



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI®**

**School of Psychology**

**Policy and Procedures Manual  
For Clinical Psychology Graduate  
Students**

**2024-2025**

The polices and procedures set forth in this document replace earlier versions of this manual.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 1: Overview.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Introduction .....	6
The Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program’s Mission Statement .....	7
People .....	8
Clinical Training Committee.....	8
Graduate Student Peer Support .....	8
Administrative Staff .....	8
Graduate Student CTC Representatives .....	9
Clinical Psychology Graduate Student Organization (CPGSO).....	9
Executive Leadership for the CPGSO .....	10
Graduate Students’ Obligation to Ethical Behavior.....	10
Background Checks Required for Admission & Continued Enrollment.....	10
Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association .....	10
Professionalism.....	11
Academic Honesty .....	11
Action Step Reminders for First Year Students to Complete by the Second Friday of the Incoming Semester .....	12
<b>Section 2: Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program Curriculum.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Clinical Concentration Area Training Options.....	13
Program of Study in Clinical Psychology at USM .....	14
Program Curriculum.....	15
Common Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology .....	15
The Clinical Sequence .....	17
Course Grade Expectations and Consequences .....	17
Course Scheduling and Academic Advising .....	18
Major Professor .....	19
Transfer of Graduate Courses from Other Institutions .....	19
Transfer of Required School Courses.....	19
Clinical Courses, Ethics, and Statistics Courses Cannot be Transferred or Waived.....	20
Master’s Degree En Route to the Doctorate .....	20
Non-thesis M.S. Option If Withdrawing from the Doctoral Program.....	20
Graduate Minor .....	21
<b>Section 3: Required Research and Comprehensive Exams .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Master’s Thesis .....	22
Getting Started on the Thesis .....	22
Composition of Master’s Thesis Committee .....	22
Thesis Prospectus.....	23
Thesis Proposal .....	23
Thesis Defense .....	24
Time Limitations to Complete the Thesis .....	26
Grading for Thesis and Dissertation.....	26

Master’s Comprehensive Exam and Relation to Master’s Thesis Defense .....	26
Doctoral Dissertation .....	27
Composition of Doctoral Dissertation Committee .....	27
Dissertation Defense.....	29
Time Limitations to Complete the Dissertation.....	31
Timetable for Submission of Thesis and Dissertation to the Graduate School .....	32
Research and Scholarly Integrity Education: Responsible Conduct of Research .....	32
Review and Approval of All Research With Human or Animal Subjects .....	33
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association .....	33
Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Policy and Procedures.....	33
<b>Section 4: Clinical Experiences .....</b>	<b>39</b>
On-Campus Clinical Practicum: The USM Center for Behavioral Health.....	39
Sequencing and Prerequisites for Practicum.....	39
Junior Clinical Practicum.....	39
Clinical Practicum.....	40
Clinical Program Didactics.....	41
Supervision and Consultation Series .....	42
Clinical Case Conference.....	42
Practicum Evaluations.....	42
Accelerated Training .....	43
Off-Campus Clinical Externship Experiences .....	43
PreDoctoral Clinical Internship .....	45
Overview of Internship Process .....	45
Eligibility to Apply for Internship .....	46
Selection of Internship Sites, the Application Process, and Preparation for Interviews.....	46
Internship Debriefing Process: Sharing Experiences with Others .....	47
Program Enrollment During Internship .....	47
Program Communication with Clinical Internship Agencies .....	47
Doctorate Will Not Be Awarded Prior to Confirmation of Internship Completion .....	48
<b>Section 5: Student Progress .....</b>	<b>48</b>
Annual Evaluation of Clinical Psychology Graduate Students .....	48
Failure to Meet Expectations and Program Probation .....	49
Methods Used to Facilitate Progress of Student Difficulties in the Program.....	50
Policies and Procedures Related to Program Dismissal.....	51
Graduate School Protocol for Dismissal of a Student.....	51
<b>Section 6: Graduate School Forms and Procedures.....</b>	<b>53</b>
Know the Graduate School Website.....	53
Pre-Graduation Procedures and the Graduate School .....	53
Progress to Degree Forms.....	53
Application for M.A. or Ph.D. Degree (Applying to Graduate).....	55
Graduate Degree Auditor .....	56
Paperwork Copies For Student Files while completing Milestones .....	56

<b>Section 7: Financial Information and Work</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Assistantships/Work Opportunities/Financial Aid.....	57
Graduate Assistantships .....	57
Opportunities for Clinical Psychology Students to Teach Undergraduate Classes .....	58
Additional Financial Aid .....	59
Employment While a Student-in-Training .....	59
Continuous Enrollment and Tuition.....	60
<b>Section 8: Other Specific Information</b> .....	<b>61</b>
Residency .....	61
Short Absences During Times of Program Obligation .....	61
Formal Leaves of Absence .....	61
Pregnancy and Parenting During Graduate School .....	62
Program Deadlines Falling on a Weekend/Holiday .....	63
Resources for Graduate Students.....	63
Faculty Research Labs.....	63
Office and Other Workspace .....	63
Colloquia and Seminars .....	63
Grants and Funding.....	64
Membership in Professional Organizations.....	65
Mississippi Psychological Association (MPA).....	65
National and Regional Psychological Organizations .....	65
Keys.....	66
Message Boxes.....	66
iTech Services Including USM Email Account .....	66
Eagle Alert.....	67
Clinical Psychology Program Group Email and SharePoint.....	67
School of Psychology Graduate Student Group Email and Teams .....	67
Unauthorized Use of School Resources .....	68
USM Student Accessibility Services .....	68
Personal Counseling and Psychotherapy Services.....	68
Services and Organizations Designed to Support and Respect Student Diversity .....	69
Opportunities to Become Involved at the Graduate School .....	69
Appeals, Grievances, and Other Policies .....	69
Graduate Student Appeals of CTC Decisions .....	69
Grade Review Policy.....	70
Office of the Dean of Students .....	70
Graduate School Grievance and Appeals Policy .....	70
Policies on Sexual Harassment, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity .....	72
Records Access Policy .....	72
Class Attendance and Use of Laptops in the Classroom.....	72
Considerations for Social Media .....	73
General Guidelines for Dress Code.....	73

Child Care .....	73
Other Relevant Policies and Webpages.....	73
A Recommendation to Retain Your Syllabi.....	74
A Date You May Need to Know in the Future.....	74
A Final Request .....	74
<b>Section 9: Appendices.....</b>	<b>75</b>
Appendix A: APAGS-inspired USM Clinical Psychology Student Bill of Rights.....	76
Appendix B: Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program General Five-Year Course Plan .....	86
Appendix C: Clinical Advising Form.....	92
Appendix D: Thesis Prospectus .....	94
Appendix E: Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Cover Memo .....	95
Appendix F: Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program Milestone Timeline Guidelines .....	96
Appendix G: Clinical Case Conference Evaluation Form.....	102
Appendix H: Doctoral Comprehensive Exam: Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Form.....	105
Appendix I: CUDCP Internship Eligibility.....	106
Appendix J: <i>TurnItIn</i> Procedure .....	107
Appendix K: Paperwork and Procedure Guidelines for Students .....	109
<b>Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology Contacts .....</b>	<b>110</b>

# SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

**Congratulations on your admission to the Clinical Psychology Program at The University of Southern Mississippi!** We are glad that you decided to pursue a doctorate with us. Expect a rigorous but exciting training experience during your tenure at USM. This document summarizes some of the important procedures and regulations that will govern your activities as you proceed toward your degree. When you first read this document, you may feel overwhelmed by the many “rules” governing your graduate career. However, it is our experience that having clear goals, objectives, and procedures helps to ensure that students complete the doctorate degree in a timely fashion. This document contains much of the information you will need during your time in the program, as well as several resources and our Student Bill of Rights (Appendix A) that outlines ways in which our program strives to live up to the ideal of the [APAGS Student Bill of Rights](#).

The material contained herein is not intended to substitute for or otherwise modify the regulations that are contained in the current [Graduate Bulletin](#), the [School of Psychology Graduate Student Handbook](#), or other official University documents. Rather, this document supplements and extends more general University-level and School-level requirements as they might apply specifically to the graduate program in clinical psychology. The program handbook may be more specific than the handbooks at other levels within the University, and it is your responsibility to adhere to these specific policies. This **Policy and Procedures Manual** will be updated periodically with a new posting at the beginning of each Fall semester. Relevant policy memoranda that appear between publications will be available on our clinical psychology SharePoint and incorporated into subsequent editions of the manual. If you judge a section of this Manual to be unclear, or if you identify additional topics that you believe warrant inclusion in the next edition, please inform the Director of Clinical Training, Dr. Stephanie Smith.

A copy of this document is available on the [Psychology Graduate Programs Teams](#) page and [USM Clinical Psychology Resources SharePoint](#). You will be asked to read this document in the first week of your training in the clinical psychology doctoral program and to sign a form to indicate that you have read this document and have had the opportunity to ask questions about its contents. You will be notified (via the clinical group email) annually when the document is updated. Please download and read the updated document as soon as possible after receiving notification of an update. We will also review new policies and procedures and answer questions at our First Clinical Psychology Program Meeting held annually at the beginning of the Fall semester.

## THE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM'S MISSION STATEMENT

The University of Southern Mississippi's doctoral program in clinical psychology is grounded in the scientist-practitioner model in which the scientific and professional components of clinical psychology are complementary and fully integrated at all stages of training. The program is a traditional Boulder Model clinical training program that prepares its graduates first as scientists and then as practicing clinical psychologists. The clinical training program presumes that all clinicians must be capable of making contributions to the science of psychology through research and consultation as well as through practice, and it is not geared to those graduate students who are interested only in clinical training. Graduates are prepared to pursue careers in academia, research, mental health care delivery, or practice in public and private settings.

In adhering to its philosophy, the clinical psychology program maintains a focus on three broad goals for its students. It is the program's goal that at the time of graduation, students will (1) have achieved a broad base of knowledge in the field of psychology, (2) be capable of contributing to current knowledge in clinical psychology, and (3) be capable of providing evidence-based clinical services that are consistent with ethical and professional standards. The program has 14 specific training objectives designed to help students meet these broad goals:

1. Students will acquire basic knowledge of the core domains of scientific psychology, including the biological, social, developmental, and cognitive/affective bases of behavior; and the history of psychology.
2. Students will be capable of synthesizing and integrating psychological theory into their research and practice.
3. Students will acquire knowledge of psychological research methods.
4. Students will acquire knowledge of statistics.
5. Students will be able to articulate and defend research questions and results.
6. Students will be knowledgeable and capable of generating an original research study and producing scholarly products.
7. Students will prioritize their training as a scientist and value collaborative research efforts.
8. Students of the program will provide competent practice in diagnosis of psychopathology and theoretical conceptualization of cases.
9. Students of the program will provide competent practice in evidence-based assessments and interpretation of assessment findings in integrative reports.
10. Students of the program will provide competent practice in selection and implementation of evidence-based interventions.
11. Students will develop the skills necessary to provide a range of clinical services.
12. Students of the program will have developed an awareness of issues of cultural diversity and will approach their work with an awareness of and sensitivity to contextual issues, including diversity.
13. Students will have knowledge of and act in accordance with the law, APA ethical codes, and HIPAA in their clinical practice and scholarly work.

