

**DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS, REGULATIONS
AND RESOURCES**

**Department of Psychology
Virginia Commonwealth University**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Handbook describes the policies governing graduate studies in the Department of Psychology that have been instituted by the Department and its graduate programs. The School of Graduate Studies has instituted the basic policies governing graduate studies in all Departments in the University. Departments may adopt additional and/or more stringent policies than those of the School of Graduate Studies, and graduate programs within the Department may adopt additional and/or more stringent policies than those of the Department. Students should read the Graduate Bulletin to become familiar with the requirements established by the School and read this Handbook to learn of the additional and/or more stringent policies enforced by the Department and its individual graduate programs. The first section of this Handbook describes the policies instituted by the Department and some of the resources available to students in Department. Later sections describe the policies of the various Departmental graduate programs. Any deliberate attempt to circumvent the standards and procedures here will be considered an honor's violation.

II. GENERAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A. Departmental Core Curriculum Requirements

The intent of the core curriculum requirement is to insure that all graduate students in the Department receive a strong foundation in the basic science of psychology. All graduate programs in the department then add specific areas of interest to the core. Thus, each student is educated first as a psychologist and then helped to develop competence in a more specialized area relevant to the student's scholarly and professional objectives. It is important that graduate students develop and demonstrate both research proficiency and the capacity to evaluate research findings early in their graduate programs.

The Department's core curriculum is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in psychology as a basis for later individual study. Students in all doctoral programs are required to successfully complete the core curriculum as part of the requirements for the M.S. degree. Those students entering the graduate program with a master's degree in psychology are also required to complete the core curriculum and are encouraged to do so as early as possible. Approved transfer courses (see following section on transfer credits) may be applied toward this requirement. The Department's core curriculum consists of the following courses:

1. PSY 680 – General Linear Models I
2. PSY 681 – General Linear Models II
3. PSY 619 - Learning and Cognition
4. PSY 617 - Sensation and Perception, or PSY 629 Biological Basis of Behavior
5. PSY 675 - Ethical Principles of Psychology (Experimental Program students are permitted to substitute MIC 510, Scientific Integrity)

B. Grades

Students are required to maintain a grade point average of 3.00 in psychology courses and a 3.00 overall grade point average. A grade of "C" or lower in more than six credits of non-core psychology courses constitutes grounds for automatic dismissal of a student from the program.

Students who receive a grade of "C" or lower in one of the Department core courses must either: (a) satisfactorily complete a re-examination of the material covered in the course within one semester following the receipt of the grade (this re-examination is to be arranged and evaluated by the course instructor); or (b) repeat the course for credit the next time it is offered and receive a grade of "B" or better. Students who receive a grade of "C" or lower in any department core course must send a letter to the Director of Graduate Studies indicating which option they intend to pursue. This decision should be made in consultation with the student's advisor and the course instructor. The letter should be co-signed by the course instructor and must be received before the first day of classes for the semester following receipt of the grade. Regardless of which of these approaches is chosen, the student will only be given one opportunity to demonstrate that they have mastered the course material. Students who either fail the re-examination or repeat the course and receive a grade of "C" or lower will be dismissed from the program.

Grades of "I" (Incomplete), if not completed in the appropriate time with an accompanying grade change ("I" in Fall, complete by end of following spring semester, "I" in Spring, complete by end of following Fall semester), will be administratively recorded as an "F." The student will be notified in writing of this occurrence, as an "F" constitutes dismissal from the program. For more information on VCU's grade policy, see the current Graduate Bulletin.

C. Transfer Credits

Transfer credits for graduate work at other institutions or from other VCU degree programs or waiver of required courses will be considered after the student has completed nine semester hours in this Department. Formal evaluation of transfer credits is initiated by the student's advisor after review and evaluation of courses with the student. Students may be asked to provide syllabi, course outlines, catalog descriptions, and other course materials in order to facilitate the evaluation of coursework. This information will be submitted to an instructor who teaches a comparable course at VCU.

A maximum of 30 percent of course work other than research applied toward all doctoral programs at VCU may be transferred from another VCU program or outside institution. Acceptance of transfer credit is made at the school level. (Various programs or divisions may have more stringent requirements).

All transfer work must be at the "A" or "B" grade level from an accredited institution or university. Transfer credit evaluation forms (see Appendix D) should be accompanied by an official transcript listing the course and submitted by the student's Program Director to the Director of Graduate Studies. A request will then be made to the Graduate School to have the transfer courses added to the student's VCU transcript.

The American Psychological Association requires that the transcript of the institution awarding the Ph.D. degree reflect all relevant coursework. To that end, in addition to coursework approved for official transfer, coursework approved as a waiver of required courses (including coursework that may have been counted towards another degree), may also be requested to be included as part of the official VCU academic history for documentation purposes.

D. Time Limit for Completion of the Degree

Candidates must complete all requirements for the M.S. degree within four years of their date of admission to the graduate program, which is more stringent than University requirements, and all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within eight years of their date of admission to the graduate program. Students may apply for an extension to this. The extension must first be approved by the Program or Division and then by the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director submits a request to the Associate Dean of Humanities and Sciences.

E. Policy on Continuous Enrollment

Once admitted, a graduate student must enroll each semester (excluding summers) until the degree is awarded. Graduate students who have been admitted to candidacy for a degree, or who have completed course requirements for a degree, must register for a minimum of one semester hour each semester, excluding summer session, until the degree is awarded. Failure to maintain a continuous registration will result in dismissal from the program and the student can only be reinstated through formal reapplication. Students who are unable to register must apply through their Graduate Program Director for a leave of absence (described below). Summer enrollment is required in some programs.

F. Full-Time Graduate Status

Full-time graduate status shall consist of a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 15 credits per semester. No more than 12 credits may be earned during the summer session.

G. Outside Employment Policy

Students in the Clinical and Counseling Psychology Programs may engage in employment which is primarily psychological in nature only under a formal Practicum arrangement or as otherwise approved by the student's Graduate Program Director. This condition shall apply until commencement of the student's approved internship. Students on an approved leave of absence may be exempt from this policy. Students in all programs who have been assigned to a Graduate Assistantship should note that any additional employment must be approved by the Graduate Director during the period of the Graduate Assistantship.

H. Leaves of Absence

Students may request leaves of absence from their Graduate Program Committee. Requests for a leave of absence approved by the Program Committee must also be approved by the Psychology Department's Graduate Committee, the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Such leaves will only be granted under approved circumstances and normally shall not exceed one year in length. Policies of the School of Graduate Studies indicate that the time a student is on an approved leave of absence does count in the calculation of time requirements for the degree.

