Correlates of Behavior	3 units

Two of the following four classes (6 units total):

PSY 587	Advanced Principles of Learning & Cognition	3 units
PSY 632	Theories and Methods in Developmental Science	3 units
PSY 740	Seminar in Social Psychology	3 units
PSY 751	Clinical Psychological Science: Theory & Methods	3 units

Three units of PSY 797 Research units (above the required 1 unit of 797) can count as an elective. Others may be selected from any other 500-700 level Psychology classes or graduate classes from other departments in the University *with the approval of the Graduate Advisor*. See class schedule for current offerings.

You may take additional courses if your schedule permits, but only 30 units of graduate level coursework will appear on your Official Program of Study.

A DEFICIENCY IN PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY MUST BE ADDRESSED BY THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR IN THE PROGRAM, SO PLEASE PLAN ACCORDINGLY!

Total Coursework Required for the M.A. Program = 30 Units

Timeline of Events for the M.A. Program

The following is a rough timeline describing significant events students will experience and activities they will participate in as part of the M.A. Program in Psychology. In addition to the courses and activities listed, there is an annual student review (usually in mid-April) for which students need to prepare a report and meet with program faculty to review progress, obtain feedback about performance and progress, and set goals for future progress. Note that each student's experience in the program is unique and may deviate somewhat from the events listed below.

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SAMPLE TIMELINE AND GOALS
(Note: Timelines for individual students may vary)

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Fall of Year One	
Typical Courses if PSY 260 deficiency exists:	**Typical Courses if no deficiency exists:**
PSY 600 (one unit)	PSY 600 (one unit)
PSY 670A or 770A	PSY 670A or 770A
PSY 260	Core Course (PSY 561, 587, 632, 740, 751 or 760)
PSY 797 (lab research; 2-3 units)	PSY 797 (lab research; 2-3 units)

Fall Semester Year One Goals:
- Complete PSY 260 (Physiological Psychology) Deficiency, if applicable, by the end of the semester
- Meet with faculty to discuss research opportunities and thesis topics by mid-semester
- Review literature relevant to possible thesis topics by the end of the semester
- Formulate thesis research question by the end of the semester

Spring of Year One
Typical Courses:
PSY 600 (one unit)
PSY670B or 770B
PSY 610
PSY 797

Spring Semester Year One Goals:
- File Official Program of Study (POS) by the end of the semeseter
- Participate in annual student progress review by the end of the semester
- Design thesis project by mid-semester
- Draft formal thesis proposal by the end of the semester
- Select other members of thesis committee by the end of the semester

Summer Goals:
- Complete thesis proposal by the end of the summer (See "Thesis M.A. and M.S." and "In Pursuit of the Master's Degree" sections of this Handbook)
- Obtain IRB clearance by the end of the summer (save all e-mail correspondence from IRB)

Fall of Year Two
Typical Courses:
2 Core Courses or 1 Core Course and 1 Elective (Core Courses are PSY 561, 760, 587, 632, 740, 751)
PSY 797 or 799A

Fall Semester Year Two Goals:
- Schedule thesis proposal meeting early to mid-semester (send abstract to Admin Coordinator at least two weeks/10 business days prior—see **Diagram A**)
- Collect and analyze thesis data mid-to-late semester (See "Thesis M.A. and M.S." and "In Pursuit of the Master's Degree" sections of this Handbook)

Spring of Year Two
Typical Courses:
PSY 675
1-2 Core Classes or Elective
PSY 797, 799A, or 799B

Spring Semester Year Two Goals
- See Academic Calendar before semester begins for Division of Graduate Affairs deadlines
- Register for PSY 799A in the first three weeks of the semester
- Apply for graduation early in the semester
- Write results & discussion sections of thesis early-to-mid semester
- Schedule final thesis oral defense meeting mid-to-late semester (send abstract to Admin Coordinator at least two weeks/10 business days prior—see **Diagram B**)

- Prepare thesis for final processing and submit to Montezuma Publishing. (See "Thesis M.A. and M.S." and "In Pursuit of the Master's Degree" sections of this Handbook)

Notes Regarding All (M.A. and M.S.) Graduate Courses in Psychology

1. Priority for registration in courses is given to students for whom the course is required on their Official Program of Study.

2. Be aware that some courses are only offered in the Fall, some only in the Spring, and some in alternate years (as discussed in PSY 600).

3. Students may take additional courses that are not part of their official Program of Study. These courses will appear on students' transcripts and will contribute to your overall GPA. **We urge you to plan ahead, and to get your required courses out of the way before you take your electives.**

4. All graduate students must demonstrate satisfactory performance on the departmental statistics placement exam prior to enrolling in PSY 670A. Before the beginning of the Fall semester, all students will be sent information for review purposes detailing the concepts and statistical content sampled by the exam.