14. Students will display professionalism in their relationships with faculty, staff, supervisors, peers, students, and clients.

## **PEOPLE**

### **Clinical Training Committee**

The Clinical Training Committee (CTC) consists of all full-time tenure eligible and tenured faculty members in the clinical psychology program and is chaired by the Director of Clinical Training (DCT). A non-tenure eligible clinical psychology faculty member may also be appointed to the CTC by majority vote of faculty comprising the CTC. Admissions, annual student evaluations, curriculum changes, and disciplinary actions, as well as other program-related issues, are all decided by the CTC. During the Fall and Spring semesters, the CTC meets weekly to discuss issues relevant to the clinical psychology training program. The committee also meets regularly during the Summer semester. All program decisions that require a vote are passed when a simple majority of the eligible faculty (not faculty present) votes in the affirmative. An outline of each CTC meeting agenda is maintained by the DCT.

### **Graduate Student Peer Support**

Once accepted to the clinical psychology doctoral program, you will be assigned to a currently enrolled student who is typically in their second year in the program and in your major professor's lab to offer peer support. This student will be available to answer general questions about the program as well as specific questions about your transition to Hattiesburg and USM. Although we want all new students to feel fully supported by the entire program, this assigned student will be readily available to provide information following your admission to the program.

### **Administrative Staff**

The School of Psychology currently has two administrative specialists and we are in the process of hiring a third to support the School, the faculty, and our training programs. Ms. Payton is located in the Owings McQuagge Hall (OMH) 214 Suite. Ms. Morgan is located in the OMH 231 suite (Psychology Administrative Office). Ms. Carol Morgan is the Administrative Specialist for the School. She is responsible for financial issues such as GA hiring paperwork, budgets, and travel. Ms. Dionne Payton is the Administrative Specialist for Undergraduate Programs. As we are currently in the process of hiring an Administrative Specialist for the Graduate Programs, Dr. Bonnie Nicholson will help with some of these administrative tasks. The Administrative Specialist for the Graduate Programs is responsible for maintaining records and providing support to all graduate programs in the School. It is important that all new clinical psychology graduate students provide Dr. Nicholson with a local mailing address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address. All clinical psychology students, new and continuing, should also keep her advised of any changes of address, telephone number(s), or e-mail address that might occur. If



you are a new student, please introduce yourself to her as soon as you arrive on campus. She will be able to direct you to faculty, staff, and facilities within the school.

As students, we ask that you please be aware of the multiple responsibilities and the amount of work required of our administrative support staff to support the programs and faculty in our school. Although staff will support you as you progress through the program, please recognize that doing so is not their primary function. They are **not** your assistant.

### **Graduate Student CTC Representatives**

Each year, two clinical psychology graduate students are elected by their peers to serve as liaisons between the clinical psychology students and the Clinical Training Committee (i.e., student representatives). The student representatives are elected during the Summer semester and serve a one-year term. To ensure representation across the student body—as well as awareness of and attention to the various concerns that students at different stages in training may have—one student representative is elected from the rising second year class, and one is elected from the rising third year class and beyond. Students must be in residence in the upcoming year to be eligible for these positions. Students who previously served as a student representative may be reappointed if they remain in residence. During the Summer semester, the DCT will reach out to students to determine their interest in the two CTC Representative positions (rising second year class and rising third year class and beyond) and if more than one student is interested in each of the two positions, an election will be held. If not, students who volunteered for each position will serve. During an election, all current students (rising second years through internship class for the upcoming year) vote for both representative positions for the next academic year. Students who are completing internship and who will graduate in the current year are not eligible to vote. The student with the most votes from their peers for each of the two positions will be selected as the student representative. Regardless of the number of votes from peers, students must be in good standing in the program to serve as a student representative. The student representatives will meet with the DCT as needed to discuss any concerns brought to their attention that are relevant to the training program. The student representatives will also participate in the weekly meetings of the CTC. Of course, the student representatives will be excused for discussions in which it would be inappropriate or unethical for them to be present (e.g., discussions of student performance). Students are encouraged to contact current CTC representatives with questions or concerns to bring forward to the CTC.

### **CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION (CPGSO)**

The Clinical Psychology Graduate Student Organization (CPGSO) is an official student organization designed to systematically coordinate program-related activities initiated by the graduate students in the clinical psychology doctoral program. An executive committee for CPGSO is elected in the Summer semester. All current clinical psychology doctoral students are encouraged to participate in the CPGSO and the many meetings and fundraising events arranged by the organization. The CPGSO's primary goal is to raise money for and administer

the Client Assistance, Retention, and Enrichment (CARE) fund. The CARE fund was established by the CPGSO to provide grants to assist in paying for services at USM's Center for Behavior Health (CBH) for clients who cannot otherwise afford services due to financial hardship, either temporary or longstanding. The CPGSO also aims to eventually raise money to assist clinical psychology doctoral students in their research and professional travel.

### **Executive Leadership for the CPGSO**

The executive leadership for the CPGSO for 2024-2025 has not yet been determined. The 2023-2024 officers are listed below.

<b>President:</b>	Maddison Knott
<b>Vice President:</b>	Kendall Beals
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Sonal Johal
<b>Secretary:</b>	Cameron Robins
<b>Fundraising Officers:</b>	Faith Wilbourne & Kylee Behringer

The faculty advisor for the CPGSO is Dr. Megan Renna.

### **GRADUATE STUDENTS' OBLIGATION TO ETHICAL BEHAVIOR**

#### **Background Checks Required for Admission & Continued Enrollment**

All graduate students admitted to the School of Psychology must complete a background check provided through Castlebranch and coordinated through the College. Requirements for admission include the absence of a felony conviction(s) or misdemeanor conviction(s) involving moral turpitude and/or convictions suggesting the applicant is not of good character or reputation. Concerns noted will be discussed with the student. Given the connection between such convictions and subsequent employment and/or licensure eligibility, applicants failing this background check will not be permitted to enroll and will be dismissed from the program. The School of Psychology reserves the right to request additional background checks at any point prior to receiving the degree. Students are subject to dismissal should they fail a background check after already enrolled. Unless otherwise indicated, costs associated with the Castlebranch background check are the responsibility of the applicant/student. This background check is in addition to the background checks conducted by Human Resources as part of hiring Graduate Assistants.

#### **Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association**

You will be governed by the applicable principles of the current version of the American Psychological Association's **Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct** during the time you are in graduate school. The ethical principles and code of conduct can be obtained online from the following website: <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf>. You will be asked

to read this document in the first week of your training and to sign a form to indicate that you have read this document. You will abide by its standards throughout your training at The University of Southern Mississippi (and beyond!).

The APA Ethics Code will be formally discussed in Psychology 607 (Ethics and Current Issues in Psychology), including implications and applications for graduate students in training. Students will also have many formal opportunities for discussion of ethical principles throughout their coursework, research, and clinical experiences as well as have the opportunity to apply these principles in a variety of settings.

### **Professionalism**

It is expected that you will act in a professionally responsible manner and in accordance with the APA's Professional Competencies. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the [APA's Professional Competencies](#), as these benchmarks will be used in determining your readiness for clinical practicum in the Center for Behavioral Health (CBH), clinical externship placements, and internship. Your professional behavior will also be evaluated as part of your annual evaluation, which encompasses your level of collegiality, engagement and citizenship as a member of the School of Psychology and the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program.

### **Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is scholarly theft, and it is defined as the unacknowledged use of secondary sources. More specifically, any written presentation in which the writer does not distinguish clearly between original and borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Because students, as scholars, must make frequent use of the concepts and facts developed by other scholars, plagiarism is not the mere use of another's facts and ideas. However, it is plagiarism when students present the work of the other scholars as if it were their own work. Plagiarism is a serious offense. *An act of plagiarism within a course may lead to a failing grade on the assignment, paper, or exam—or a failing grade for the course itself—as well as other sanctions. An act of plagiarism in a thesis, dissertation, or other research contribution will also be met with severe consequences including dismissal from the program.* To ensure that you understand the nature of plagiarism, you must complete the tutorial found at: [http://www.lib.usm.edu/plagiarism\\_tutorial/](http://www.lib.usm.edu/plagiarism_tutorial/) and have the results of the quiz e-mailed to Dr. Smith during your first week in the program.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is also viewed as academic dishonesty and our program has adopted the AI Prohibitive Use Policy unless it is explicitly permitted by your course instructor, major professor or supervisor. The AI Prohibitive Use Policy states that the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not permitted when writing one's thesis or dissertation, coursework, or other faculty-supervised research products. Use of generative AI (i.e., using AI to generate text which is then copied and pasted into one's document) may be considered a violation of the University of Southern Mississippi's [Academic Integrity policy](#). Your course instructors, major professor, and supervisors reserve the right to send documents through AI detection software.

Please be aware that the Graduate School requires all theses and dissertations to be run through software which detects the use of AI. The use of unauthorized AI tools will result in consequences deemed appropriate by the major professor, graduate program and/or School of Psychology and will be subject to the terms Academic Integrity Policy at the University of Southern Mississippi.

**ACTION STEP REMINDERS FOR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE BY THE SECOND FRIDAY OF THE INCOMING SEMESTER**

- Read the *Policy and Procedures Manual for Clinical Psychology Graduate Students*; sign and submit form of completion for student file.
- Read the *American Psychological Association Code of Ethics*; sign and submit form of completion for student file.
- Complete plagiarism tutorial on the University Libraries website; email results to Dr. Smith for your file.
- Complete CITI *Responsible Conduct of Research* Training and provide certificates to Dr. Smith for your file.
- Review the American Psychological Association Professional Competencies benchmarks.

## SECTION 2: CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM CURRICULUM

### CLINICAL CONCENTRATION AREA TRAINING OPTIONS

The clinical psychology training program is committed to the concept of broadly-based general clinical training. However, upon admission to the program, students are accepted into one of two areas of clinical concentration: **(1) clinical adult** or **(2) clinical child**. Generally, students in either concentration area will have similar coursework and clinical practicum requirements, although sequencing of these experiences will differ by concentration area, permitting specialized training in the elected concentration area earlier in training. In addition, students will typically be assigned a major professor, conduct their thesis and dissertation, and take electives (through consultation with and approval by their major professor) within their area of concentration. We believe this approach to the curriculum will allow students the opportunity to develop enhanced competencies specific to their area of interest before applying to internship, thus maximizing their potential for a suitable internship match. Because of the different course sequences associated with the child and adult areas, changing concentration areas could delay your progress through the program. Therefore, changing concentration areas is discouraged. Please see the DCT as soon as possible if you are considering changing your concentration area. Sometimes students will work in the labs of other faculty members on specific, time-limited projects that may help them gain additional research experience or clinical hours. Students should obtain approval from their major professor before volunteering for additional work in another professor's lab to ensure that they do not become too overloaded and are staying on track for their primary research projects.

### ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND CLINICAL TRAINING OPTIONS

Our program is based on the scientist-practitioner model, meaning that all students receive training in both clinical and research domains, as well as experience integrating research into practice and vice versa. Historically, the opportunities available in both areas during the standard four years in residence have been sufficient for students to move on to successful postdoctoral positions and careers in the field. However, the program recognizes that these are a busy four years, and that the competitiveness of research-related positions continues to increase. If students are interested in pursuing a research career, they are encouraged to speak with their major professor in the first two years of the program to discuss the possibility of an additional year of funding (depending on the availability of funds). Their major professor will outline what expectations they have of students to potentially receive this additional funding and what research activities should be completed in this additional year to make them competitive for a research-related position. Alternatively, students may wish to receive specialized clinical training not offered in the standard four years of the program to better prepare them for a specific clinically oriented career. They are also encouraged to speak with their major professor in the first two years of the program about the availability of additional funding, what this additional year of clinical training would entail and if it is necessary to reach their career goals.

## **PROGRAM OF STUDY IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY AT USM**

The first two years of graduate work consists of completing the master's core sequence (which is also relevant for students entering with a master's degree and obtaining only the Ph.D. at USM), preliminary clinical coursework, introductory practicum experiences in the Center for Behavioral Health, and research under the supervision of your major professor. The sequence of courses that you will take as a clinical psychology graduate student is designed to ensure that you receive strong preparation in the research and theoretical literature of psychology as an experimental behavioral science, the fundamental skills to conduct an empirical thesis and dissertation, and the requisite clinical skills necessary to prepare you to begin serving clients in the Center for Behavioral Health and in our affiliated community settings.

Your degree plan is based on program requirements published in the *Graduate Bulletin* for the catalog year in which you matriculate into the program. However, program requirements are subject to change based on new accreditation standards or requirements.

## Program Curriculum

### COMMON REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

#### Research Tool(s)

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Research tools are completed as part of the master's in psychology (MA) earned en route to the doctorate.

PSY 661 - Research Evaluation in the Behavioral Sciences (3 hrs.)

PSY 662 - Quantitative Methods I (3 hrs.) or REF 762 - Quantitative Analysis II (3 hrs.)

PSY 663 - Quantitative Methods II (3 hrs.) or REF 830 - Multivariate Analysis (3 hrs.)

PSY 698 – Thesis (3 hrs.)

#### Departmental (School) Courses

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##### **Psychological Foundations (Discipline-Specific Knowledge):**

Completion of 3 of the following 4 content areas is required for the MA in Psychology earned en route to the doctorate (Completion of the remaining 4<sup>th</sup> content area is required for the doctoral degree.)

##### **Biological area:**

PSY 624 - Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience (3 hrs.)

##### **Cognitive and Affective areas:**

PSY 716 - Cognition and Emotion (3 hrs.)

##### **Social area:**

PSY 750 – Advanced Social Psychology (3 hr)

##### **Individual Differences and Life Span Development area:**

PSY 679 – Advanced Developmental Psychology (3 hr)

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##### **Other Departmental (School) Requirements:**

PSY 718 – History of Modern Psychology (3 hrs)

PSY 898 – Dissertation (9 hrs.)

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#### Note:

Thirty-eight credits are required to complete the MA, earned en route to the doctorate. The MA degree requirements include the Research Tools (12 credits), 3 of the 4 Psychology foundation courses (9 credits), and an additional 17 credits of electives. All choices between core courses as well as selection of elective courses must be approved by the student's major advisor and the emphasis area director of training. Students entering the program with a master's degree who have their thesis accepted as meeting the thesis requirement will complete 3 hrs of PSY 791 - Research in Psychology during their first semester and will not be required to complete PSY 698 hours.

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## REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EMPHASIS IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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In addition to the requirements listed under common requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, the student must take the following:

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### **Professional Core (7 hours)**

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PSY 607 - Ethics and Current Issues in Psychology (3 hrs.)

PSY 613 - Cultural Bases of Behavior (3 hrs.)

PSY 701 - Seminar in Teaching of Psychology (1 hr.)

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### **Additional Research Design and Analysis (3 hours)**

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PSY 768 - Psychometric Theory (3 hrs.)

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### **Clinical Core (24 hours):**

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PSY 640 - Behavioral and Emotional Assessment of Children (3 hrs.) OR

PSY 740 - Objective Personality Assessment (3 hrs.)

PSY 641 - Adult Cognitive Assessment (3 hrs.) OR

PSY 642 - Psychoeducational Assessment I (3 hrs.)

PSY 736 - Introduction to Clinical Skills (3 hrs.)

PSY 780 - Advanced Psychopathology (3 hrs.)

PSY 734 - Child Behavior Therapy (3 hrs.)

PSY 742 - Empirically Supported Therapy for Adults (3 hrs.)

PSY 777 - Psychological Disorders of Childhood (3 hrs.)

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### **Practica, Externships, and Internship (26 hours):**

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PSY 782 - Clinical Psychology Practicum 1-3 hrs. (minimum 8 semesters and 23 hours)

PSY 881 - Internship in Clinical Psychology 1-3 hrs. (3 hrs. required)

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### **Note:**

Upon admission to the program, students choose a concentration in either Adult Clinical or Child Clinical. *Adult Clinical:* Students selecting the Adult Clinical concentration will be assigned an Adult Clinical research mentor, have a minimum of 4 semesters of Adult Clinical practicum training, and complete Adult Clinical coursework earlier in the course sequence. They are also required to complete PSY 740 and PSY 641. *Child Clinical:* Students electing the Child Clinical concentration will be assigned a Child Clinical research mentor, have a minimum of 4 semesters of Child Clinical practicum training, complete Child Clinical coursework earlier in the course sequence, and complete PSY 640 and PSY 642.

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## **The Clinical Sequence**

The clinical core is designed to provide a strong foundation in the skills deemed essential to clinical practice. The active research orientation that exists within the clinical psychology program requires that students continue to conceptualize clinical practice and phenomena in terms of theory and basic knowledge from all areas of our discipline.

Second, third, and fourth year students in Clinical Psychology Practicum (PSY 782) must attend a weekly Clinical Didactic series. Four of these didactics per year are designated as topics in the Supervision and Consultation Series. Topics will not repeat in three years; thus, students will be exposed to 12 unique topics in the Supervision and Consultation series portion of the practicum didactic. In addition, readings on models and theories of Supervision are covered in junior practicum in the Summer semester of the first year in order to lay the foundation for getting the most out of clinical supervision in the coming years.

Please note that for Fall and Spring semesters the minimum number of hours for full-time graduate study is nine (9) semester hours and the maximum number of hours for full-time graduate study is thirteen (13) semester hours. Unless advised otherwise, you should be registered for 13 hours in the Fall and Spring semesters. This is mandatory for tuition waivers to be applied correctly. Due to tuition waiver limitations, course loads in the Summer semester will typically be 3 hours. If you expect to propose or defend your dissertation in the Summer semester, you must notify the DCT so that the program can petition for an additional hour of tuition waiver. You will be advised by the DCT regarding how many hours for which to register during each semester.

Students can refer to the *General Five-Year Course Plan* (Appendix B) for general information about course sequencing and a sample plan to progress through to completion of the program in five years. See more information in the Course Scheduling and Academic Advising section below.

## **Course Grade Expectations and Consequences**

Only grades of A and B are considered acceptable for graduate courses in the Clinical Psychology Program at USM. A grade of C+/C is considered failing and will result in a formal warning letter from the DCT. A second C+/C will result in the student being placed on school and program probation, and a third C+/C will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

Grades of C-, D or F are also considered failing, but these have more significant consequences. Specifically, an F will result in automatic dismissal from the program. A grade of C- or D will result in immediate school and program probation and a termination review. A grade of C- or D in combination with a grade of C+/C or lower will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

All courses resulting in a final grade of C+/C or lower must be retaken until an acceptable grade (B- or better) is obtained. Grades may not be replaced. A remediation plan will be put in place for the student to facilitate success when retaking the failed course(s).

A grade of U for research or thesis/dissertation credits will also result in a student being placed on school and program probation, and a second U will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

Finally, students must also maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better (i.e., a student who maintains a B-average will be placed on academic probation). All course grade expectation policies for the Clinical Psychology Emphasis are consistent with the Grade Policy for the School of Psychology.

### **COURSE SCHEDULING AND ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Please remember that not all graduate courses are offered every semester. Furthermore, personnel changes and other scheduling considerations sometimes require modifications to the timetable of classes (Schedule of Classes available in SOAR) released each year by the Office of the Registrar. Prior to registration in the Fall and Spring semesters, the DCT will send information regarding the courses and hours in which you should register. To facilitate this process, the DCT maintains a *Clinical Advising Form* (Appendix C) for each student that is updated each semester during the advisement period. When advised for registration, the DCT will indicate when you have options regarding the sequencing of courses. When decisions about your course sequencing need to be made, it is important that you consult with your major professor to plan a schedule that will satisfy your program of study through consultation with the DCT.

Please respond promptly to feedback from your major professor and the DCT about your course schedule. It is also important that you register for classes promptly and as advised. Failure to do so could cause problems with your tuition waiver, financial aid, or graduate student status at the Graduate School. Once your schedule is determined, register appropriately and do not deviate from it without consulting with your major professor and the DCT and having the DCT's approval. **During the Summer semester, it is important that you register for the exact number of hours indicated by the DCT.**

## MAJOR PROFESSOR

Although the DCT conducts formal academic advisement for course registration each semester, your major professor is your academic advisor, research supervisor (i.e., thesis and/or dissertation chair), and professional mentor. Given the role of your major professor, any applications for grants, scholarship or awards, conference presentations, or any other scholarly work (e.g., publications) completed while under the mentorship of your major professor must be approved by them prior to their submission. In those rare cases in which a student wishes to identify a new major professor, the student should first discuss this change with both the current and prospective mentor. The student must next notify the DCT in writing. The DCT will contact the current and proposed major professor to confirm the proposed change in mentors and will then notify the CTC of this change.

In rare cases, non-clinical faculty members have directed clinical psychology students' theses and dissertations. If you select a non-clinical faculty member as your thesis or dissertation director, the DCT will appoint a clinical faculty member, typically one who is a member of your thesis or dissertation committee, to serve in the capacity as your clinical psychology program advisor or the DCT will serve in this capacity.

As stated before and reiterated here due to the importance of this policy, students should obtain approval from their major professor before volunteering for additional work in another professor's lab to ensure that they do not become too overloaded and are staying on track for their independent research projects.