I. Student Evaluation and Feedback

The Ph.D. represents the highest academic degree awarded in psychology. The faculty hold the responsibility for insuring that all recipients of this degree meet high standards of competence across the domains required by this field of study. Whereas each program may have more specific criteria for evaluating students, the following domains are considered important by all doctoral programs:

1. Academic Performance. Minimal performance criteria are delineated in the Graduate Bulletin. In addition to these criteria, student's class performance should reflect a high level of scholarship. Graduate students are expected to show a high level of initiative and self-reliance in pursuing their academic coursework. Grades and other feedback from instructors (e.g., evaluation of written work and class participation) should clearly indicate that the student is doing more than just the minimum quality and quantity of work required to receive passing grades.

2. Professional Competence. Evaluation in this area is based primarily on the student's practicum performance (i.e., PSY 690, 693, 694, 695, 795). Minimum standards for performance depend on the student's professional goals. More specific criteria for performance in this area are determined by the student's Graduate Program Committee.
3. Research Interest, Competence and Progress. Although the student's thesis project often reflects a collaborative effort of the student and his or her advisor, it is expected that the student will make some independent contributions to this project. The dissertation should be a substantial research project of the student's own design, and should reflect a high level of professional maturity and competence. Students are expected to complete their theses and dissertations in a timely manner. In addition to the formal requirements for thesis and dissertation research, students are expected to maintain continual research activity during their tenure at VCU. The student's research efforts should be of publishable quality and make a contribution to the field of psychology. Students should prepare and submit their thesis and dissertation research for publication when deemed appropriate by their research advisor. Research advisors generally are involved in this process and share authorship of such publications.
4. Ethical Behavior. Students should have a full grasp of all ethical principles which apply to any activities in which they may become involved. Students are required to adhere to the APA Ethical Standards of Psychologists and the VCU Academic Integrity Policy. The student should be able clearly to operationalize and conform to all relevant ethical principles related to her or his professional or research activities and should readily seek professional consultation and feedback when appropriate. Students must understand and comply with IRB (Institutional Review Board) policies in conducting research.
5. Commitment and Contribution to the Program, Department and Profession. The student should show evidence of constructive involvement in the graduate program and department. Involvement would be evidenced by such behavior as (a) consulting with other students and faculty; (b) initiating activities that would be conducive to the growth of other students and faculty; (c) attendance at colloquia and other department activities; and (d) participation in other extra-classroom activities sponsored by the Psychology Department. Commitment to graduate study would be evidenced by such other behaviors as completing papers in a conscientious and timely manner, regular and timely classroom

attendance, and evidence of some pursuit of knowledge beyond minimal curricular requirements.

Although the interpretation of the above criteria may vary somewhat depending on the student's area of study and career goals, students are required to show satisfactory progress in each of the above areas to remain in good standing in the program. Insufficient performance in a single area may be grounds for terminating a student from the program independent of their performance in any other criterion areas. In order to insure that students' performance in each of these areas is evaluated, and that students receive adequate and timely feedback on their progress through the program, each student will be regularly evaluated by their Graduate Program Committee throughout their tenure at VCU. The specific time points for these evaluations and procedures are described in each of the individual program sections.

J. Probation and Dismissal from the Program

If a student's Graduate Program Committee determines that the student's performance in one or more criterion areas is deficient, they may elect either to dismiss the student from the program or to place the student on probation. If the deficiency is judged to be sufficiently severe, the student may be immediately dismissed from the program. If the performance deficiency is judged to be remediable, a plan will be developed with the student to remediate his/her performance deficiencies. This remediation plan will describe the nature of the student's problems, the expected behavior patterns or goals of the plan, possible methods for accomplishing these goals, and a date for re-evaluating the student. The student will be considered to be on probation during this remedial period. The success of the remedial plan will be evaluated by the student's Graduate Program Committee at or near the specified date. On the basis of this evaluation the Committee may: (a) decide that the specific problem is no longer a significant one and continue the student in the program; (b) develop a further remedial plan and date for re-evaluation and continue the student on probation; (c) suggest that the student pursue other career objectives; or (d) when the student has failed to meet the remedial goals and there is no expectation she or he will be able to meet them in the immediate future, she or he may be formally dismissed from the program.

K. Ombudsman

Occasionally, students and/or faculty members have issues with another member of the department that are not easily addressed through informal channels. To facilitate constructive resolution of such problems (which mostly arise in the context of non-classroom teaching), the Department has two or more members of the department to serve as ombudsmen for a specific period. Persons with complaints may contact one of these appointees, whose job is to problem solve with the grieved party to help him or her deal with the issue and with the other member involved. The ombudsman will involve

the program director and/or Chair only if informal methods of intervention do not resolve the issue.

L. Graduate Student Appeal Procedure

Graduate students in the College of Humanities and Sciences at VCU have the right to appeal actions of an academic nature that they believe are unjustified. If such action involves a course grade, the University Grade Review Procedures should be followed. In those cases that do not involve course grades the College's Graduate Student Academic Appeal Procedure should be followed (see Appendix D). Copies of both documents may be obtained from the office of the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences (Scherer Hall, Room 405). In either case, the student should first attempt to resolve the matter with the individuals involved. If the student continues to believe that the grade or action is unjustified the student may choose to initiate a formal appeal procedure. In the case of a formal grade review, the written appeal must be submitted no later than 30 calendar days after the beginning of the spring semester for grades awarded in the fall semester, and no later than 30 days after the beginning of the fall semester for grades awarded for the spring semester or summer sessions. For appeals that do not involve a course grade, the student must submit a written appeal to the Chair of the Psychology Department within 15 academic working days of the notification of the academic action.

III. MASTERS THESIS REQUIREMENTS

A. Master's Thesis

Students are required to complete a master's thesis as part of the M.S. degree requirements. Students who have previously completed a master's thesis in psychology at another university may have the thesis requirement waived if the thesis is accepted by their Graduate Program Committee. The thesis should represent a joint project of both the research advisor (thesis committee chair) and the student. The student's research advisor may take a major role in any aspect of the thesis development, with the student maintaining an apprenticeship role in the enterprise. In most cases, the student will take the major role in actual data collection and analysis. Ideally, the thesis should be publishable and thereby make a contribution to the field of psychology. The students and faculty should discuss authorship, including order of authorship, on publications coming out of the thesis and in all cases should be in compliance with APA guidelines regarding authorship.

B. Thesis Credits

Students should be registered for thesis research (PSY 798) during any semester they are involved in the planning, running, or writing of their thesis. It is expected that students will begin work on their thesis (and consequently register for thesis credits) during the

Spring Semester following their admission to the graduate program, and continue to sign up for thesis credits until their thesis is completed. The number of credits of PSY 798 to be signed up for in any given semester should accurately reflect the amount of time dedicated to working on the thesis, with 3 hours per week per credit hour serving as a general guideline. The exact number of thesis hours taken by any given student will, in part, reflect differences in the nature of the research they conduct and their timetable. There is no upper limit on the number of thesis credits students may take while pursuing their degree as long as the student receives a grade of "S" for each credit. However, a minimum of 6 credits is required and no more than 6 credits may be counted toward the degree.