5. Your total hours of course work and assistantship should total no more than 15 units per semester. Ten hours of teaching assistantship is equivalent to 3 credit units, so if you have a 20-hour teaching assistantship, you should take no more than 9 units per semester and if you have a 10-hour teaching assistantship, you should take no more than 12 units per semester. However, if you feel you need to take more units, you may petition to do so by discussing this with your advisor. The advisor will then notify (via email) the Associate Dean of GRA explaining the circumstances, and vouch that the student will be able to make good academic progress even with the additional workload.

6. Grade point average of at least 3.0 must be maintained in all courses listed on the official degree program, and in all courses, 300-level and above, taken at SDSU concurrently with or subsequent to graduate admissions. If an individual's grade point average is below 3.0, they are at risk of losing their teaching assistantship. A grade point average of at least 2.85 must be maintained in all courses on the graduate record in order to graduate.

Thesis (M.A. and M.S.)

All Master's students are required to complete and present a thesis, involving the design of an original empirical study, data collection, analysis, and a write-up of the study hypotheses and findings. The thesis must fulfill the requirements of the Graduate School, described in the Graduate Bulletin. Students work closely with a Thesis Committee Chair to develop an original empirical project, which is evaluated and approved by a committee chosen by the student and his/her advisor. Students work independently during all aspects of the thesis, including design, data collection, analysis, and write-up. A final report is written by the student, approved by the Thesis Committee, and submitted to the Graduate School for credit towards the Master's degree.

In Pursuit of the Master's Degree

Step One: File an Official Program of Study (POS)

An Official Program of Study (POS) is a contract between the student and the University indicating which classes the student will take to complete the requirements for his/her master's degree. The POS form is located on Blackboard (Masters's Homeroom). The Official Program of Study should be submitted by the end of the first year in the program. Students holding department assistantships will not have their assistantships renewed unless their Official Programs of Study have been submitted.

During the Fall semester, the Graduate Advisors will make a presentation to the Research Orientation class (PSY 600) and address questions regarding the completion of the Official Program of Study. Students can make an appointment with an Associate Graduate Advisor to get additional information. After completing the Official Program of Study form, the student should meet with his/her mentor to review the POS and obtain the mentor's signature on the form. Then an appointment must be made with an Associate Graduate Advisor to officially submit the POS on-line. You must be present with the Advisor to submit the POS. This process typically occurs during spring semester of the first year.

You cannot remove courses from your POS once they're taken. If you wish to change your Official Program, of Study you must file a "Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements," form, located here: http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra/graforms.aspx. This form must be approved and recommended by the Graduate Advisor, then signed by the Assistant Dean of the Division of Graduate Affairs.

Please note that you should plan on when you will take courses, given that some courses are only offered one semester/year or even once every 2 years. However, the submitted POS includes only the courses you need to complete the degree and not the particular semester you need to take them. If you decide to take a particular course in a different semester than originally planned, you may do so without filing a Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements.

Step Two: Thesis Proposal Preparation

Students need to select a Thesis Committee Chair (typically their faculty mentor) and Committee, and develop a thesis proposal. A thesis proposal is needed that outlines the planned research project. The thesis proposal should consist of a description of the study's hypotheses, objectives, design, methods for data collection, planned statistical analyses, and implications of potential outcomes. It must be written in the current APA-approved style. Students often do background work on developing a thesis topic prior to their thesis proposal. However, there are strict guidelines regulating the nature and extent of such pilot work. These can also be found in the most recent version of the official thesis preparation manual, San Diego State University Master's Theses and Project Manual, as introduced in PSY 600. It contains detailed information about who may chair or serve on thesis committees, manuscript preparation, etc.

Students must apply for approval from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (or IACUC for animal research) before the proposal meeting, and then submit amendments (if needed) after the proposal meeting.

Advancement to candidacy (see below) cannot occur until IRB or IACUC paperwork has been submitted. Students should seek the input of their thesis chair when deciding which option would

be best. In either case, collection of the thesis data **cannot** begin until IRB or IACUC approval has been obtained. Students who are using data from a research project that has already been approved by IRB/IACUC still must submit a modification to that IRB describing how the data will be used for their thesis project.