## TRANSFER OF GRADUATE COURSES FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

### Transfer of Required School Courses

If you believe that a required School-level core course taken at another institution is equivalent to the one required for the clinical psychology doctoral training program at USM, you should provide the DCT with a copy of the transcript on which that course grade appears, a copy of the course syllabus, a sample of written material from the course (e.g., tests or papers), and any other available materials that you believe will be helpful in determining whether the course in question is equivalent to the one required at USM. The material will be furnished to the USM instructor who normally teaches the course. That person, in turn, will make a recommendation to the DCT regarding course equivalence. This recommendation will be reviewed for possible approval by the CTC.

A total of up to six (6) semester hours of graduate credit (typically two courses) from other accredited institutions may be transferred to your program at USM or waived by the DCT, if such coursework is within the time limitations that the University allows for the degree. The limit to 6 semester hours of transferred credit is mandated by the Graduate School. The *Transfer Credit Approval Form* should be completed for transfer courses. Courses completed as part of another completed degree program (e.g., master's degree) *cannot* be transferred in per

Graduate School requirements. Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin for the Graduate School policy on transferring courses. Equivalent courses earned as part of a formal graduate degree program **may be waived** on your USM Degree Plan by the DCT at the time you apply for graduation. It is important to note that waived courses will not appear on your USM transcript as part of your doctoral program.

### **Clinical Courses, Ethics, and Statistics Courses Cannot be Transferred or Waived**

You cannot transfer or waive courses taken at other institutions for the required clinical core courses. In addition, you cannot transfer ethics or professional issues courses taken at other institutions for 607 (Ethics and Current Issues in Psychology). Finally, we require the statistics course sequence to be completed at USM.

### **MASTER'S DEGREE EN ROUTE TO THE DOCTORATE**

A master's degree is required en route toward the doctorate. If you enter the clinical psychology program with only a bachelor's degree, you must complete a master's degree, with thesis, at USM. If you enter with a research-oriented master's degree, with thesis, from another department of psychology, you are expected to provide a copy of the thesis to the DCT early during the Fall semester of the first year. The DCT will appoint two readers for your thesis (typically one of the readers is your major professor). The two readers will advise the CTC after reviewing your thesis. If the CTC determines that your master's thesis meets the research criteria normally expected of master's theses conducted by clinical psychology students at USM, you will not be required to earn a master's degree at USM. If the CTC determines that your master's thesis does not meet the standard for thesis projects in the clinical psychology training program, you will be required to complete a thesis for the program and you would earn a subsequent M.A. degree from USM.

### **NON-THESIS M.S. OPTION IF WITHDRAWING FROM THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

**A non-thesis master's degree is not available through the clinical psychology doctoral program.** Voluntary or involuntary attrition from the clinical psychology program is rare, and approximately 90% of entering clinical psychology students receive their doctoral degree. Nonetheless, USM has established a mechanism for the academically eligible student, who chooses to withdraw from the doctoral program, to apply for a non-thesis (terminal) master's degree (the M.S. in Psychology), which is a general psychology (not clinical) degree. To be eligible, the student must have completed all master's degree requirements except the thesis. **Students who select this option are not eligible to continue in the clinical psychology doctoral program at USM.** A *Change of Status Form* must be filed with the Graduate School to withdraw from the Ph.D. program and change to the M.S. degree plan. The DCT or your major professor can access this form from the Graduate School website. Likewise, students earning the M.S. must complete a master's comprehensive exam requirement (described in more detail in Section 3).

## **GRADUATE MINOR**

No minor field is required in the master's or doctoral program in clinical psychology at USM. You must have prior approval from the CTC to take graduate courses in another department at USM or to have it apply toward your degree.

## SECTION 3: REQUIRED RESEARCH AND COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

### MASTER'S THESIS

#### Getting Started on the Thesis

Research training in the clinical psychology program is arranged sequentially and hierarchically. You will start with exposure to research under the guidance of your major professor in the first semester, including some initial steps that will lead to the master's thesis project. Specifically, you should begin exploring the literature and speaking with your major professor about a master's thesis topic in your first semester. We encourage you to begin the thesis process as early as possible because, in your second semester, you will take the Research Evaluation in the Behavioral Sciences course, in which you will learn more advanced competencies related to developing a research proposal. It is beneficial if you have a good knowledge of the literature base and at least initial thoughts about the design of your thesis project before you take Research Evaluation. Students must establish a thesis committee and file a thesis prospectus (see below) with the CTC **no later May 1<sup>st</sup> of their first year**. Students who enter the program with a master's degree and for whom the master's thesis was approved by the CTC do not have to complete an additional thesis (thus, the sections directly below do not apply). However, these students will register for Research in Psychology and should initiate independent research work through consultation with their major professor early in the Fall semester of their first year.

#### Composition of Master's Thesis Committee

If you enter the clinical psychology program without a master's degree, your master's thesis work will be supervised by a School committee that includes a committee chair (your major professor) and at least two committee members, selected in consultation with your major professor and appointed by the Graduate School. If your major professor (thesis committee chair) is not a member of the clinical faculty, **one** member of the master's thesis committee must be a member of the clinical faculty. However, most students (well over 90%) have a clinical faculty member as their major professor.

Qualified individuals from outside the University may serve as committee members if they have specialized knowledge needed by the student but will have to provide their credentials (i.e., *Graduate Faculty Status Recommendation Form*, CV) to the Graduate School to be approved to be on the committee (i.e., they must have Associate Graduate Faculty status). If you plan to have an outside member on your committee, you must plan ahead. The process of applying for Associate Graduate Faculty Status can take weeks to months as all applications must be submitted through the School Director and approved by the Graduate Council. Graduate Council meets monthly during the regular academic year. More information on meeting dates and proposal deadlines are provided here: [Faculty and Staff | Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

A *Graduate Committee Request Form* (see Graduate School website under Current Students) must be submitted via SOAR. Dr. Nicholson will submit this information on your behalf after you fill out the [Graduate School documents form](#). You will be notified by email after the form is approved. In the event that the composition of your thesis committee changes, you have to re-file a *Graduate Committee Request Form* to reflect the changes. This form should be filed in advance of your thesis proposal meeting.

### Thesis Prospectus

A thesis prospectus (Appendix D) must be developed within the first year through consultation with your major professor. **Each student must file a thesis prospectus with the CTC and have it approved no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> of the first year or the student will receive a warning; if the student fails to file a thesis prospectus with the CTC that is subsequently approved by the CTC by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the second year, the student's status will be changed to fails to meet expectations** (Appendix F).

All CTC faculty members should receive a copy of the document for their review. Once the prospectus is received, the DCT will place it on the agenda for the next available CTC meeting (time allowing). Please note that it could take a few weeks before the CTC is able to discuss and vote on your thesis prospectus. The thesis prospectus is not intended to be a full thesis proposal, but rather, a two-page document that includes a brief literature review, study aims, preliminary hypotheses, and a research methods section. This document must be approved by your major professor before you file it with the CTC. The purpose of the thesis prospectus is to ensure you are making satisfactory progress in fulfillment of your research requirements. Once the thesis prospectus has been approved by the CTC, you can form your thesis committee (if you have not already done so), prepare a proposal document, and hold your thesis proposal meeting. A copy of the approved thesis prospectus (signed by the DCT) is placed in the student file. You will be notified by the DCT about the thesis prospectus approval.

### Thesis Proposal

A written proposal including your literature review, method, and proposed analyses, accompanied by the *Thesis Proposal Cover Memo* (Appendix E), must be distributed to all members of your thesis committee. You may distribute this electronically but should provide a hard copy to any committee member requesting it. The committee will have two weeks to read and provide feedback on the document per the thesis proposal cover memo, which is returned to the thesis chair. If, **after the two-week review period**, all members of the thesis committee agree that the document is adequate, then a formal proposal meeting will be scheduled. Note that a student may have to provide some proposal changes in writing prior to scheduling the proposal meeting if requested by a committee member. If a member of the thesis committee indicates that the document is *not* ready for a proposal meeting, then concerns identified by that committee member must be addressed in consultation with your major professor and a

revised draft sent out to your committee for an additional two-week review period, as outlined above. You are responsible for securing the meeting location and may do this using the [School of Psychology Bookings link](#). At the proposal meeting, you will present and defend your proposed study, answer committee questions, and seek approval to proceed with the study. **Each student must successfully propose the thesis no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of the second year or the student will receive a warning; if the student fails to propose the thesis by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the second year, the student's status will be changed to fails to meet expectations** (Appendix F).

*A Thesis, Project, Dissertation, or Doctoral Project Proposal Approval Form* must be submitted to the Graduate School after your project is approved by your committee. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to indicate your need of a Proposal Approval Form in order for the form to be submitted to the Graduate School. It is recommended that you complete the form at that link once your meeting is scheduled. The documents will be sent to your chair to complete them (including obtaining committee members' signatures) after your project is approved. You must also email the DCT with the name of your project and proposal date after a successful meeting.

### Thesis Defense

Upon completion of your thesis, the committee chair will ask you to schedule the defense. The finalized thesis must be distributed to your thesis committee a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the defense. You may submit this document electronically but should also provide a hard copy to any committee member requesting it. There is not an accompanying memo, and the defense date can be established prior to or at the time of distributing the thesis. Nevertheless, a committee member is always welcome to provide feedback prior to the meeting if there is something they want to ensure you address at the meeting. You are responsible for securing the meeting location and may do this using the [School of Psychology Bookings link](#). The examination will be open to any member of the graduate faculty and, at the discretion of the committee chair, may be opened to the public. The committee chair, with advice from the committee, has complete authority for the conduct of the defense. The chair may ask whether you should leave the room at the start of the meeting for committee-only discussion prior to your defense presentation (any non-committee attendees would also be asked to leave the room). The chair may recognize those attendees outside of your committee wishing to ask questions about your research. Questions and resulting discussion are appropriate for this important event. The chair may end the open part of the defense by restricting the meeting to the committee after an appropriate time, asking non-committee attendees to be excused. Discussion of the results of the defense must be limited to the committee members. A majority vote will determine the result of the defense and shall be reported to the Graduate School at the close of the meeting (see information about form below).



Graduate School deadlines for each semester are provided at <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/internalportal/graduate-school-deadlines.php>. The Documents Specialist can be reached at [documentspecialist@usm.edu](mailto:documentspecialist@usm.edu).

**You must be registered for at least 1 hour of thesis (PSY 698) during the semester you defend.** You should also adhere to Graduate School deadlines for conferment of degrees. Please note that you cannot be given a “P” (pass) for PSY 698 until your committee-approved document has been submitted and fully approved by the Graduate School. If you miss the graduation deadlines for a given semester, you will have to register for an additional 1 hour of PSY 698 the following semester. Students are encouraged to make any necessary changes and submit their committee-approved document to the Document Specialist expeditiously following the defense. To graduate the semester you defend, you **MUST** meet graduation deadlines for final document submission to the Document Specialist. **Students are encouraged to defend the thesis no later than August 1<sup>st</sup> of the second year. Each student must successfully defend the thesis no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> of the third year or the student will receive a warning; if the student fails to defend the thesis by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the third year, the student’s status will be changed to fails to meet expectations. If the student still has not defended the thesis by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the third year, a termination review will be convened (Appendix F). More serious consequences will result if the student remains in the program through the Summer semester of third year but still fails to defend the thesis (next set of consequences takes place August 1<sup>st</sup> of third year and then again December 1<sup>st</sup> of fourth year).** Refer to Appendix F.