C. Evaluation of Thesis Progress

Students should set goals with their research advisor for each semester they are registered for thesis credits. To facilitate this process, it is recommended that students complete a Goals for Thesis Research Activity form (see Appendix A) at the beginning of each semester they are registered for thesis credits. This form is intended to clarify both the student's and advisor's expectations regarding work on the thesis for that semester. This work will normally include regular scheduled meetings with the advisor, where the advisor will provide guidance and planning for each step of the thesis. At the end of the semester students should meet with their research advisor to review their progress on the thesis. Students receive a grade of "S," "U," or "F" from their research advisor for each semester they are registered for PSY 798. Consistent with Graduate School policy, students who receive a grade of "U" in any thesis work will be reviewed for possible termination. Receipt of a grade of "F" for PSY 798 is grounds for dismissal from the program.

D. Time Requirements for Thesis

It is expected that students will submit their thesis proposal to their committee during the Fall Semester of their second year in the program; and that students will complete their final thesis orals no later than the last day of formal classes for the spring semester of their second year. If the thesis has not been completed prior to the fifth semester of graduate study, the following guidelines will be used for allowing students to take didactic courses:

<u>Stage of Thesis Completion</u>	<u>Max. No. of Course Credits Allowed</u>
Data collected and analyzed	9 credit hours
Data collected, but not analyzed	6 credit hours
Proposal approved, but incomplete	

data collection
Proposal not yet approved

3 credit hours
0 credit hours

No more than three credit hours of courses may be taken after the fifth semester if the thesis has not been completed. Note that the above restrictions apply to course credit hours only and do not include thesis research credits (PSY 798) or practicum. Thesis progress is an important criterion in evaluating students' progress in the program and is also considered in assigning departmental assistantships and financial support. Students must complete their master's thesis within a four year period following their entry into a graduate program.

Upon checking with Program Directors on a student's progress, and finding that the student has registered for inappropriate courses/credits regarding the status of their thesis, the student will be administratively withdrawn from such courses/credits. It is the student's responsibility to then replace these credit hours if necessary to maintain either or both their full-time status in the program or standing as a recipient of an assistantship, fellowship, or other type of funding award.

E. Thesis Committee

The student should select a full-time member of the Psychology Department and VCU Graduate Faculty to serve as Chair of the Thesis Committee. This individual should have a doctoral degree in Psychology, and either (1) a primary faculty appointment in the Department of Psychology or (2) a primary faculty appointment in another VCU Department and a joint appointment in Psychology. If he or she is not a Psychology faculty member, a Psychology Department faculty member must serve as co-chair. The committee should have at least 3 members (including the chair) such that (1) at least one member must hold an appointment in the student's program, (2) at least 2 must hold faculty appointments in Psychology (regular, collateral, or joint), (3) at least 2 of the members must be members of the University Graduate Faculty, and (4) 1 member must hold a faculty appointment at VCU, but this individual's primary appointment should NOT be in the Department of Psychology, and (5) all members must hold doctoral level degrees. The non-department member may be an affiliate member of the department. The appointment of the committee must be submitted to the student's advisor, Program Director, and the Director of Graduate Studies (see form in Appendix A), whose signatures will indicate their recommendations that the committee be approved. Finally, the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences appoints the committee. The student will be notified when the committee has been approved. The committee must be formally convened prior to conducting the thesis research, and students should allow 10 working days prior to their committee meetings for administrative processing. The student must gain the consent of all individuals identified for the committee prior to their being named to the committee.

If a student wants a person not on faculty at VCU to serve on the committee (for example, someone on faculty at another college or a professional in the community), and the individual is not already a member of the VCU Graduate Faculty, the student must petition the Graduate Director to request that this individual be permitted to serve. The petition must include a rationale and supporting evidence of scholarly training (e.g., vita). If the Graduate Director approves the student's request, he or she must then formally ask the Dean of Humanities and Sciences to permit this individual to sit on the committee. This individual serves as an additional member of the committee, rather than taking the place of any of the original 3 committee members.

Changes in the membership of a Thesis Committee are accomplished by first, formally dissolving the existing committee, and then constituting a new committee by means of the procedures described above. Formal dissolution of a committee (see form in Appendix A) must be submitted to the Program Director and the Director of Graduate Studies, whose signatures will indicate their recommendation for the proposed action. Recommendation against the proposed action is implied by the absence of a signature on this form when it is submitted to a higher level. The Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences will approve or disapprove the dissolution. The wishes of the Committee Chair will normally be paramount, but a committee member should not be removed unwillingly in the absence of valid reasons.

F. Proposal Requirements

Students will write a proposal which conforms to APA publication standards and has been approved by the University IRB committee (see Section VII). The proposal should include the following sections:

- I. Thesis Proposal Cover Sheet (see Appendix A)
- II. Introduction, including but not limited to:
 - Description of the relevant literature
 - Conceptual basis or framework for the study
 - Statement of the problem
 - Hypotheses
- III. Proposed Method:
 - Selection of subjects
 - Materials
 - Procedure
 - Data Analysis Plan
- IV. References

G. Proposal Defense

When copies of the proposal have been submitted to all committee members for their review, a meeting shall be scheduled to discuss this proposal. This meeting shall be open to all VCU faculty and Psychology Department graduate students, and must be announced in the departmental calendar at least one week prior to its being held. The Chair may, however, request that non-members leave at any point during the meeting, as appropriate. All committee members should be present at this meeting, and the Chair must be present. No more than one member may be absent, and he/she must be represented by proxy or by written comments which normally would be submitted prior to the meeting. Meetings should be scheduled in one of the Department meeting rooms or an acceptable alternative. If the proposal does not meet with the committee's approval, they may elect to hold an additional proposal meeting. Once the proposal has been approved by the committee, the proposal cover sheet should be signed by all the committee members and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to commencing the thesis research. Approval of the thesis proposal by the committee must be unanimous.

H. Thesis Format

Theses should be written to comply with the University Graduate Thesis and Dissertation Manual. Students may obtain a copy of this manual from the Graduate Studies Office located at 1001 Grove Avenue or a copy can be downloaded from their web page. A sample copy of the signature page can be found in Appendix A. Students need to have their signature sheets proofed BEFORE they are actually signed, as occasionally there may be a mistake (typo) on it or the name of the Graduate Director or Dean may have changed. If the student does make a mistake on the signature page and does not have it proofed before it is signed, it will need to be retyped and then resigned by the committee members. Diana Pauley, Department secretary, can proof the format.