Step Three: Thesis Proposal Meeting
After the proposal has been thoroughly critiqued and approved by the Thesis Committee Chair, the student must then present the thesis proposal at a meeting with their Thesis Committee. It is the student's responsibility to reserve a room and schedule the proposal meeting at a time when the entire Thesis Committee can attend. The proposal should be distributed to the Thesis Committee members typically 2 weeks in advance of their proposal meeting. **At least 2 weeks prior to their meeting (or 10 business days)**, the student must submit their abstract announcement (template can be found in Blackboard Homeroom) to the Graduate Administrative Coordinator for approval by the Graduate Advising Team. NOTE: <u>The Thesis Committee Chair must approve the Abstract before it can be submitted</u>. The abstract page should be written according to the guidelines set forth in the template. We are required by SDSU's Division of Graduate and Research Affairs to send notification of the proposal meeting to faculty **at least 7 days** prior to the proposal meeting date (see Diagram A and B on Proposing and Defending). The purpose of this procedure is to give the faculty an opportunity to provide feedback to the student prior to conducting the study so that the thesis proper may benefit from the input. Faculty are encouraged to transmit their comments to the Thesis Committee Chair and to attend the proposal meeting. Faculty and students are invited to attend the proposal meeting.

If needed, students can arrange for a laptop computer and projector with the Department of Psychology office, but need to reserve this in advance. At the end of a successful proposal meeting, students should have their Thesis Chair and Committee sign the official Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee Signature Form from the Division of Graduate Affairs. The student then takes this form to the Graduate Advisor for signature and to receive their Advancement to Candidacy form (see Step Four). The student then submits these forms to the Division of Graduate Affairs.

If no major problems are brought to the attention of the Graduate Advisor within five working days following the proposal meeting, and all other conditions for Advancement to Candidacy are met, then thesis research may proceed. In the rare event that major difficulties arise, informal resolution is attempted. Failing this, the matter is presented to the department Master's Committee.

Step Four: Recommendation for Advancement to Candidacy
When 12 units or more in courses on the Official Program of Study have been completed with an average GPA of B (3.0) or better, and any undergraduate deficiencies have been remedied, students are eligible for Advancement to Candidacy for the Master's Degree. In addition, students must have successfully proposed their thesis. After determining that all requirements have been met, the Graduate Advisor signs the Advancement to Candidacy form, which is submitted to the Division of Graduate Affairs by the student. This form notifies the Division of Graduate Affairs that the student has met Department of Psychology requirements and has been Advanced to Candidacy. This form is typically submitted at the same time as the official Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee Signature Form. After this has been done, the student is eligible to enroll for three units of master's thesis research (799A). The schedule number for 799A may be obtained from the Division of Graduate Affairs once the Thesis/Project Committee Signature Form and Advancement to Candidacy have been approved. Note that enrollment in 799A or 799B (thesis research extension) is considered a full course load for veteran's benefits, Navy Contract employment, and student financial aid. A letter to this effect can be obtained from the Graduate Advisor and the Division of Graduate and Research Affairs.

Step Five: Thesis Data Collection and Analyses
Collection or accessing of thesis data can begin only after the thesis proposal has been approved in writing by the Thesis Committee and the Graduate Advisor, and IRB approval has been obtained. Pilot data can be collected beforehand (with appropriate IRB or IACUC approval) and may be described in the report. The student must be registered for at least one class at SDSU in order to begin collecting thesis data. The Thesis Chair is to be consulted throughout the data collection, analysis, and write-up of the thesis.

Step Six: Final Thesis Oral Exam (Thesis Defense)
Upon approval by the Thesis Chair, the thesis must be distributed to each member of the Thesis Committee, ideally at least two weeks in advance of the final oral exam. It is the student's responsibility to reserve a room and schedule the defense meeting at a time when the entire Thesis Committee can attend. **At least 2 weeks prior to their meeting (or 10 business days)**, the student must submit their thesis (which will be evaluated by Turnitin) and abstract announcement (template can be found in Blackboard Homeroom) to the Graduate Administrative Coordinator for approval by the Graduate Advisor. NOTE: The Thesis Committee Chair must approve the Abstract before it can be submitted. The abstract page should be written according to APA publication guidelines (located in Montezuma Publishing Manual). Notification of the defense meeting must be sent out to faculty **at least 7 days** prior to the defense meeting date. Faculty and students are invited to attend the defense meeting.

If needed, students can arrange for a laptop computer and projector with the Department of Psychology office, but they need to reserve this in advance. The Thesis Committee must approve the thesis; for approval, ask Thesis Committee members for their signatures in black ink on an official Signature Page which the student has prepared and printed ahead of time. The model for the official Signature Page can be found in Chapter 5 of the *SDSU Master's Thesis and Project Manual* and here: http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/Links.aspx. The signatures indicate final approval of the thesis. Although this Signature Page is typically signed at the defense meeting, the Thesis Committee members may recommend edits to the document. If so, the Committee may sign under the condition that the student make the edits and obtain final approval from the Thesis Committee Chair for the final version of the thesis document. Otherwise, the Committee members may not sign until the edits have been made and approved.