Both a *Results of Oral Defense* **AND** a *Results of Comprehensive and/or Qualifying Exams Form* must be submitted to the Graduate School after your committee meeting. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to generate these forms. Your thesis chair will submit the signed forms to the DCT who ensures they are passed along to the Graduate School. Per graduate school policy, you will also be required to submit your document to *Turnitin*, generate an originality report, and submit this to your major professor. Your major professor must review this report, and you must make any necessary corrections before your Committee Chair can notify the Document Specialist that your committee has accepted the required changes. Only then are you permitted to initially submit your document to the Graduate School. Specific instructions for these procedures are provided in the *School of Psychology Graduate Student Handbook*. You must prepare your thesis in the Graduate School format (see templates posted on the Graduate School website): <http://aquila.usm.edu/graduateschooldocs/>). You are required to use the Templates provided by the Graduate School on this website. Once your document is ready to submit, you should follow the instructions provided in the “Instructions for Using Aquila/How to Submit to the Reviewer” section). Note that the review and approval process with the Documents Specialist will require you to reply promptly and exactly as instructed to ensure your document is accepted in the necessary timeline. Once you have made all edits required by the Documents Specialist, you will submit your final approved copy to the Documents Specialist via Aquila. Bound paper copies are NOT required by the School of Psychology.

You must also email the DCT with the defense date (and the thesis title, if it changed from the proposal) after a successful thesis defense meeting.

### **Time Limitations to Complete the Thesis**

Failure to maintain adequate research progress at any stage of the thesis project may result in disciplinary action. After submitting the thesis prospectus, you will write a formal thesis proposal, followed by a formal thesis proposal meeting with your committee. Prior to collecting any data with human participants, you will need to submit an application to the University's IRB (<https://www.usm.edu/research-integrity/institutional-review-board.php>). Details of the application process are provided in a later section of this document under "Review and Approval of All Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects". **You cannot commence data collection until you receive written approval from the IRB.** We expect you to successfully defend your thesis by the last day of classes in the Summer semester of the second year (Appendix F). Although the Graduate School requires that all master's degrees at USM be completed within six calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in the graduate program, the CTC mandates that all requirements for the master's degree, including a successful thesis defense, be met by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the third year or else a **termination review** is triggered. Deadlines triggering a warning and a change in status to **fails to meet expectations** precede the termination review deadline. The consequences of failing to meet the deadlines of the various stages of thesis progress are detailed in Appendix F.

### **Grading for Thesis and Dissertation**

Thesis and Dissertation (PSY 698 and 898) as well as Research in Psychology (PSY 791) courses are graded using an "S" (Satisfactory) and "U" (Unsatisfactory) grading scale while the project is in progress. Students are encouraged to work with their major professor to establish the criteria needed to obtain a Satisfactory grade each semester a student is enrolled in thesis, dissertation, or research credits. At the beginning of each semester in which 698/898 or 791 credits are taken, the student and faculty member should complete a Research Agreement form that outlines expectations for the semester and is signed by both parties. Consistent with the Graduate School policies, any grade of "U" will result in probationary status and one semester to remediate the concerns. More than one U grade will result in dismissal. Students will receive a "P" (Pass) the semester that they successfully defend the thesis/ dissertation. Students are strongly encouraged to work quickly to finalize the defense document and to seek approval from the major professor and committee so they are able to submit the document to the Graduate School in the same semester as the defense occurred and receive a P in the course.

### **MASTER'S COMPREHENSIVE EXAM AND RELATION TO MASTER'S THESIS DEFENSE**

A comprehensive examination is required by the Graduate School for the master's degree. **A successful master's thesis defense meeting fulfills the master's comprehensive exam**

**requirement for the M.A. awarded by the clinical psychology program.** Thus, you should have the thesis committee sign all appropriate forms (for thesis defense **and** master's comprehensive exam) following your successful thesis defense. Students entering the program with a master's degree whose thesis is accepted by the CTC are **NOT** required to complete the master's comprehensive examination.

In rare instances, a student may choose to withdraw from the clinical psychology program with a terminal M.S. degree (non-thesis option) in psychology, which is a general psychology (not clinical) degree. In this situation, a written comprehensive examination must be completed in place of the thesis defense. The Graduate School requires that the Comprehensive Examination be administered no later than the last week of the semester/term in which the student expects to receive the degree. The results must be reported by the School Director to the University Registrar and the Graduate School no later than the last day for presenting signed theses to the Graduate School. The student must give four weeks' notice to the CTC, in writing, to sit for the non-thesis M.S. comprehensive examination option. The CTC will form an examination committee consisting of the major professor and two other members of the CTC. If the major professor is unavailable, the DCT will assign a third CTC faculty member to chair the committee. The committee will write an examination consisting of five essay questions that sample from the domains of coursework the student completed to date. Each answer will be scored by two readers who will assign grades of PASS or FAIL. In the case of rater disagreement, a third rater ("blind" to the two faculty members' ratings) will grade the essay, and the higher two of the three ratings for that question will be assigned. Two PASSING ratings are required for a passing grade on an answer. If two raters score an essay as FAILING, that section of the examination may be repeated one time only. A new test item in the same area will be written, and the student must sit for the exam within 10 working days. All second essays will be administered on the same day. To pass the master's comprehensive examination, a student must earn two passing grades on four of the five essays. If a student does not pass the examination within two test administrations, the student will be dismissed from the program without the non-thesis M.S. degree. It is up to the discretion of the CTC (by majority vote) to allow another written project (i.e., in an alternative format) produced by the student to be submitted as fulfilling the master's comprehensive exam requirements in place of the written exam.

## **DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

### **Composition of Doctoral Dissertation Committee**

Your doctoral dissertation will be supervised by a committee composed of a committee chair (your major professor) and at least three other members approved by the School Director and appointed by the Graduate School. **Three** members of the committee must be members of the clinical faculty (this may include the major professor). You should discuss with your major professor about constituting an appropriate committee soon after completing the degree requirements for the master's degree or by the end of your second year of study (or sooner) if you completed a master's thesis elsewhere that was accepted by the CTC.

Qualified individuals from outside the University may serve as members if they have specialized knowledge needed by the student but will have to provide their credentials (i.e., *Graduate Faculty Status Recommendation Form*, CV) to the Graduate School to be approved to be on the committee (i.e., must have Associate Graduate Faculty status). If you plan to have an outside member on your committee, you must plan ahead. The process of applying for Associate Graduate Faculty Status can take weeks to months as all applications must be submitted through the School Director and approved by the Graduate Council. Graduate Council meets monthly during the regular academic year. More information on meeting dates and proposal deadlines are provided here: [Faculty and Staff | Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

A *Graduate Committee Request Form* must be submitted to the Graduate School after your project is approved by your committee. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to have this from submitted to the Graduate School on your behalf. It is recommended that you complete this form using the provided link once your meeting is scheduled. The documents will be sent to your chair to complete them after your project is approved. You must also email the DCT with the name of your project and proposal date after a successful meeting.

### Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation project must be approved by your dissertation chair (your major professor) and your dissertation committee. A written dissertation proposal including your literature review, method, and proposed analyses, accompanied by the *Dissertation Proposal Cover Memo* (Appendix E), must be distributed to all members of your dissertation committee. You may submit the document electronically but should also provide a hard copy to any committee member requesting it. The committee will have two weeks to read and provide feedback on the document per the dissertation proposal cover memo. If, **after the two-week review period**, all members of the dissertation committee agree that the document is adequate, then a formal proposal meeting will be scheduled. Note that a student may have to provide some proposal changes in writing prior to scheduling the proposal meeting, if requested by a committee member. If a member of the dissertation committee indicates that the document is *not* ready for a proposal meeting, then concerns identified by that committee member must be addressed in consultation with your major professor and a revised draft sent out to your committee for an additional two-week review period. You are responsible for securing the meeting location and may do this using the [School of Psychology Bookings link](#). At the proposal meeting, you will present and defend your proposed study, address committee questions, and seek approval to proceed with the study.

Your study must be empirical in nature, and it must be an original and significant contribution to knowledge in your chosen field. **The DCT will not certify you as internship ready until you have successfully proposed your dissertation (among other requirements for internship eligibility).** To meet this deadline, students will be required to have disseminated a copy of the

completed **proposal document** that has been approved by their chair to their entire committee by **September 1<sup>st</sup>** of the semester that they plan to apply for internship. The **proposal meeting** must be scheduled by **October 1<sup>st</sup>**. If a student's dissertation proposal is not approved following this meeting, they will have until **November 1<sup>st</sup> to revise the document and successfully propose** to be certified to apply for internship (Appendix F).

In addition to the dissertation proposal deadlines that must be met to apply for internship, there are dissertation deadlines that must be met to remain in good standing in the program (see Appendix F). **Each student must successfully propose the dissertation no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> of the fourth year or the student will receive a warning; if the student fails to propose the dissertation by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the fourth year, the student's status will be changed to fails to meet expectations; and if the student still has not proposed the dissertation by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the fifth year, a termination review will be convened** (Appendix F).

*A Thesis, Project, Dissertation, or Doctoral Project Proposal Approval* must be submitted to the Graduate School after your project is approved by your committee. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to get the form submitted to the Graduate School. You must also email the DCT with the dissertation title and proposal date after a successful proposal meeting.

*A Doctoral Comprehensive Exam: Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Form* (see Appendix H) should also be completed by all members of your dissertation committee following your dissertation proposal meeting. This form is used for program evaluation data regarding our comprehensive exams process.

**NOTE:** If successful completion of the dissertation proposal occurs **after** the student has already passed the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam, then the student will have successfully passed the full doctoral comprehensive exam after passing the dissertation proposal. In that case, a *Results of Comprehensive and/or Qualifying Exams Form* should be submitted to the Graduate School. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) so this form is generated. Your dissertation chair will submit the signed form to the DCT who ensures it is passed along to the Graduate School. See more information in the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam section.

### **Dissertation Defense**

After the dissertation has been accepted and all required coursework has been completed, a final oral examination or dissertation defense will be conducted by your dissertation committee. The finalized dissertation must be distributed to your dissertation committee a minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the defense. You may submit the document electronically but should also provide a hard copy to any committee member requesting it. There is not an accompanying memo, and the defense date can be set prior to or at the time of distributing the dissertation. Nevertheless, a committee member is always

welcome to provide feedback prior to the meeting if there is something they want to ensure you address at the meeting. The examination will be open to any member of the graduate faculty and, at the discretion of the committee chair, may be opened to the public. The committee chair, with advice from the committee, has complete authority for how the defense is conducted. The chair may ask whether you should leave the room at the start of the meeting for committee-only discussion prior to your defense presentation (any non-committee attendees would also be asked to leave the room). The chair may recognize those attendees outside of your committee wishing to ask questions about your research. Questions and resulting discussion are appropriate for this important event. The chair may end the open part of the defense by restricting the meeting to the committee after an appropriate time, asking non-committee attendees to be excused. Discussion of the results of the defense must be limited to the committee members. A majority vote will determine the result of the defense and shall be reported to the Graduate School at the close of the meeting (see information about form below).