In addition, the Psychology Department requires that the references and other aspects of style be consistent with the latest edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. In addition to the above, the style manuals listed below may also be helpful:

1. Campbell, W. G., & Ballou, S. V. (1974). Form and Style: Theses, reports, term papers. 4th Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
2. Martin, R. (1980). Writing and defending the thesis or dissertation in psychology and education. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

3. Turabian, K. (1973). A manual for writers of term papers, theses and dissertations. 4th Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Students can consult with Diana Pauley, Department secretary, about format.

I. Thesis Defense

Students will conduct and write the thesis with the guidance of regular meetings with the thesis advisor. When copies of the completed thesis have been submitted to all committee members for their review, a meeting shall be scheduled to discuss the completed work. Committee members should receive a final draft of the thesis at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. This meeting shall be open to all VCU faculty and Psychology Department graduate students, and must be announced in the departmental calendar at least one week prior to its being held. Other guests may attend only with the student's and the Chair's consent. All committee members should be present at this meeting, and the Chair must be present. No more than one member may be absent, and he/she must be represented by proxy or by written comments, which normally would be submitted prior to the meeting. Meetings should be scheduled in one of the Department meeting rooms or an acceptable alternative. Students will be expected to formally present their findings and conclusions during this meeting and to answer questions and discuss issues raised by committee members. At the end of the formal defense, the student is asked to step outside while the committee confers in closed session to evaluate both the written proposal and the student's oral defense. Students must perform satisfactorily in both areas in order to have the thesis approved. If the committee concludes that the student's performance on the orals exam was not satisfactory, it may recommend that the student be given a second opportunity for an oral defense. With respect to the student's written work, the committee may find it acceptable in its current form, acceptable pending specific revisions, or unacceptable. The thesis must be approved by members of the committee with no more than one negative vote. Approval is signified by signing the cover page of the thesis (see Appendix A for a sample cover sheet and J.4 below for procedures for obtaining signatures on the cover sheet). There are normally some changes that the committee requests. The chair of the committee should not sign the signature sheet until he or she has read the final copy. Other committee members may sign, or decline to sign, at the end of the meeting, before the changes are made. A committee member disapproving may provide a written dissenting opinion to be bound with the thesis.

J. Procedure for Processing Theses

The following steps should be followed in sequence after the thesis has been approved by the student's committee and all revisions and corrections have been made. Students must

allow sufficient time to complete all of the following steps by the deadline for turning final copies of the thesis to the library (see #7 below).

1. Checking format. Students should show their signature sheets to Diana Pauley before the defense to be certain they are perfect.
2. Number of Copies. The original and two signed copies of the completed thesis are required: the original is retained by the library, one copy is sent to the Department, and one copy is sent to the Chair of the thesis. All other copies become property of the student. Additional copies of the thesis can be bound by paying additional binding fees.
3. Charges for Binding and Processing Theses. All fees for binding and processing theses (see Checklist of Charges in Appendix A) must be paid by the student to the VCU Library in Room 201. After you have completed your thesis and have all of the required signatures, bring all the copies with the amount due (MasterCard, Visa, Discover, cash, check or money order) that are to be bound to the library. Take your payment directly to the James Branch Cabell Library, along with the required number of copies of your thesis.
4. Signature Page. Each copy of the thesis submitted for binding must be accompanied by a cover sheet (see thesis cover sheet in Appendix A for format). Each copy of the cover sheet must be an original and signed in black ink by the members of the thesis committee (i.e., copies of the cover sheet made after it has been signed may not be used for this purpose). The date at the bottom of the cover sheet is to be completed by the Dean. The Chair of the committee reviews changes. The committee chair should check the changes before signing the signature sheet.
5. Departmental Approval. After the oral defense has been successfully completed and the thesis is in final form, one working copy of the thesis, and all the signed cover sheets should be delivered first to the Psychology Department's Staff Resource Center for format review, where Ms. Diana Pauley checks the thesis for all technical and formatting issues. Upon meeting the guidelines, the Director of Graduate Studies will review and approve with signature on the cover sheets the written thesis on behalf of the Psychology Department. Students should allow a minimum of five working days for obtaining Ms. Pauley's and the Director's approval. Therefore, students must submit the thesis five days before the deadline for the Dean's signature as published in the official academic calendar.

6. Obtaining the Deans' Signatures. All of the signed cover sheets should be delivered to the Dean's office in Scherer Hall. Students are encouraged to contact the Dean's secretary (828-1674) in advance to determine times the Dean may be available for signing the cover sheets. After the Dean of the College has signed, the final signature is obtained from the Dean of Graduate Studies (1001 Grove Ave; 828-6916).
7. Procedure for Turning in Copies. All copies of the thesis which are to be bound (i.e., at least three) must be delivered to the University Library along with a copy of the cashier's receipt for all fees by the end of the second week after the end of a semester (students should double check the final due date with the library). Each copy of the thesis should be separated physically. That is, each copy should be in a separate box, separate envelope, or have a piece of cardboard between it and the next copy. All copies should be kept together as a group (e.g., in a larger box or envelope housing the separate copies). Rubber bands and string should not be used as they may damage the material.
8. Copies of the thesis must be turned in to the library before the Master's Degree will be conferred.

K. Applying for Graduation

Deadlines for completion of graduation requirements (including graduation application, thesis defense) are listed in the University Calendar published in the Graduate Bulletin and on the Web. The student completes an electronic graduation checkout on e-services and downloads the graduation application. There is no graduation fee. The application is filled out by the student, signed by the advisor, reviewed by the Associate Director for Academic Operations (Dorothy Fillmore), signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and then forwarded to the Dean's Office. Note that in completing the graduation application for the master's degree, students should list the department core courses and other courses up to the total required number of credit hours (i.e., do not include more credit hours than those required for the degree). All M.S. courses, whether required or not, are included in computing grade point average. See Appendix A for a checklist of requirements for the M.S. degree. This checklist should be signed by the student's advisor and should be turned in to Dorothy Fillmore with the graduation application and transcript. If the student does not complete the degree requirements by the date set on the application, she or he will need to submit an application for the next semester and be enrolled for at least one hour of credit.

IV. PH.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A. Requesting Continuation

After completion of all M.S. degree requirements (including the thesis defense), and prior to commencing any work on the Ph.D., students must submit a doctoral plan of study and formally request continuation into the doctoral program (see Appendix B for copies of forms used by each program). Continuation forms should be submitted to the student's Graduate Program Director. The student's Graduate Program Committee will review the plan of study and request for continuation and will approve or disapprove the plan of study and request. Continuation in the doctoral program is not automatic.