Step Seven: Thesis Submission
Finally, the thesis needs to be typed and formatted in just-about-final form. It is suggested that this be done by a professional familiar with SDSU psychology thesis format to avoid problems with the Thesis Review Service. For those who choose not to retain a professional for this service, it is recommended that the student consult the *San Diego State University Master's Theses and Projects Manual* for reference.

Visit the Dissertation/Thesis Review web site. http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/ThesisReview.aspx. The site contains information on deadlines, policies, and procedures for preparing and submitting theses. You will also find a checklist of required components for all theses. Students who cannot prepare their theses will find a list of professional formatters to contact.

Before submission of the final draft to Thesis Review Service, the entire thesis manuscript, the Abstract/Title page, and a photocopy of the Title and Signature pages need to go to the Division

of Graduate and Research Affairs. They will issue a Thesis Clearance Sheet approving the almost-final copy. Then the pages and manuscript can be taken to the Thesis Review Service.

Step Eight: Walking at Graduation
Most students enjoy the experience of closure they get from "walking" through the graduation ceremonies, being hooded by their thesis chair at the psychology ceremony, and being lauded by their family and friends. In order to qualify to "walk" (either at the college or department ceremony), an almost final copy of the thesis (even if it has not yet been defended) must have been submitted to the Thesis Chair. The determination of what constitutes "almost final" is made by the Graduate Advisor. It is the responsibility of the student to rent or otherwise obtain the formal cap, gown, and hood, which make up the graduation regalia. These are available in the bookstore. Be sure to ask your Thesis Chair well in advance of graduation whether s/he plans to attend the ceremonies, and whether s/he would be willing to hood you. If your Thesis Chair is not available for the hooding, you should ask a favorite professor to do so.

Critical Deadlines
Graduation is not automatic upon filing the thesis. There are deadlines and costs. Students need to obtain an application for graduation from the Division of Graduate Affairs office, submit it to the cashier's office and pay the required fee. **You must apply for graduation early in the semester in which you plan to graduate, and you must be registered in 799 (A or B) in the semester in which you plan to graduate. Check the current Graduate Bulletin for deadlines.**

If, for some reason, graduation in May is not possible, it is necessary to re-apply (and pay an additional fee) for August or whatever subsequent semester in which graduation is expected. The Thesis Review Service has a late April "without risk" deadline (see the Graduate Bulletin for current deadline data) for submission of the final draft for May graduation. That means they will critique it and return it to the student for any corrections in time for it to be submitted to Thesis Processing (Montezuma Publishing) by their late May deadline (see the Graduate Bulletin for current deadline data). Montezuma Publishing will see that it is printed, bound, and shelved in the library. The Thesis Chair and members of the Thesis Committee also appreciate receiving a bound copy of the thesis.

If the thesis is submitted to the Thesis Review Service between late April and late May, this is the "at risk" period and the critiquing/printing procedures may not be done in time for May graduation. However, as long as the thesis has gone to the Thesis Review Service, the Division of Graduate Affairs considers it complete, and it will not be necessary to re-enroll in the subsequent semester.

The deadlines for filing for graduation and for filing the thesis manuscript change each semester. The dates are published in each semester's class schedule and the Graduate Bulletin. Note that there is a seven-year rule. Students have seven years from the date of their first course on their Official Program of Study to complete all the requirements for the master's degree. Students must apply for an official Leave of Absence if they are going to be taking a break from the program during any time within the program. Please see http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/registrar/leave.html for procedures if students are absent from the program during the course of their program.

Summary of Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to take care of the following:

1. Read the SDSU Graduate Bulletin for any graduate student requirements.

2. Make sure all transcripts are in and the GRE score is on file.

3. Notify the Department as well as Admissions and Records of any changes in name, address, e-mail or phone number.

4. Keep overall GPA at 3.0 or above.

5. Fulfill course requirements for specialization (M.A. or M.S.).

6. Obtain approval for transfer units from other schools/departments.

7. File your Official Program of Study and obtain approval to change it, if necessary. The Official Program of Study should be signed by both the student and his/her faculty mentor and submitted to Graduate Affairs during a meeting with a Graduate Associate Advisor by the end of the second semester in the program.