**You must be registered for at least 1 hour of dissertation (PSY 898) during the semester in which you defend.** You should also adhere to Graduate School deadlines for conferment of degrees. Please note that you cannot be given a “P” (pass) for PSY 898 until your document has been submitted and fully approved by the Graduate School. If you miss the graduation deadlines for a given semester, you will have to register for an additional 1 hour of PSY 898 the following semester. Students are encouraged to make any necessary changes and submit their committee-approved document to the Document Specialist expeditiously following the defense. To graduate the semester you defend, you **MUST** meet graduation deadlines for final document submission to the Document Specialist. If you defend outside of your graduation semester but after defense deadlines for graduation that semester, you will be expected to register for PSY 898 in the following semester. **Students are expected to defend the dissertation no later than the June deadline for August graduation during the internship year (typically mid-June). Each student must successfully defend the dissertation prior to internship completion or the student will receive a formal warning; if the student does not defend their dissertation by the end of the semester following internship completion their status will be changed to fails to meet expectations and a formal remediation plan will be developed. If the student still has not defended the dissertation one academic year following the completion of the pre-doctoral clinical internship, a termination review will be convened** (Appendix F). Students must also adhere to the eight calendar year limit to obtain the doctoral degree set forth by the Graduate School.

A *Results of Oral Defense* form must be submitted to the Graduate School after your committee meeting. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to generate this form. Your dissertation chair will submit the signed form to the DCT who ensures it is passed along to the Graduate School. Per graduate school policy, you are required to submit your document to *TurnItIn*, generate an originality report, and submit this to your major professor. Your major professor must review this report, approve any final changes, and submit the report to the Document Specialist. If you had changes following the submission of your *Results of Oral*

*Defense Form*, your dissertation chair will need to email the *Turnitin* report to the Document Specialist and note that the edits have been made and approved prior to you submitting the initial dissertation document to the Graduate School. Specific instructions for running this report are provided in the *School of Psychology Graduate Student Handbook*. Please note that Psychology uses a different process than other Schools at USM, so be sure to explicitly follow these instructions.

You must prepare your dissertation in the Graduate School format (see guidelines posted on the Graduate School website: <http://aquila.usm.edu/graduateschooldocs/>). You are required to use the Templates provided by the Graduate School on this website. Once your document is ready to submit, you should follow the instructions provided in the “Instructions for Using Aquila/How to Submit to the Reviewer” section). Note that the review and approval process with the Document Specialist will require you to reply promptly and exactly as instructed to ensure your document is accepted within the necessary timeline. Once you have made all edits required by the Document Specialist and your dissertation has been approved, you will electronically submit the finalized dissertation via Aquila.

You must also email the DCT with the defense date (and dissertation title, if it changed from the proposal) after a successful dissertation defense meeting.

### **Time Limitations to Complete the Dissertation**

Failure to maintain adequate research progress at any stage of the dissertation project may result in disciplinary action. Prior to collecting any data with human participants, you will need to submit an application to the University’s IRB ([| Office of Research Integrity | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#); “Review and Approval of All Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects” in this document). **You cannot commence data collection until you receive written approval from the IRB.** We expect you to successfully defend your dissertation by the June deadline for August graduation during your internship year (Appendix F). Although the Graduate School requires that all doctoral degrees at USM be completed within eight calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in the doctoral program, the CTC expects that you successfully defend the dissertation prior to the end of the internship year. Failing to do so will result in a **warning**. Failure to defend by the end of the semester following internship completion will result in a status change to **fails to meet expectations** and a formal remediation plan will be developed. Failure to defend within one academic year after completing the pre-doctoral internship will result in **termination review** (Appendix F). For students who complete their internship late in their training (particularly those who entered the program with a master’s degree so their doctoral clock began their first year), the eight calendar year limit set forth by the Graduate School may supersede the program’s dissertation milestone timeline. If so, the students’ coursework will expire, and they will have to petition for a **revalidation exam** and pay a revalidation fee (see the *Graduate Bulletin* for more details).

## TIMETABLE FOR SUBMISSION OF THESIS AND DISSERTATION TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

For the exact deadlines you must meet to graduate with your master's or doctoral degree in a specific semester, you should consult the appropriate calendar of **Graduation and Dissertation/Thesis Deadlines**, which may be obtained from the Graduate School at: [Graduate School Deadlines | Graduate Student Success | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). Although these submission deadlines for your dissertation documents must be met for graduation in a given semester, the Document Specialist expects to receive your document within a reasonable time period following your successful defense—particularly if your defense form indicated that your document is **approved with no revisions**. Therefore, you should work diligently to turn in your document shortly after your defense. If you have many revisions to make to the content of the document (i.e., not just minor edits and formatting), your committee should indicate that the document is **approved with pending revisions as indicated**. Once those revisions are made, your committee chair communicates to the Document Specialist that the necessary changes have been made. You should then work to get your document turned into the Document Specialist within a reasonable time period after that communication.

## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTEGRITY EDUCATION: RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

The USM's Office of Research Integrity (ORI) has a goal to guide and serve the University's research community through Research and Scholarly Integrity Education, including the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) program. Mandatory education in the RCR is required for all Principal Investigators (PIs) and significant personnel participating in sponsored projects, including staff, postdoctoral fellows, **graduate students**, and undergraduate students. Whereas research integrity is a crucial factor in this program, the RCR curriculum is intended to follow the National Institute of Health's (NIH) April 2011 update on its requirement of training in the RCR and the National Science Foundation's (NSF) execution of the America COMPETES Act. **All graduate students are required to complete the online training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). Based on Graduate School and School of Psychology policies, you are required to complete this training within the first semester in the program. However, the CTC requires you to complete this by the second Friday of your first semester, as you need to complete this training before actively engaging in research in your major professor's lab. Upon completion of the course, please provide your major professor and the DCT a copy of your CITI course certification for your student file.**

When you register for the CITI course, you must add a course and update your learner group by selecting the common course group for Graduate Students at The University of Southern Mississippi and indicating that you will be collecting data with human subjects in the social and behavioral sciences (SBR). It should take 4 to 6 hours total to complete all modules, which may be completed in multiple sessions. **The passing mark for certification at USM is set at 85% summed across all modules.** You will receive a certificate of completion and a Curriculum Completion Report showing your performance in each module (grouped into two courses, the



Common RCR Course and the SBR Basic Course). You must provide a printout showing your Curriculum Completion Report for both of these courses. In addition, you should save an electronic copy as this will be a required part of any IRB application you submit in the future.

The CITI RCR courses must be completed before receiving any IRB approval or sponsored program funding. They are also required for a graduate degree, and you will not pass your degree audit without certification in all required modules. Copies of your certification are sent directly from CITI to the Graduate School. Information about the RCR initiative and instructions for the CITI course in RCR can be found at : [CITI Training Requirements | Office of Research Integrity | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#) and the CITI course can be directly accessed at: [Research, Ethics, Compliance, and Safety Training \(citiprogram.org\)](#)

### REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ALL RESEARCH WITH HUMAN OR ANIMAL SUBJECTS

The **USM Human Subjects Protection Review Committee** (Institutional Review Board; IRB; [Office of Research Integrity | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#)) must review and approve all research conducted using human subjects. All IRB applications are submitted electronically through InfoEd (<https://usm.infoedglobal.com/>). The **USM Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee** (IACUC; [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee | Office of Research Integrity | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#)) must review and approve all research using non-human subjects. These regulations are discussed in detail in PSY 607 (Ethics and Current Issues in Psychology). **Approval must be obtained prior to the beginning of any data collection.** The application steps are indicated on the website(s) above. Your major professor must be designated as a Co-Principal Investigator on any application and should approve any application prior to submission.

### PUBLICATION MANUAL OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The acceptable guide which governs much of the formatting of theses and dissertations and has been authorized for use by the Graduate School is the current version of **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association**. Additionally, much of the research-related work you complete during your program of study at USM will require mastery of the **APA Publication Manual**, so you are advised to obtain a copy early in your graduate career (i.e., during your first semester in the program).

### DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

All doctoral students in clinical psychology are required to take and pass a doctoral comprehensive examination (see [USM Graduate Bulletin](#)).

A comprehensive examination is required of all specialist students to assess knowledge of the major field of study, and thus, must be taken after all coursework has been completed. The major school will determine whether the comprehensive exam will be written, oral, or both. It is prepared, administered, and assessed by the student's graduate committee. A student who

fails the comprehensive examination may retake it no sooner than three (3) months after the first attempt. A student being examined as a part of a cohort or group may repeat the comprehensive examination at the next scheduled administration if at least three (3) months have passed since the first attempt. A student may repeat the comprehensive examination only once; failure to complete the comprehensive examination successfully on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the program. Students must register for a minimum of one (1) credit hour the semester the comprehensive exam is taken. The Results of the Comprehensive Exam form must be submitted by the major professor/committee chair to the Graduate School immediately after completion of the exam.

For clinical psychology doctoral students, the comprehensive doctoral examination is used to assess whether the student has acquired substantial understanding of and competence in the breadth of scientific psychology, including the scientific, methodological, and the theoretical foundations of practice. In addition, psychological assessment, diagnosis, and intervention critical to the practice of Boulder-model trained clinical psychologists are covered in the examination. In other words, the doctoral examination will test student competencies in both applied and research skills, as well as the integration of these skills. The comprehensive examination serves as an important benchmark and transition point through the program.

**The student must pass the comprehensive examination as one requirement (among others) for certification as “internship ready” on the DCT verification submission form for internship applications.** Likewise, a student may not schedule a final defense of the dissertation before successfully completing the doctoral comprehensive examination (including the clinical case conference portion) and should not register for an excessive number of dissertation hours prior to passing the doctoral comprehensive examination.

### **Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Content**

The doctoral comprehensive examination is designed to cover the following Broad Areas:

1. Research Methods and Statistics
2. Psychopathology and Diagnosis
3. Assessment and Psychometrics
4. Intervention
5. Ethics and Professional Practice
6. Cultural Bases of Behavior

These broad areas will be assessed through the student’s performance in two portions of the doctoral comprehensive exam: (1) dissertation proposal and (2) clinical case conference. The student must pass **both** portions to pass the doctoral comprehensive exam.