B. Preliminary Examination

A written preliminary examination must be passed for a student to become a doctoral candidate. Students may not take this exam until they have completed their Master's degree and have been formally approved for continuation into the doctoral program. The exam is normally taken prior to proposing the dissertation. The exam must be passed prior to defense of the dissertation, and prior to leaving on internship for students in the clinical and counseling psychology programs. The examination will be a written examination and will cover material relevant to the student's degree program. The format of the exam is set by the individual program. Each program is obligated to provide guidance for the student well in advance of the examination (e.g., list of topics or reading list). Specific details regarding the scheduling of the examination, material to be covered, and evaluation procedures are provided in the individual program sections. Any student who fails the first administration of prelims will be given the opportunity to retake the exam. The retake may be just the section failed or it may be the whole exam. Each program outlines how the prelims are given, so refer to each program's description. If the examination is failed a second time, the student will be terminated from the program.

Note that specific details regarding the scheduling of the examination, material to be covered, format of the administration, evaluation procedures, and remediation procedures are provided in the individual program sections.

C. Minor

A minor is not required for completion of doctoral study. However, with the consent of their graduate program committee, students may design a minor in one of two ways: (a) a minor may consist of at least nine semester hours in psychology other than in the student's major (excluding required courses); or (b) a minor may consist of courses in a department other than psychology (in this case it must meet the requirements of the department offering the courses).

D. Ph.D. Dissertation

A dissertation requiring the planning, completion, and defense of an original empirical research project is an integral part of the Ph.D. program. The dissertation shall be of such quality as to warrant publication. The students and faculty should discuss authorship, including co-authorship (if any) and order of authorship, on publications coming out of the dissertation and in all cases should be in compliance with APA guidelines regarding authorship.

E. Dissertation Credits

Students should be registered for doctoral dissertation research (PSY 898) during any semester they are actively involved in the planning, running, or writing of their dissertation. The number of credits of PSY 898 to be signed up for in any given semester should accurately reflect the amount of time dedicated to working on the dissertation, with 3 hours per week per credit hour serving as a general guideline. The exact number of dissertation hours taken by any given student will, in part, reflect differences in the nature of the research they conduct and their timetable. There is no upper limit on the number of dissertation credits a student may take while pursuing their degree. However, a minimum of 12 credits is required and no more than 12 credits may be counted toward the degree. Only students who have completed the master's degree and have had this request for continuation form accepted by the program may enroll in PSY 898. Any student who violates this policy will be charged with an honor's violation.

F. Evaluation of Dissertation Progress

Students should set goals with their research advisor for each semester they are registered for dissertation credits. To facilitate this process, it is recommended that the student and research advisor complete a goal form (see Appendix C) at the beginning of each semester the student is registered for dissertation credits. This form is intended to clarify both the student's and advisor's expectations regarding work on the dissertation for that semester. Students should have regular meetings with the advisor for advice and guidance throughout the dissertation process. At the end of the semester students should meet with their research advisor to review their progress on the dissertation. Students receive a grade of "S," "U," or "F" from their research advisor for each semester they are registered for PSY 898. Consistent with Graduate School policy, students who receive a grade of "U" in any dissertation work will be reviewed for possible termination. Receipt of a grade of "F" for PSY 898 is grounds for dismissal from the program.

G. Dissertation Committee

The student should select a full-time member of the Psychology Department and VCU Graduate Faculty to serve as Chair of the Dissertation Committee. This individual should have a doctoral degree in Psychology, and either: (1) a primary faculty appointment in the Department of Psychology or (2) a primary faculty appointment in another VCU Department and a joint appointment in Psychology. If he or she is not a Psychology faculty member, a Psychology Department faculty member must serve as co-chair. The committee should have at least 5 members (including the chair) such that (1) at least one member must hold an appointment in the student's program, (2) at least 3 must hold faculty appointments in Psychology (regular, collateral, or joint), (3) at least 4 of the members must be members of the University Graduate Faculty, and (4) 1 member must hold a faculty appointment at VCU, but this individual's primary appointment should NOT be in the Department of Psychology, and (5) all members must hold doctoral level degrees. The non-department member may be an affiliate member of the department. The appointment of the committee must be submitted to the student's advisor, Program Director, and the Director of Graduate Studies (see form in Appendix A), whose signatures will indicate their recommendations that the committee be approved. Finally, the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences appoints the committee. The student will be notified when the committee has been approved. The committee must be formally convened prior to conducting the dissertation research, and students should allow 10 working days prior to their committee meetings for administrative processing. The student must gain the consent of all individuals identified for the committee prior to their being named to the committee.

If a student wants a person not on faculty at VCU to serve on the committee (for example, someone on faculty at another college or a professional in the community), and the individual is not already a member of the VCU Graduate Faculty, the student must petition the Graduate Director to request that this individual be permitted to serve. The petition must include a rationale and supporting evidence of scholarly training (e.g., vita). If the Graduate Director approves the student's request, he or she must then formally ask the Dean of Humanities and Sciences to permit this individual to sit on the committee. This individual can serve as the fifth member of the committee.

Changes in the membership of a Dissertation Advisory Committee are accomplished by, first, formally dissolving the existing committee, and then constituting a new committee by means of the procedures described above. Formal dissolution of a committee (see form in Appendix C) must be submitted to the Program Director and the Director of Graduate Studies, whose signatures will indicate their recommendation for the proposed action. Recommendation against the proposed action is implied by the absence of a signature on this form when it is submitted to a higher level. The Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences will approve or disapprove the dissolution. The wishes of the

Committee Chair will normally be paramount, but a committee member should not be removed unwillingly in the absence of valid reasons.

H. Other Dissertation Requirements

Requirements for the dissertation proposal format and review, proposal, and defense are the same as the requirements listed for the master's thesis (see Sections III.F to III.I). Forms associated with the Dissertation are included in Appendix C.

I. Program Guidelines for Dissertation

Some flexibility exists within the clinical and counseling programs as to when a student initiates and completes her or his dissertation research. However, students are strongly urged to complete their doctoral dissertation before going on internship. Also note that students must be continuously enrolled each Fall and Spring Semester until the degree has been received (see Policy on Continuous Enrollment). This enrollment may be, for example, just one hour of dissertation credit.

J. Procedure for Processing Dissertations

The following steps should be followed in sequence after the dissertation has been approved by the student's committee and all revisions and corrections have been made. Students must allow sufficient time to complete all of the following steps by the deadline for turning final copies of the dissertation to the library (see #7 below).

1. Checking format. Students should show their signature sheets to Diana Pauley before the defense to be certain they are perfect.
2. Number of Copies. The original and three signed copies of the completed dissertation are required: the original and one copy is retained by the library, one copy is sent to the Department, and one copy is sent to the Chair of the dissertation. All other copies become property of the student. Additional copies of the dissertation can be bound by paying additional binding fees.
3. Charges for Binding and Processing Dissertations. All fees for binding and processing dissertations (see Checklist of Charges in Appendix C) must be paid by the student to the VCU Library in Room 201. After you have completed your dissertation and have all of the required signatures, bring all the copies with the amount due (MasterCard, Visa, Discover, cash, check or money order) that are to be bound to the library. Take your

payment directly to the James Branch Cabell Library, along with the required number of copies of your dissertation.