8. Select a Thesis Committee Chair and a Thesis Committee, and complete the paperwork involved.

9. Obtain approval from IRB (Institutional Review Board) before collecting data for your thesis.

10. Successfully defend your proposal, and conduct your thesis research.

11. Write up your thesis in appropriate form, and successfully defend it.

12. Know the required steps and forms to be completed for the thesis.

13. Obtain forms and signatures for all steps of the thesis.

14. File for graduation early in the semester in which you plan to graduate.

15. Provide SDSU's main library with a copy of the final thesis.

Pearls of Wisdom from Students Who Have Been There

"The expectations for graduate students are different from undergraduates. No one is going to hold your hand and tell you what to do every step of the way. Be prepared to be independent and to take the initiative for all aspects of your education. This includes getting to know professors, finding a thesis topic, making friends, and unearthing answers to administrative questions."

"I thought I knew everything about performing research in the library. In reality, I was completely ignorant. It wasn't until my last year that I discovered all sorts of resources that could have saved me weeks of work. I would advise new students to talk to the librarians about their papers and research projects. Librarians are paid the big bucks for a reason."

"A big mistake I made was to wait until my last semester to start thinking of a thesis topic. I know of some students who knew what thesis topic they were interested in and wrote a paper on the same topic throughout all of their courses. They were really ahead of the game when they sat down to write their final thesis. Other students were a lot more on the ball and actively searched for topics by talking to professors or asking questions in their classes. If I could do it all over again, in each class I would have asked myself the question 'Does this interest me? Could I write a thesis on this subject?'"

"The bureaucracy at SDSU is thicker than cement! There's a form for absolutely everything and the policies (and the forms) are always changing. My advice is to be prepared. Read absolutely everything in the catalog and make sure you understand what you need to do. Asking several sources (the department and the Division of Graduate Affairs, for example) also helps to get a broader picture of the requirements. Turn in the paperwork as early as possible, in case there are problems (and usually there is at least one box you'll forget to fill in). Another piece of advice is to maintain a Zen-like attitude. Eventually someone will give you the wrong form, the wrong information, or forget to tell you that you needed to fill out Form A before you can turn in Form B. It doesn't help to get upset about it because you'll still have to jump through those hoops whether you want to or not. Throwing a tantrum only makes the person less helpful and raises your own blood pressure."

The following was written by Tory Weber, Master's Student, Class of 2002:

"Why Your Thesis is the Ideal Boyfriend..."

It is always there for you.
It listens and reflects what you have said.
It can provide a great sense of accomplishment. Standing by its side makes you feel intelligent.
It can be on your mind without consuming your every bit of attention. It works around your schedule.
It will never take advantage of you.
You will never have to worry about jealousy or apologizing. You will feel the immediate reward for the time you invest in it. It will be at your command, your every beck and call.
It will appreciate your unique ambitions, talents, and insights.
It will never roll its eyes at you or comment in any derogatory manner. It has no preference as to your shape and size.
It will never look to be just friends, but will always desire an intimate relationship.
Once you have established a good working relationship it will reciprocate your every expression of love. It will laugh with you not at you.

It will hang on your every last word and will always provide more than a one-word answer. But, most importantly, it will never lead you on or forget to call, and if you have questions, it has the answers.

Good luck to all those working through or taking on the novel endeavor of a thesis. Hopefully, this short piece will encourage you to greet this challenge with smiles and a hearty laugh.

M.A./M.S. Checklist

1. Select a Thesis Topic, Thesis Chair & Thesis Committee

2. Write proposal

3. Send proposal to IRB and get written approval for research

4. Submit abstract and proposal announcement to Graduate Administrative Coordinator and Thesis Committee.

5. Successfully defend proposal at proposal meeting

6. Get the Thesis Committee Signature form from Division of Graduate Affairs, obtain necessary signatures at your proposal meeting, and get Graduate Advisor signature

7. Meet with the Graduate Advisor to get your Advancement to Candidacy form completed

8. Submit your signed Thesis Committee Signature form, IRB written approval, and Advancement to Candidacy forms to Division of Graduate Affairs

9. Get schedule number from Division of Graduate Affairs, and register for 799A, if date permits

10. Begin data collection

11. Apply for graduation, and/or register for 799B

12. Finish thesis research and writing

13. Defend thesis in oral presentation meeting

14. When all changes requested after defense have been made, obtain committee signatures on official signature page you have typed

15. Submit correctly typed and formatted thesis, copy of signature page and copy of title page to Division of Graduate Affairs, and get Thesis Clearance Sheet.

16. Take Clearance Sheet, signature pages, and manuscript to Thesis Review Service.

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

Use this template for your Thesis Proposal announcement. Do not use track changes. Set your font to **Times New Roman**, and set the font size to 12. Left justify margins, single space. Edit the red text below to reflect your individual information. Leave it in red when you email it so that we can quickly check these fields.