It is the Clinical Psychology Training program’s policy that the Clinical Training Committee (CTC; the full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty members of the clinical psychology program or full-time clinical or teaching faculty with a doctorate in clinical psychology who by majority vote

have been approved to join the CTC by current members) serve as the full doctoral committee for the purpose of the doctoral comprehensive examination. Signatures affirming successful completion of the exam will be secured by the student's dissertation committee (dissertation proposal portion) and the DCT (clinical case conference portion).

### **Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Part A: Dissertation Proposal**

The goal of the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam is to assess the student's competency in the first domain (research methods and statistics); however, competency in other domains may be demonstrated depending on the nature of the project.

A student who successfully passes his/her first dissertation proposal based on a majority vote of the dissertation committee has also **passed the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam on the first administration**. All members of the dissertation committee will complete a *Doctoral Comprehensive Exam: Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Form* for the purpose of obtaining program evaluation data only; outcome of the proposal meeting (pass or fail) is determined by the committee vote. If a student fails the first dissertation proposal but successfully passes the second dissertation proposal, the student has **passed the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam on the second administration**. If a student fails his/her second dissertation proposal, the student has **failed the doctoral comprehensive exam** and will be dismissed from the program. At that time, the student will be provided with the policies and procedures for grade appeals. For the grade appeal process, the date that the student receives the dissertation proposal results will be considered the date the grade is assigned.

### **Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Part B: Clinical Case Conference**

During the Spring semester of their third year, each student will be scheduled to present a clinical case (therapy or assessment) at the clinical case conference. The format involves a presentation and question and answer period (described in more detail below). The clinical case conference will be attended by the CTC and other non-presenting students enrolled in PSY 782.

#### **GENERAL OUTLINE FOR CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE PRESENTATION**

The goal of the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam is to assess the student's competency in the second through sixth domains covered by the doctoral comprehensive exam. To achieve this goal, students should cover the following dimensions in their presentations:

- I. Provide general demographic information only (using **pseudonyms** and ensuring the client is not reasonably identifiable) and reason for referral
- II. Provide background history that is relevant to case conceptualization

- III. Provide intake and assessment data and behavioral observations; for assessment-only cases, provide the evidence base and decision-making process for the assessment battery
  - a. All cases should have some type of assessment data even if only seen for therapy
  - b. If a full psychological assessment preceded treatment, it would be appropriate to present those data as well
  - c. Provide a good description of the onset, duration, and severity of symptoms, the level of impairment, and the settings in which both symptoms and impairment are evident
- IV. Provide a coherent case conceptualization (inclusive of factors precipitating and maintaining symptoms) that informs evidence-based approaches to treatment
- V. Describe the main treatment objectives; for assessment-only cases, describe assessment-informed recommendations
- VI. Describe the client's response to treatment thus far; for assessment-only cases, describe the approach to providing assessment feedback and response of the client
- VII. Describe any anticipated or encountered barriers to treatment or the assessment process (inclusive of the implementation of assessment recommendations) and plans to overcome them
- VIII. Describe how cultural factors influenced the approach to assessment, case conceptualization, and/or treatment
- IX. Describe ethical considerations relevant to the assessment, case conceptualization, and/or treatment approach

#### CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE FORMAT

1. Each student will be scheduled for an individual clinical case conference, which will be held in FGH 207 during our standard didactics time (Weds 3-4 PM). Students may present a case either from the CBH or an externship site. The case (whether from practicum or externship) must be cleared with your practicum supervisor before it is presented in clinical case conference. However, your supervisor should not help you prepare the clinical case conference and should not provide feedback on your visual presentation. Regardless of the origin of the case, **only pseudonyms** should be used during the clinical case conference (no names, initials, or other potentially identifying information).
2. The clinical case conference will be attended by a majority of the CTC and all second-, third-, and fourth-year students enrolled in practicum, even if the student is leaving next year for internship. First year students do not have to attend clinical case conference (but are invited to do so if they choose). Second- through fourth+-year students must clear any clinical case conference absences with their practicum supervisor and the DCT. Such absences would only be allowed for extraordinary circumstances or sickness (just like a class).
3. The presenting student will deliver a formal presentation (with use of visual aids, preferably PowerPoint). The presentation should start promptly and **not exceed 40 minutes.**

- a. Attending students should not ask questions during the presentation but are encouraged to take notes and ask questions at the end.
- b. Faculty will also ask minimal questions during the presentation but may raise a question for a point of clarification if deemed necessary.
4. A question and answer period will follow the case presentation. It will last for no more than **20 minutes**.
  - a. First, faculty will ask a series of questions.
  - b. Once faculty have completed all questions and if time allows, the floor will be opened for questions from attending students.
5. The clinical case conference will not exceed **60 minutes**. No feedback will be given at that time so that faculty can complete their ratings independently.
6. The presenting student should send their PowerPoint presentation or other visual aids via email to the DCT and practicum supervisor **before** the presentation so that it can be reviewed by the CTC.
7. All attending CTC members will independently evaluate the presentation and return their ratings to the DCT who will aggregate the ratings (see Clinical Case Conference Assessment below).

#### CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT

For each student completing the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam, all attending CTC members will complete the *Clinical Case Conference Evaluation Form*; a copy of which will be circulated to students prior to their scheduled case presentations. Faculty ratings will be compiled to form the **Comprehensive Exam Part B Score**.

The CTC members will complete their aggregated ratings for the first and second administrations (or any follow-up) of the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive examination within two weeks of the clinical case conference. Aggregated assessment results will be provided to the student in writing by the DCT within three weeks of the clinical case conference. Results will also be placed in the student's file. Students may request a meeting with the DCT and major professor to clarify this written feedback within 2 weeks of receiving written results.

If a student fails the doctoral comprehensive exam and is dismissed from the program, the student will be provided with the policies and procedures for grade appeals. For the grade appeal process, the date that the student receives the clinical case conference assessment results will be considered the date the grade is assigned.

#### CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE SCHEDULING

Students will be automatically scheduled for their first administration of the clinical case conference in the Spring semester of their third year. If a student requires a first administration follow-up for the clinical case conference, it will be scheduled during the late Spring or early

Summer semester of third year. If a student does not pass the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam after the first administration follow-up, the student will be scheduled for the second administration in their fourth year. If a student requires a second administration follow-up for this second clinical case conference, it will be scheduled during the late Spring or early Summer semester of their fourth year.

### **Passing the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam**

The doctoral comprehensive exam is considered passed when the student has passed both portions of the exam—the dissertation proposal and the clinical case conference. Completion of these two events may happen at widely different times during the student’s career. Likewise, for some students the clinical case conference portion may precede the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam requirement, whereas for other students the dissertation proposal portion may precede the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam requirement. Whenever **both** requirements for the doctoral comprehensive exam have been met (either after passing the clinical case conference if it is the second requirement met or after passing the dissertation proposal if it is the second requirement met), the student has passed the doctoral comprehensive exam (i.e., as of the date of the second requirement being met). If the dissertation proposal was passed on the first attempt **and** the clinical case conference was passed on the first administration or first administration follow-up, the doctoral comprehensive exam is considered passed on the first attempt. If either the dissertation proposal **or** the clinical case conference required a second attempt/administration, the doctoral comprehensive exam is considered passed on the second attempt.

Once both portions of the exam are completed, a *Results of Comprehensive and/or Qualifying Exams Form* should be submitted to the Graduate School. You must complete the [Graduate School documents form](#) to generate this form. Your dissertation chair will submit the signed form to the DCT who ensures it is passed along to the Graduate School. The form must be signed by the DCT [to show passing of the clinical case conference portion of the exam], your dissertation committee [to show passing of the dissertation proposal portion of the exam], and the school director. Completion of the doctoral comprehensive exam formally admits the student to doctoral candidacy and the student is now considered a doctoral candidate.

## SECTION 4: CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

### ON-CAMPUS CLINICAL PRACTICUM: THE USM CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

#### Sequencing and Prerequisites for Practicum

Clinical experiences are sequenced and arranged hierarchically. Typically, during the Summer semester of your first year, you will begin your clinical practicum experience in our on-campus Center for Behavioral Health (CBH). To begin clinical practicum, you must have completed PSY 736 (Introduction to Clinical Skills). The practicum sequence consists of a minimum of eight semesters of Clinical Practicum (counting Summer semesters). **Although a minimum of eight semesters and 23 credit hours of practicum are required, you are expected to enroll in practicum for the remainder of your in-residence semesters. Starting in the Spring of the fourth year, students may be given opportunities for peer supervision. Those who have applied for internship may begin to reduce their caseload based on client need and at the discretion of the supervisor. They will be expected to continue to attend group supervision even if they do not have active individual clients. Students who have not yet applied for internship will continue to carry a standard clinic caseload at least through the Spring of their fourth year.** Decisions regarding when a student may stop seeing clients in the Center for Behavioral Health is determined by the CTC based on individual student competencies and career goals.

#### Professional Liability Insurance

As Clinical Practicum (PSY 782) contains experiential learning activities (e.g., psychological interventions, assessment), it is included on the university liability insurance plan. You will be required to pay a fee each semester you are enrolled in PSY 782. Presently, the fee is \$8 per semester. In addition, it is **strongly** recommended that you also purchase a personal professional liability policy. The APA Trust Insurance company ([Professional Liability Insurance for Students in Psychology | The Trust \(trustinsurance.com\)](https://www.trustinsurance.com)) offers an appropriate, inexpensive policy for graduate students. Presently, the annual premium is \$35 per year.

#### Junior Clinical Practicum

During the Summer of the first year and Fall of the second year, students will enroll in Junior Clinical Practicum (PSY 782). Typically, students will spend the shorter Summer semester learning about CBH policies and procedures through direct instruction and shadowing of more advanced students and will spend the longer Fall semester beginning to work directly with their own clients. Students typically enroll in 1 semester hour of PSY 782 in the Summer of the first year and for 3 semester hours of PSY 782 in the Fall of the second year. Junior Clinical Practicum students are expected to adhere to requirements set forth by their clinical supervisor. Generally, Junior Clinical Practicum students participate in group case supervision with the members of their practicum team, attend Wednesday afternoon didactics, learn clinic

procedures, begin on duty-clinician shifts, begin didactic training on models of supervision and consultation, and complete other clinical training tasks to the extent expected by their supervisor (e.g., serving as psychometrician for an advanced clinician's testing case). In the Summer semester, students must pass a clinic exam (grade  $\geq 90\%$ ) before they are assigned clients in the Fall semester. If a Junior Practicum student fails the exam, they must remediate by answering critical test items (e.g., suicide/homicide risk assessment) for which they did not receive full credit in a meeting with the Director of the CBH. The Director will determine their readiness to see clients. In the Fall semester, Junior Clinical Practicum students will be assigned their own independent caseload of assessment clients and may begin conducting intake sessions with therapy clients. Towards the end of the Fall semester, Junior Clinical Practicum students may add a therapy case to their caseload in preparation for carrying therapy clients during the Spring semester. Students must have successfully completed an assessment course (typically PSY 641 or 642) prior to receiving assessment cases. Students entering the program with previous clinical experience (e.g., entered with a master's degree) may be permitted to see assessment or therapy clients sooner in their practicum experience at their supervisor's discretion and through consultation with the CTC.