4. Signature Page. Each copy of the dissertation must be accompanied by a signature page (see dissertation cover sheet in Appendix C for format). Each signature page must be an original and signed in black ink by the members of the dissertation committee (i.e., copies of the cover sheet made after it has been signed may not be used for this purpose). The date at the bottom of the cover sheet is to be completed by the Dean. The chair of the committee reviews changes to the document requested by the committee. The committee chair should check the changes before signing the signature sheet.
5. Departmental Approval. After the oral defense has been successfully completed and the dissertation is in final form, one working copy of the dissertation and all the signed cover sheets should be delivered first to the Psychology Department's Staff Resource Center for format review by Diana Pauley. Upon meeting the guidelines, the Director of Graduate Studies will review and approve with signature on the cover sheets the written dissertation on behalf of the Psychology Department. Students should allow a minimum of five working days for obtaining Ms. Pauley's and the Director's approval. Therefore, students must submit the dissertation five days before the deadline for the Dean's signature as published in the official academic calendar.
6. Obtaining the Dean's Signature. All of the signed cover sheets and the binding fee receipt should be delivered to the Dean's office (Room 405, Scherer Hall-note-this location will change sometime toward the end of 2003). Students are encouraged to contact the Dean's secretary (828-1674) in advance to determine times the Dean may be available for signing the cover sheets. After the Dean of the College has signed, the final signature is obtained from the Dean of Graduate Studies (1001 Grove Ave; 828-6916).
7. Procedure for Turning in Copies. All copies of the dissertation which are to be bound (i.e., at least four) must be delivered to the University Library along with a copy of the cashier's receipt for all fees by the end of the second week after the end of a semester (students should double check the final due date with the library). This must be done prior to graduation. The Ph.D. degree is not conferred until the dissertation copies are turned in to the library. Each copy of the dissertation should be separated physically. That is, each copy should be in a separate box, separate envelope, or have a piece of cardboard between it and the next copy. All

copies should be kept together as a group (e.g., in a larger box or envelope housing the separate copies). Rubber bands and string should not be used as they may damage the material.

8. Optional Services. Microformat copies of the dissertation, abstract reprints, and copyright registration services are available and should be requested when the copies of the dissertation are turned in.

K. Applying for Graduation

Deadlines for completion of graduation requirements (including graduation application, and dissertation defense) are listed in the University Calendar published in the Graduate Bulletin. The student completes an electronic graduation checkout on e-services and downloads the graduation application. The application is filled out by the student, signed by the advisor, reviewed by the Associate Director for Academic Operations (Dorothy Fillmore), signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and then forwarded to the Dean's Office. Note that in completing the graduation application for the Ph.D., students should not include courses listed on their M.S. graduation application. All graduate courses attempted are included in calculation of grade point average, regardless of whether or not they are required courses. This includes both grades for repeated courses. See Appendix C for a checklist of requirements for the Ph.D. degree. This checklist should be signed by the student's advisor and should be turned in to the Department with the graduation application. If the student does not complete the degree requirements by the date set on the application, she or he will need to submit a second application.

V. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. General Guidelines for Graduate Student Support

Each year the department has a designated number of funds for graduate student support for those in the first through fourth years of study, with preference being given to students in their first three years of training. Fourth year students in all programs are funded when possible, however, students may not be funded on a Graduate Assistantship and receive concurrent funds for a fourth year practicum. The various types are mentioned in the following sections.

All newly admitted and continuing students in any of the department's programs are considered unless one of the following occurs:

- The student has indicated she/he is not interested
- Academic performance quality is poor
- Past assistantship performance was rated unsatisfactory
- Student is not full-time in the program
- Student admitted to program as "non-funded"

B. Graduate Assistantships

Continuing graduate students are encouraged to apply for Graduate Teaching Assistantships offered each year by the Psychology Department. Most assistantships are for the academic year (August 10 - May 9) and carry a workload of 20 hours per week. Assignments vary and typically involve one of the following: (a) staffing the PSY 101 Teaching/Learning Center; (b) assisting a faculty member who teaches a course with a large enrollment; (c) teaching a laboratory section or recitation section associated with an undergraduate course; (d) teaching a laboratory associated with a graduate course; (e) serving as an instructor with full responsibility for teaching a course (requires completion of the Master's degree); and (f) staffing one of the service positions within the department (e.g., CPSD assistants, academic advisors in the Psychology Undergraduate Advising Office, assistant to one of the program directors in the department). Graduate Teaching Assistants receive a stipend plus tuition (for a basic load) for in-state (and usually for out-of-state) students. GTAs are responsible for paying fees. Tuition is not provided for overloads.

Each spring semester (usually in early March) the Director of Graduate Studies sends out a memo listing the Graduate Teaching Assistantships available for the following academic year. The following procedures will be used to assign GTAs:

1. Interested students must submit a GTA application by the announced deadline.
2. Students should discuss their interest with the appropriate faculty member who supervises that assignment as these individuals will have input into the final selection.
3. The Department's Graduate Committee and Director of Undergraduate Studies will review all applications. Selections will be made based on a combination of criteria including students' progress and standing in their program, suitability for the positions available, and financial need. Priority will be given to students in the first three years of graduate study.
4. Applicants will be notified in writing of their assignments.
5. All assignments will be reviewed at the beginning of each semester. Occasionally, changes in specific assignments may need to be made in order to accommodate changes in teaching schedules, fill vacancies and to insure that there is some degree of comparability in work loads across assistantships.

The duration of an assistantship runs from the 16th day of August through the 15th of May, in most cases, although some assistantships run August 10th through May 9th. Assistants should contact the supervisor to whom they have been assigned as soon as possible after they are notified of their assignment. Graduate Teaching Assistants are expected to post and maintain regular office hours. Performance on all assistantships is

evaluated. Graduate assistants are required to register for a minimum of nine credit hours each semester **and normally may not hold any other employment for the duration of their appointment.** Students who wish an exemption must apply in writing to the Director of Graduate Study, with accompanying letters from their Program Director and advisor. GA performance will be reviewed using the survey in the appendix.

C. Termination of Funding

Students are funded on a yearly basis, only. The department will strive to fund students for the first 4 years in the program, but due to financial ambiguities, funding is only guaranteed in the year it is formally offered.