DATE:	For date, use the week day that is at least two weeks prior to your meeting. Use this format: January 12, 2012. (note, not 12th) For dates, don't use ordinals like "1st, 2nd or 3rd."
TO:	Department of Psychology Faculty
FROM:	Jennifer Thomas, Ph.D., Graduate Advisor
SUBJECT:	Advancement to Candidacy – First Name Last Name
COMMITTEE:	**Name**, Ph.D., Psychology, Committee Chair (or Co-Chair) If you have a co-chair, (**Name**, Credential, Department, Institution if not SDSU, Committee Co-Chair.) **Name**, Ph.D., Psychology, Committee Member **Name**, Credential, Department, Committee Member If you have a 4th member, put his/her info here. Include institution if not at SDSU.

Mr. or Ms. Last Name (for example, Mr. Hamilton) is eligible for Advancement to Candidacy. Below is an abstract of his or her proposal. The proposal, entitled "**Put your Title here, bold with Title Capitalization**" has been distributed to the thesis committee above for their initial review, and has been reviewed by the committee chair.

Mr. or Ms. Last Name will discuss his or her research plan at a proposal meeting on Day of the week, Date, Year, at time, (do time like this: 10:30 a.m., or 4:00 p.m. Use periods… NOT 10 am or 4 pm.) at location. Include suite number if appropriate. Use this format: Monday, April 30, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in the Hillix-Cronan Conference Room, LS 281. Note LS 281 is the only room that has a designated donor name)

Department faculty and graduate students are invited. If you have questions, comments or are interested in learning more about the topic, please plan to attend. Department members should address comments and/or questions about the proposed research directly to the committee chair.

Abstract

The Abstract is read first and may be the only part of your work that our department faculty as a whole may see, so make sure the project is well described. It is a brief comprehensive summary of the project in 500 words or less. Please include the headers in black text below; they are included in your word count.

Purpose: State the problem you are addressing and the purpose of your study, in one or two Sentences, if possible.

Participants/Subjects: (You may choose either Participants or Subjects for your header, as appropriate.) Describe the participants/subjects, specifying such pertinent characteristics as number, gender, species, etc.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Next, describe the study design/methodology including the apparatus, data-gathering procedures, complete test names or generic names and the dosage of any drugs. Then describe the statistical tests to be used, the interpretation of the various possible outcomes, and the possible implications.

Remember there are no references in your abstract; it is single spaced, and it must be less than 500 words. **Don't indent** the paragraphs, they should be left justified.

DIAGRAM B

MEMORANDUM

Use this template for your **Oral Defense** announcement. Do not use track changes. Set your font to **Times New Roman**, and set the font size to 12. Left justify margins, single space. Edit the red text below to reflect your individual information. Leave it in red when you email it so that we can quickly check these fields.

DATE: For date, use the week day that is at least two weeks prior to your meeting. Use this format: January 12, 2012. (note, not 12th) For dates, don't use ordinals like "1st, 2nd or 3rd."

TO: Department of Psychology Faculty

FROM: Jennifer Thomas, Ph.D., Graduate Advisor

SUBJECT: Oral Defense – First Name Last Name

COMMITTEE: **Name**, Ph.D., Psychology, Committee Chair (or Co-Chair) If you have a Co-Chair, (**Name**, Credential, Department, Institution if not SDSU, Committee Co-Chair.) **Name**, Ph.D., Psychology, Committee Member **Name**, Credential, Department, Committee Member If you have a 4th member, put his/her info here. Include institution if not at SDSU.

Mr. or Ms. Last Name (for example, Mr. Hamilton) will discuss his or her thesis, entitled "**Put your Title here, bold with Title Capitalization**" at a defense meeting on Day of the week, Date, Year, at time, (do time like this: 10:30 a.m., or 4:00 p.m. Use periods… NOT 10 am or 4 pm.) at location. Include suite number if appropriate. Use this format: Monday, April 30, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in the Hillix-Cronan Conference Room, LS 281. Note LS 281 is the only room that has a designated donor name). Department faculty and graduate students are invited. If you have questions, comments or are interested in learning more about the topic, please plan to attend.

Abstract

The Abstract is read first and may be the only part of your work that our department faculty as a whole may see, so make sure the project is well described. It is a brief comprehensive summary of the project in 500 words or less. Please include the headers in black text below; they are included in your word count.

Purpose: State the problem you are addressing and the purpose of your study, in one or two sentences, if possible.

Participants/Subjects: (You may choose either Participants or Subjects for your header, as appropriate.) Describe the participants/subjects, specifying such pertinent characteristics as number, gender, species, etc.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Next, describe the study design/methodology including the apparatus, data-gathering procedures, complete test names or generic names and the dosage of any drugs.

