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Subject: Change in Course Requirements for Psychology M.A. degree

From: Brett Laursen, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Director of Graduate Training

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Laursen', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Department of Psychology Graduate Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'David Wolf', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Department of Psychology

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chuck Peltz', followed by the date '11/5/12', written over a horizontal line.

Dean of Charles E. Schmidt College of Science

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nancy Kason Ponton', followed by the date '11/7/12', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of University Graduate Programs Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Barry T. Rasmussen', followed by the date '11.8.12', written over a horizontal line.

Dean of Graduate College

Executive Summary of MA Degree Changes

The Psychology MA degree now requires a minimum of 30 credits with no fixed number of thesis credits. Changes were made to the Psychology MA degree requirements to (a) reflect the reality that no students ever complete the program with only 30 credits, (b) specify the minimum number of thesis credits required for graduation, and (c) increase the number of elective courses (from 2 to 3) required for graduation. The new requirements are designed so that students can complete the degree by taking a full time (9 credits per semester) load for two academic (spring and fall semesters) years. The typical student in the program now takes two years to complete the M.A. degree.

New Psychology M.A. catalog description

Admission Requirements

In addition to meeting all of the University and College admission requirements for graduate study, applicants for the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree must meet each of the following criteria:

1. The student must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. It is not essential for this to be a degree in psychology.
2. The student must have a score of at least 150 on the verbal component and 150 on the quantitative component of the Graduate Record Examination.
3. The student must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 60 credits of undergraduate work.
4. The student must attain approval for graduate admission from the Department of Psychology.

Course Requirements

A minimum of 30 credits of coursework and 6 M.A. thesis credits are required to complete the M.A. program.

Three quantitative courses (7 credits) are required, including the 3 credit Experimental Design 1 course (PSY 6206), the 1 credit Experimental Design 1 Lab course (PSY 6206L), and an additional 3 credit quantitative course approved by the Chair of the Department of Psychology Graduate Committee. Only courses offered by the Department of Psychology (or other units in the College of Science) can be used to satisfy this additional 3 credit quantitative course requirement.

An additional 7 courses (21 credits) are required. Of this total, at least 6 courses must consist of approved Department of Psychology graduate seminars, including a minimum of one regularly offered seminar in each of the following areas: (1) behavioral neuroscience; (2) cognition; (3) developmental; and (4) social/personality. Any single course will satisfy the requirement of only one area (e.g., Seminar in Personality and Social Development can fulfill the developmental or social/personality area requirement, but not both). With the approval of the Chair of the Department of Psychology Graduate Committee, one course taken outside the department may be included in this 7 course requirement.

A total of 6 M.A. thesis credits (PSY 6971) is required. Students must register for M.A. thesis credits the semester after the M.A. thesis proposal is approved by the supervisory committee and during each subsequent regular academic (fall and spring) semester.

An additional 2 credits are required, which may be filled with electives and/or Directed Independent Study (EXP 6908). Students are encouraged (but not required) to take at least 1 credit of Directed Independent Study.

Students are required to maintain a grade point average of "B" (3.0) or better. Courses with grades of "C+" or lower will not satisfy program requirements.

INSERT LIST OF COURSES FROM CURRENT CATALOG HERE

Transfer Students

Students may transfer up to 6 credits of graduate coursework completed at other institutions toward their M.A. degree. Approval for such transfer is made by the Chair of the Department of Psychology Graduate Committee.

Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee

By the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program, students must identify an M.A. thesis advisor. Students are encouraged to file an M.A. plan of study during the second semester of enrollment in the program. Students pursuing an M.A. along the way to a Ph.D. should also file a Ph.D. plan of study at the same time.

By the end of the second semester of enrollment, students must hold a meeting of their supervisory committee for the purpose of approving the M.A. thesis prospectus. There must be a minimum of three faculty members on the supervisory committee and at least half of the supervisory committee must be graduate faculty in the Department of Psychology, including the committee chair. Committee composition must be approved by the Department of Psychology Graduate Committee.

Approval of a written thesis proposal by the supervisory committee must precede the experimental work required for thesis. Approval of the thesis proposal must be obtained during a meeting of the full committee. Additional meetings of the thesis supervisory committee should be held at least once a year to review the student's progress toward the degree.

Approval of a written thesis during a full meeting of the supervisory committee is required. A publicly announced departmental lecture summarizing the M.A. thesis research is expected upon successful defense of the thesis.

Annual Review

All M.A. students will be evaluated by the entire graduate faculty during an annual meeting. Students who receive two consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations will be subject to dismissal.

Current Psychology MA catalog description

Admission Requirements

In addition to meeting all of the University and College admission requirements for graduate study, applicants for the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree must meet each of the following criteria:

1. The student must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. It is not essential for this to be a degree in psychology.
2. The student must have a combined quantitative-verbal total score of 1100 or higher on the general aptitude portion of the Graduate Record Examination.
3. The student must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 60 credits of undergraduate work.
4. The student must attain approval for graduate admission from the Department of Psychology.

Degree Requirements

Students are required to complete all coursework maintaining a grade point average of "B" (3.0) or better. Courses with grades of "C+" or lower will not satisfy program requirements. A minimum of 30 credits of coursework are required in the M.A. program. Of the 30 credits, 25 must consist of approved graduate courses and include the 3-credit Experimental Design 1 (PSY 6206), the 1-credit graduate statistics lab course, and an additional 3-credit quantitative course approved by the graduate affairs committee. Only courses offered by the Department of Psychology (or other units in the College of Science) can be used to satisfy this additional 3-credit quantitative course requirement.

The remaining six courses (18 credits) must be in approved graduate seminars and include at least one regularly offered seminar in each of the following four areas: Cognition, Developmental, Social/Personality and Behavioral Neuroscience. Any single course will satisfy the requirement of only one area (e.g., Seminar in Personality and Social Development can fulfill the Developmental or Social/Personality area requirement, but not both).

With the approval of the graduate affairs committee, one course taken outside the department may be included in the 25 credits required for graduate seminars. The remaining credits will be taken in electives and master's thesis. Students must register for PSY 6971 (Master's Thesis) during the semester they are admitted to M.A. candidacy and during each subsequent regular academic semester (fall and spring) of attendance.

Students may transfer up to 6 credits of graduate coursework completed at other institutions toward their M.A. degree. Approval for such transfer is made by the graduate coordinator.

By the end of the first semester of enrollment in the program, students must identify a thesis advisor. By the end of the second semester of enrollment, students must form a supervisory committee and apply for admission to candidacy for the M.A. degree. There must be a minimum of three faculty members on the supervisory committee and at least half of the supervisory committee must be faculty in the Department of Psychology, including the committee chair. Committee composition must be approved by the graduate affairs committee. Approval of a written thesis proposal by the supervisory committee must precede the experimental work

required for thesis. Approval of the thesis proposal must be obtained during a meeting of the full committee. Additional meetings of the thesis supervisory committees should be held at least once a year to review the student's progress toward the degree.

A publicly announced departmental lecture summarizing the M.A. thesis research is required.

All M.A. students will be evaluated by the entire graduate faculty during an annual meeting. Students who receive two consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations will be automatically discontinued from the program.