Graduate assistantships and fellowships normally end when the period of appointment is concluded and the term of the assistantship or fellowship agreement is fulfilled. An appointment also may end when the grant or contract supporting the student expires, for whatever reason, even if that occurs before the end of the student's current appointment. Otherwise, a graduate fellowship or assistantship may be terminated for the following reasons:

- resignation for cause by the student, such resignation to be in writing for approval by the department chair or program director, with a copy to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies;
- failure of the graduate fellow or assistant to perform assigned duties adequately, such termination to be recommended by the department chair or program director, with a copy to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies;
- failure of the graduate fellow or assistant to remain in good academic standing or to adhere to enrollment policies in accordance with this policy statement.

Any stipend funds remaining after the termination of a graduate fellowship or assistantship revert to the funding department or program and may be reallocated to another graduate student. If students withdraw from classes or programs or reduce enrollment below full time, tuition/fees and stipends may be rescinded, and students will be responsible for returning all funds to the University. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the student's graduate program director.

A graduate student who believes that his or her graduate fellowship or assistantship has been terminated unjustly and who has exhausted all departmental and school appeal procedures, may appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

D. Other Sources of Financial Support

In addition to GTAs, there are several other forms of financial aid available to graduate students. These include:

1. Graduate School Assistantships. These assistantships are normally used to recruit incoming graduate students and cover 12 months with a stipend (2008-09 - \$15,000) and tuition (including 3 units of summer tuition). A 20-hour per week service commitment is required.
2. Graduate Research Assistantships. These involve assisting a faculty member on a funded research project. GRAs are usually selected by the principal investigator. Stipend levels are equal to or higher than the Graduate Assistantships from the College. Some Assistantships pay fees. Tuition is paid for most assistantships. If the GRA is paid by a faculty member outside of the psychology department, that department is responsible for the students' tuition.
3. SCHEV Fellowship - 12-month renewable fellowship (support package similar to #1 above) awarded by State Council for Higher Education in Virginia. Service commitments are required in years 4 and 5 only. These are available to minority students and must be applied for.
4. Paid Practica. A variety of paid practica placements are available to eligible students in the Clinical and Counseling Psychology Programs. These placements carry a minimum stipend level and are arranged by the practicum coordinator for the student's program. Practica do not include tuition or fees.
5. Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship. A \$1,000 tuition stipend awarded to one student at each the master's and doctoral levels on each campus. Students apply for this award at the beginning of the Spring semester. The Psychology Department's Graduate Committee reviews all applicants and submits a nominee to the Humanities and Sciences Graduate Academic Committee. The final recipient is selected from among the applicants nominated by each College or School on the academic campus.
6. Jesse Hibbs Fellowship. A \$1,000 tuition stipend awarded to one student on the academic campus by the VCU Women's Club. The recipient must be a woman graduate student with a dependent child.

7. APA Dissertation Research Awards. A \$500 stipend awarded by APA to support dissertation research. Up to three students may be nominated by the Department's Graduate Committee each year (final selection is made by APA). Students must be a student affiliate of APA and must have successfully defended their dissertation proposal.
8. APA Student Travel Awards. A \$300 stipend awarded by APA to support student travel to the APA convention. Up to three students may be nominated by the Department's Graduate Committee each year (final selection is made by APA). Students must be a student affiliate of APA and must have had a research paper, poster or other contribution accepted for presentation at the annual APA convention.
9. Other Financial Support at VCU. Graduate students are able to apply for a number of positions at VCU outside of the Psychology Department (e.g., Residence Hall Directors, Career Center). The Department makes an effort whenever possible to notify appropriate students of these positions when they become available. Students are also eligible for student loans and other financial support arranged through the VCU Financial Aid Office.
10. External Financial Support. Financial support in the form of fellowships, grants and dissertation research awards is available from a variety of external sources.
11. Department Awards. Each year the following are made:
 - a. Travel Awards - Given to those students whose work has been submitted and accepted at professional conferences to defray costs of attending. \$25 to \$250.
 - b. John P. Hill Award of Excellence - Given to student showing high academic standards and evidence of promise or productivity in research in adolescent or family development. \$500
 - c. Deborah Braffman Schroeder Endowment Award - Given to the Clinical student who has shown evidence of significant research in the discipline. \$500
 - d. Outstanding Masters Candidate Endowment – Given to exceptional masters degree candidate, academic excellence or need based – \$500

- e. Outstanding Graduate Students - Five awards annually to one student in each of the five programs. \$100

- 11. VCU Financial Aid Office. Because deadlines are constantly changing, please visit the University office at 901 W. Franklin Street to receive pertinent information, forms, etc. All external financial aid of this type is independent of the department and is the individual student's responsibility.

VI. TEACHING PRACTICUM

The Graduate Teaching Practicum was developed to help graduate students develop their teaching skills. The program, which is designed to meet the needs of students who plan to pursue academic careers requiring experience in teaching, is based on a mentoring model of skill development. All graduate teaching assistants whose roles include teaching responsibilities (i.e., labs in PSY 214, 308, 317, 620, 621, 644, and 645 or are responsible as primary instructor) MUST take this course – traditionally offered only in the Fall semester -- in the first year they hold the position. Throughout the semester, students and the instructor/supervisor will examine issues related to teaching the particular class, including identifying goals, developing a syllabus, designing evaluation procedures, lecturing, helping students with special problems, and assigning grades.

This course is open to all full-time graduate students. Both graduate teaching assistants and those who are not funded through teaching assistantships are eligible. It should be noted, however, that a student who is not a funded teaching assistant should not be given the duties of an assistant. If practicum students take part in grading assignments, then the supervisor must be prepared to give them constructive feedback concerning their effectiveness as a grader. Similarly, if a practicum student delivers a lecture, the supervisor should be present during the class and later provide the student with suggestions for improvement. Thus, practicum students who are not funded GTAs should not, for example, be given an entire set of papers to grade or be asked to teach a substantial number of class sessions.

VII. ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH

A. Adherence to Ethical Standards

All students should be familiar with, and conduct their research in accord with the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists. Depending on the nature of the research population this might include Principle 9: Research with Human Participants; or Principle 10: Care and Use of Animals.

B. Review of Research Proposals

All research conducted by graduate students must be reviewed by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to commencing the research. The instructions and forms for review can be found on the web, www.vcu.edu/research.

Research involving laboratory animals must be approved by the VCU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The IACUC meets on the second Wednesday of every month. Twelve copies of the review forms (available from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, Room 1-020 Sanger Hall), must be submitted by the last Wednesday of each month for review at the next meeting.

VIII. INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH PARTICIPANT POOL

The Department of Psychology has established a set of guidelines governing research projects that involve students recruited from introductory psychology classes as research subjects. These apply to all Psychology 101 classes taught during the Fall and Spring semesters, and to both faculty and graduate student researchers. These guidelines describe how students can be recruited for research, procedural steps to take in conducting research, and the researcher's ethical obligations.