Results: Then describe the statistical tests used, the results, and the interpretation of the results.

Conclusions: Describe the implications of your findings.

Remember there are no references in your abstract; it is single spaced, and it must be less than 500 words.   **Don't indent** the paragraphs, they should be left justified.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Creating and Completing the Master's Thesis

Selecting a Topic

1. How? The following are some methods for narrowing your choices:
   a. What area interests you?
   b. What sort of research is currently being conducted in the Department? See the listing of faculty research interests available in this Handbook and/or on-line.
   c. What topic is currently exciting the field?
   d. What faculty project can you attach yourself to?

2. Survey the relevant literature in Psychological Abstracts by looking up key words. Often a computer search via Psych Lit in Love Library is very useful. Read articles in the current issues of the journals, which show up most frequently in your search.

3. Attend department colloquia and talks, conferences and professional meetings to hear about new ideas and to stimulate your own thinking

4. Evaluate your personal timetable for completing the thesis in view of your obligations, work habits, scope of the project which interests you--then add four months.

5. Seek out faculty in your chosen interest area(s). To do so, look in the <u>Psychological Abstracts</u> for their prior publications, Love Library for theses they have directed, and the Department of Psychology web pages listing faculty research interests. Above all, ask fellow students who may know the person.

Selecting a Chair and a Thesis Committee

Typically, your faculty mentor will serve as your Thesis Chair. Meet with your prospective Thesis Chair or Chairs regularly. Describe your ideas, ask about their research interests, what kinds of theses other students have done with them and if they think your project would work within their research program. Work closely with your Thesis Chair to identify a realistic project. There seem to be two major faculty styles for directing thesis research. One group of faculty tend to be rather non-directive, and encourage students to develop their own thesis topic. While this stimulates originality it may take a long time and be frustrating. Other faculty members require that thesis students carry out some project that is of interest to the faculty member, perhaps a component in a larger thematic research program. While this is expedient and convenient, it may be unexciting to you. Above all, you want a Chair who is readily available in the day-to-day conduct of research, one whose students complete their theses with dispatch, and who may furnish a strong recommendation. You will be happier if your needs and your advisor's are congruent.

Final authority for approval of committee members rests with the Dean of the Division of Graduate and Research Affairs.

Thesis Proposal - General Considerations

The aim of the proposal is to spell out clearly what you propose to do for your thesis research study and why, so that you and your committee can discuss the details and arrive at definite decisions and agreement. Proposals are written in the future tense ("will") rather than the past tense ("was"). Otherwise write the proposal in journal article format, following the style of the current APA Publication Manual. If there are some details or procedures you are uncertain about, include a discussion of the various ways you might proceed, indicating the pros and cons of each possible way.

Introduction

Describe the general purpose of the study. Describe the history of the topic, prior research findings and why it is of interest. What are the major theoretical issues generating this line of work? What do you plan to do to extend the research? What is the significance of your proposed research to the field of psychology and the world at large? What is your hypothesis? Include anything else the reader needs to know to understand why the study is being done. Don't include information that does not help to clarify the   purpose of the study, the method, or the potential results.

Method and Procedure

Describe exactly how you plan to do the project in as much detail as is currently practical. Include type and number of subjects, experimental design, materials and apparatus, details of procedure and anything else appropriate to how your particular experiment is to be done. Include a draft of any questionnaires or other such materials to be used as well as the formal feedback to be given to human subjects. If uncertain about exactly how you think some particular problem should be handled, include a discussion of the pros and cons of the various alternatives.

Results

How will you score the data, and what statistical tests will you use? Which comparisons will be of particular interest?

Discussion

 How might the study turn out? What would it mean if it turned out as expected? What would each of the other ways it could turn out tell you?
In what way could it make an important contribution to knowledge? What are the theoretical implications of the findings for each of the potential outcomes?

References

Include here the bibliography of works that are cited in your paper, following APA citation style.

Abstract

The Abstract is read first and may be the only part of your work that our department faculty as a whole may see, so make sure the project is well described. It is a brief comprehensive summary of the project in 500 words or less. State the problem, in one sentence if possible. Describe the subjects, specifying such pertinent characteristics as number, gender, species, etc. Next describe the experimental procedure including the apparatus, data-gathering procedures, complete test

names or generic names and the dosage of any drugs. Then describe the statistical tests to be used, the interpretation of the various possible outcomes, and the implications. Do not include source documentation. You will find it very difficult at first to condense your magnum opus in this manner. However, it is good practice, because submissions to most professional meetings and journals require such brief abstracts. In addition, it will help you to emphasize and clarify those basic elements that are at the core of your research.

Master's Thesis Regulations

Below are regulations pertaining to the master's thesis, which have been adopted by the Department of Psychology faculty. They went into effect at the start of the Spring 1990 semester, and supercede previous requirements if there is any conflict.

Master's Thesis Overview

1. A master's thesis is an essential component of the requirement for the master's degree. It is the policy of the Department of Psychology that all theses be empirical studies. The purpose of the thesis is to demonstrate the student's ability to carry out a scientifically valid research project. The skills required include:
    a. familiarity with previously published scientific literature on the problem
    b. formulation of a hypothesis
    c. specification of appropriate procedures and a research design
    d. collecting or accessing of relevant data
    e. appropriate data analyses
    f. appropriate interpretation of the results and conclusions and implications of the findings
    g. effective written communication of this information in APA style
    h. satisfactory oral defense of the work

    Collection or accessing of thesis data can begin only after the thesis proposal has been approved in writing by the Thesis Committee and Department of Psychology faculty. Pilot data can be collected beforehand and may be described in the report, but are not to be added to or blended with the formal thesis data.

2. The Thesis Chair and Committee will ensure that:
    a. the student is significantly involved in the development of hypotheses and the study's design and testable predictions.
    b. the student identifies the appropriate parameters, collects or accesses firsthand the study database, and conducts the necessary statistical analyses.
    c. when an existing database is used, the student independently identifies the dependent/independent variables and sample criteria before collecting the necessary sample data from the larger database.
    d. research designs that do not involve the manipulation of independent variables maintain the same level of scientific rigor as those using experimental designs. The variables under study must be operationally defined and the data must be collected systematically using a method of sampling appropriate to scientific psychological research.

3. A professor can chair or co-chair no more than five active theses simultaneously. Exceptions can be provided by the approval of the Graduate Committee.

4. The Graduate Advisor, the Department Chair and the Thesis Chair and Committee shall ensure that master's theses comply with the department policies.

Thesis Proposal

In addition to other requirements for Advancement to Candidacy for the M.A. or M.S. degree, the student must present a thesis proposal to the department faculty outlining the research project. The thesis proposal will contain a description of the study's hypotheses, objectives, design, methods for data collection, planned statistical analyses, and implications of potential outcomes. It must be written in the current APA-approved style. It is the Thesis Chair's responsibility to make sure that all members of the Thesis Committee are familiar with the proposal. After the Thesis Chair has approved the proposal, the student will send the Graduate Administrative Coordinator a copy of the proposal and an abstract (APA style) along with information about the title of the proposal, the time and date of the meeting, and the three committee members' names. The Department of Psychology office staff (LSN-110) will send the abstract to all department faculty and post it on the Graduate Student Bulletin Board. Because the abstract will also announce the date, room, and time for the proposal meeting, you must first consult with your Thesis Chair to make sure the time, date, and place are convenient. Because the thesis proposal announcement must go out seven calendar days before the meeting date, it is imperative that the abstract be turned into the department office *at least two weeks or ten business days* before the meeting date. In addition, an electronic copy of the proposal should be e- mailed to the Graduate Administrative Coordinator *at least seven days* before the meeting date. The purpose of the proposal meeting is to get helpful input from knowledgeable faculty before the experiment is begun. Faculty members are encouraged to transmit their comments to the Thesis Chair and may also attend the proposal meeting. In the rare event that major problems arise, we try to resolve them informally. Failing this, the problem is presented to the department Master's Committee before the Graduate Advisor acts on the student's Advancement to Candidacy. After the proposal meeting, the Thesis Chair should contact the Graduate Advisor and let her/him know that all went well.   If all other conditions have been met, the Graduate Advisor will then promptly recommend to the Division of Graduate Affairs that the student be officially Advanced to Candidacy.

Final Thesis Oral Defense

5. Notice of final thesis oral defense is to be distributed to each faculty unit employee at least two weeks or 10 business days in advance of the scheduled time.

6. Notice is to contain the title of the thesis and an abstract.

7. The oral defense is to be scheduled on campus at reasonable times during regular working hours.

8. The thesis is not to be signed by the committee prior to the oral defense.

9. All Thesis Committee members must be present for the oral defense. If any member is on leave and unavailable, a substitute must be selected by the Chair and the candidate subject to approval by the Division of Graduate and Research Affairs.

10. Waiver of the oral defense will be granted only in rare cases of extreme hardship and only

with the approval of the Master's Committee.

11. Passage of the oral defense is determined by unanimous vote of the Thesis Committee.

12. It is the responsibility of the Thesis Committee to make efforts to encourage other department members to attend the oral defense.