A. Recruitment of Subjects

Researchers conducting studies involving students drawn from the Research Participant Pool (RPP) can recruit participants in several ways. These include:

1. Electronic postings. Each semester, researchers will be notified about the procedures to follow to use the online subject pool scheduling service.
2. Persuasive recruitment. In some instances, researchers may prefer to discuss the project with prospective participants to elicit appropriate response rates. Such arrangements must be made by contacting the instructors that permit persuasive recruitment in their classes and gaining their consent. In general, class time is not to be spent completing questionnaires. If graduate students are to solicit participants, they should be adequately briefed concerning the appropriate approach.

B. Procedures for Using the Research Participant Pool.

1. Registration. Researchers who wish to utilize the RPP must complete a "Research Information Sheet" available through email to the RPP coordinator.

Until this form is approved and on file, researchers cannot use RPP students in their research.

2. Recruitment. When the study is registered, researchers will be told about the policies established concerning recruitment procedures. Under no circumstances should a researcher ask instructors for permission to recruit in their classrooms if the instructor has registered a policy of non-recruitment.
3. Conducting the Research. Researchers are urged to conduct their research in a professional manner. Subjects should be given explicit instructions concerning time and place as well as a cancellation number. Researchers should avoid canceling sessions without notifying subjects.
4. Credit Acknowledgment. Because of the bookkeeping burden and the many demands placed on instructors' time, researchers are responsible for maintaining the records of student participants. The Department uses a centralized system, in which researchers must enter data about their participants electronically. Please note:
 - a. Under no circumstances can extra credit in addition to that actually earned be given to participants as an incentive to participate. ONE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE (ONE STUDY) = ONE CREDIT.
 - b. Individuals who refuse to participate during the informed consent process must also be given full credit.
 - c. Individuals who cannot participate due to equipment failure, incomplete groups, researcher missing the session, etc. must be given full credit.

Researchers are responsible for making certain that students receive credit. Anyone who fails to give students credit for their help where credit is due will be denied access to the RPP in the future. Additional information about the credit procedures should be obtained from the RPP director.

C. Ethical Obligations

All research using subjects from the RPP must FIRST be approved by the IRB. In addition to obtaining ethical approval, the researcher is REQUIRED to make the research experience meaningful for the STUDENT. To achieve this goal, researchers must follow appropriate ethical guidelines concerning debriefing, informed consent, and feedback.

Researchers also must assist in providing assistance with the administration of the “indirect research experience project” by working two hours during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester.

1. Debriefing. Students should be told about the basic purposes of the research. Although in some cases this feedback must be kept fairly rudimentary, the student must be told about the basic question under investigation. If the design of the research makes post-session debriefing impossible, subjects should be sent written information when the project is concluded.
2. Informed Consent. Most research involving students recruited from the RPP requires the use of informed consent.
3. Feedback. Researchers should ask students to contact them if they would like to learn the results of the investigation.

Each researcher will receive an RPP number which **MUST** appear on all postings and be provided to students. This number is used in the credit-tracking process.

IX. COMMITTEES AND PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

A. Student's Graduate Advisor

Each student shall have an advisor selected from the faculty in their graduate program. Students should meet regularly with their advisor to discuss issues such as curriculum matters, progress in the graduate program, career goals, and other concerns. A close student-advisor relationship is an extremely important part of graduate education. The advisor plays a very important mentoring role for the graduate student and is responsible for the student's socialization into the profession. The advisor also serves as a liaison between the student and the student's Graduate Program Committee. For this reason, it is essential that the advisor be informed about the student's progress at all times. During formal student evaluations, the advisor will provide the student's program committee with information about the student's progress in the program, and will convey feedback from the program committee to the student. In most instances, the advisor also serves as the student's research advisor. In instances where students have a research advisor outside of their graduate program, they will also maintain an academic advisor within their program.

In most programs, the student's advisor is assigned at admission into the program. The advisor can be changed, however, for any reason (for example, if another advisor is closer in line to the student's interests). The student, the old and new advisors, and the program director should work together to help the transition to a different advisor.

B. Graduate Program Committee

Each student's Graduate Program Committee consists of all of the graduate faculty within the student's program or other Psychology Department faculty who have an Affiliate membership in the program (i.e., Clinical, Counseling, Biopsychology, Developmental, and Social Psychology Programs) and is chaired by the Program Director. The Graduate Program Committee addresses all matters related to the training of students within the program. This committee is responsible for the program's curriculum and requirements, selection of graduate students, and evaluation of graduate students in the program.

C. Psychology Department Graduate Committee

The Psychology Department Graduate Committee consists of the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Program Directors, and the Associate Director of Academic Operations. This committee addresses issues related to the Department's core curriculum and all Departmental degree requirements; assigns all fellowships and Department Assistantships; nominates students for University Awards and honors; evaluates all proposals to add, delete or revise courses in the graduate curriculum; and reviews, updates, and makes appropriate changes in the Graduate Bulletin, and other materials describing the graduate program.

X. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Graduate Student Offices

All graduate students in the Department, when possible, are assigned office desk space which they may use in the performance of their assistantship responsibilities (when appropriate) as well as for academic purposes. An assessment of graduate student office needs and available space is usually made at the end of the academic year, and new assignments are made at the beginning of the Fall semester. Office assignments are based on needs, priorities, and assistantship assignments. Students may be assigned to space in any of the buildings occupied by the Department and may not necessarily be assigned the same office space in consecutive years.

Students may check out keys for their assigned offices from Diana Pauley, whose office is located in 806 W. Franklin. Students should report any lost or stolen keys to her as soon as possible.

B. Mailboxes

Mailboxes for graduate students are located in the basement of 806 W. Franklin Street. Campus mail, departmental notices and memos, and correspondence from the student's

program and Department are placed in student mailboxes. Students are therefore expected to check their mailboxes on a regular basis.

C. Computer accounts and E-mail

Students are responsible for establishing a university computer account. Upon doing so, they are given an e-mail address and should check their e-mail regularly. Many departmental notices as well as the weekly calendar are distributed by email. E-mail is also the easiest way for faculty and students to communicate. E-mail is the official means of communication at VCU. Students are expected to check their VCU account on a regular basis. The Department will use only the student's VCU e-mail address.

D. Student Directory, Change of Personal Information, and Pay Information

A Faculty and Student Directory is distributed each year by the Department. Students should make certain that they notify the Department **and** Human Resources (through Employee Self Service in the Banner system) of any changes in address/telephone numbers or personal information. Students should also keep an accurate address and telephone number on file with the University Registrar. If a student moves, it is also extremely important to make note of this change through the Self Service Banner (SSB) system that allows employees to update personal information. Failure to do so could result in not receiving a W2 form, which is mailed to the home address. Pay information is also found in Banner. The site is available through a link in the Human Resource Web site (www.eservices.vcu.edu/).