### **Clinical Practicum**

During the Spring semester of the second year, students demonstrating satisfactory performance in their Junior Clinical Practicum experiences will be permitted to enroll in 3 credits of Clinical Practicum (PSY 782) with a supervisor in their primary concentration area. Students will typically complete a year and a semester (Spring and Summer of second year, Fall and Spring of third year) of regular clinical practicum in their concentration area (i.e., child students will complete child practicum; adult students will complete adult practicum), typically rotating supervisors each semester. Students will typically complete at least two semesters of practicum experience outside of their primary concentration area (i.e., child students will complete adult practicum; adult students will complete child practicum). The described sequence is what is typical for most students, but it may be modified based on student progress or other circumstances.

Practicum students generally maintain a client caseload ranging from 4 to 6 active cases and a balance of assessment and therapy cases. Practicum students are expected to manage all aspects of their clinic caseload, including scheduling their appointments, reserving a room and testing materials, monitoring collection of client fees, keeping appropriate session notes and other chart materials up to date, and digitally recording sessions per supervisor guidelines. Practicum students will also be given the opportunity to serve as Peer Practicum Partners, supervising junior practicum (2<sup>nd</sup> year) students as they are oriented to the CBH and begin to take on clinical duties. More information about specific duties can be obtained from your practicum supervisor. The ***USM Center for Behavioral Health Manual*** describes the policies and procedures of the CBH and is designed specifically for practicum students. Students are required to abide by all policies and procedures described in the CBH Manual. A copy of the CBH Manual may be found on the [CBH SharePoint](#).



Clinical supervision in PSY 782 is typically provided by full-time clinical faculty members, all of whom are licensed or license-eligible in one or more states. In some cases, faculty from outside of the program or those not employed full-time with USM may be supervisors for PSY 782. Faculty who are not yet licensed in Mississippi are supervised by a licensed faculty member until they are licensed. In those cases, all CBH paperwork will be co-signed by your clinical supervisor and the licensed faculty member. Your supervisor will usually change each semester, and you will typically have a minimum of three clinical practicum supervisors during your training. Practicum supervisors are assigned by the CTC.

### **Counting Hours**

The program expects students to have 500 hours of assessment/intervention services prior to applying for internship. We regularly circulate information about hours benchmarks across years and this information is also available upon request. A few specific points to highlight:

- ODC phone screens should be counted as "Intake/Structured Interview" which falls under Intervention Experience
- ODC risk check-ins should be counted as "Other Intervention" which falls under Intervention Experience
- Police pre-employment evaluations are integrated reports

Your practicum supervisor can also help you understand how to count your hours, or you may ask the DCT or other faculty for guidance.

### **Clinical Program Didactics**

During the academic year (August through May), each Wednesday from 3:00-4:00 PM, all students enrolled in PSY 782 (junior clinical practicum and clinical practicum) will participate in the Clinical Program Didactic for the week. Didactics will involve an array of topics presented by the clinical faculty as well as guest speakers. Some didactic meetings will be used for internship application preparation and internship debriefing (see Predoctoral Clinical Internship section). Other didactic meetings will focus on professional development, special topics, or additional training not otherwise addressed in our curriculum. Four of the didactic meetings will be reserved for the Supervision and Consultation Series (see description below). Early in the Spring semester, the Wednesday 3:00-4:00pm hour block will be used for Clinical Case Conference (see description below), presented by third year students. Participation in the didactic meetings and clinical case conferences is mandatory for all students in PSY 782, which includes all second, third, and fourth year students and may include fifth+ year students. Students in their fifth or greater year who remain in-residence are generally expected to attend the series except when the topic is repetitive for them (i.e., a supervision/consultation topic they attended in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year). Participation in this practicum requirement does not depend on client caseload.

## **Supervision and Consultation Series**

Each academic year, four of the Clinical Program Didactics will be reserved for topics that are part of the Supervision and Consultation Series. Unique topics will be presented each year during a three-year period (no repeated topics). Thus, students will be exposed to 12 unique topics related to supervision and consultation during the typical three years in practicum (second through fourth year). The topics in this series will be presented by clinical faculty or qualified guest speakers. The structure and expectations for the Supervision and Consultation Series is provided in the PSY 782 syllabus; a schedule will be distributed each Fall and Spring semester. Readings are provided in advance of the presentations, which students are required to read prior to attending the meeting. Students are expected to attend all 12 meetings (they will sign an attendance sheet) and are required to do make-up work if they miss a meeting. Presentation notes are provided to students via the clinical program group email after each meeting when available (dependent on the presenter). Following the four topics for a given year, students will take a *Supervision and Consultation Written Assessment Quiz*, consisting of multiple choice and short essay questions. Handouts and readings may be used as a reference for the written assessment quiz. Participation in the written assessment is mandatory for second through fourth year students; however, its purpose is to provide program outcome data, and the results of the written assessment do not impact the students' grades for PSY 782. Nevertheless, if the results of the written assessment indicate that a student requires some remediation to reach competence, the student will be provided additional materials and instruction as necessary. Questions about the Supervision & Consultation Series can be directed to the DCT or your practicum supervisor.

## **Clinical Case Conference**

The clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam (described in Section 3) is considered an important part of the clinical training experience. Students participate as a presenter (during Spring of the third year) but also gain valuable knowledge through participation as an attendee at the clinical case conferences. Students will attend, on average, more than 15 clinical case conference presentations during their second through fourth years in practicum. For more information on scoring and procedures, see the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam section of this handbook (Section 3).

## **Practicum Evaluations**

At the end of each semester, the practicum supervisor will provide each student in clinical practicum and junior clinical practicum with a formal evaluation (*Student's Skills in PSY 782 Supervisor's Evaluation; Student's Skills in Junior Practicum Supervisor's Evaluation*). Students will be rated as Strong, Satisfactory, or Needs Improvement on items related to general clinical behavior, assessment skills, treatment planning, treatment implementation, treatment documentation, general professional ethics and responsibilities, supervision behaviors, and specific duties related to junior practicum. In addition, students are given written, qualitative

feedback on their strengths, weaknesses, and suggested areas for future growth. The CTC discusses practicum evaluations as a group to ensure consistency in feedback and grading across students. At the start of each semester, the new practicum supervisor reviews the evaluation from the previous supervisor for each student in their practicum course. At the end of each semester, the previous semester's evaluation is considered when completing the current evaluation so that growth and improvement can be tracked and so that any longstanding problems can be monitored.

In addition, once the semester is completed, students complete the *Student Evaluation of PSY 782 Supervisor* online survey. The data are retrieved by the DCT, and all provided information is anonymous. Once all surveys are completed, the DCT compiles the information for each practicum supervisor. This feedback allows continued growth of the supervisors and enhancement of their practicum courses.

### **Accelerated Training**

Occasionally, students entering the program with a master's degree and an empirical thesis attempt to complete their doctoral training within 4 years, rather than the standard 5 years. Please note that most students will not fulfill 23 credit hours of practicum training within 3 years; thus, students who wish to pursue accelerated training must develop a practicum training plan that will allow completion of a minimum of 23 credit hours of practicum within the anticipated 3 years on campus. This plan must include a balance of child and adult practicum experiences and will likely be more heavily weighted toward their primary concentration area. This plan must be developed in collaboration with their advisor and must be approved by the CTC.

### **OFF-CAMPUS CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES**

Following the successful completion of at least one semester of on-campus Clinical Practicum, students will be eligible for placements at off-campus externship facilities. Students in any externship (**paid or unpaid**) must be enrolled in Clinical Practicum (PSY 782). Clinical externships are part of your practicum training, and evaluative information about your externship performance impacts your PSY 782 grade. Furthermore, you must be enrolled in PSY 782 to be covered by the University's professional liability insurance policy. Whereas the on-campus clinical practica are supervised by our on-campus clinical faculty through the Center for Behavioral Health, the clinical externships typically are supervised by on-site doctoral level staff members at the off-campus agency. However, the on-campus clinical supervisor, Clinical Externship Coordinator, and DCT will monitor the externship experiences and the performance of students. Externship placements are assigned by the DCT and Clinical Externship Coordinator through consultation with the CTC and are designed to ensure broad exposure to work environments common in clinical practice after graduation. Students will be given the opportunity to express a preference, but there is no assurance that they will be given their first choice. Students will typically rotate through a minimum of two off-campus clinical training

agencies (which may or may not be funded). Prior to placement at an external site, students may be required to complete a formal application and interview process, pass a background check, submit immunization records, and/or pass a drug screen as a condition of the placement. **Failure to pass a background check may affect one's standing in the program.**

Off-campus placements can either be paid externship positions (20 hours per week) or unpaid, volunteer externship positions (typically 8 hours per week but the amount of time is negotiable if it is beneficial for the student and the site). Students must be directly observed by the licensed psychologist supervisor affiliated with the placement at least once each evaluation period (i.e., semester). Live or digitally recorded observation is preferred, although audio recording may be acceptable under certain circumstances. See the Clinical Externship Coordinator if you have questions about this requirement. Students who are not making satisfactory progress in other areas (e.g., research) may not be allowed to complete a volunteer, unpaid externship until they have made sufficient gains in the deficient area. **It is recommended that you talk with your major professor and DCT to ensure that your externship placements provide sufficient clinical hours and experiences, so you are competitive for the internship sites to which you plan to apply.**

On occasion, a student with previous clinical training or experiences (e.g., entered the program with a master's degree in clinical psychology earned elsewhere) may be allowed to take an external research or clinical assistantship prior to their first semester of Clinical Practicum. Although not participating in the in-house practicum, the student will enroll in 1 hour of PSY 782 given that the externship is part of practicum training and to insure coverage under the University's professional liability insurance.

Feedback that includes a written evaluation and recommendation from the off-campus externship supervisor on the *Clinical Externship Supervisor Evaluation of Student* form will be considered when assigning a letter grade for PSY 782 during those semesters when a student is on externship. That is, all students participating in a clinical externship (unpaid or paid) must have their externship supervisor(s) complete a clinical externship evaluation form. If the form is not returned by the deadline, the student will receive an Incomplete grade for PSY 782, which will be changed upon receipt of the evaluation.

Feedback about the externship experience is regularly sought from students. Each year, students will be given the opportunity to meet with the DCT and/or Clinical Externship Coordinator to discuss externship experiences. If the CTC determines that a site is no longer providing training experiences of high quality—or that are inconsistent with the program goals and objectives—and changes cannot be negotiated with the site, it will no longer be used for an externship experience.

Clinical externship placements in recent years were at the following sites: Pine Grove Behavioral Health (Hattiesburg, MS); South Mississippi State Hospital (Purvis, MS); Specialized Treatment Facility (Gulfport, MS); University of Mississippi Medical Center (Jackson, MS); Will's

Way Pediatric Behavioral Psychology (Hattiesburg, MS); Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System (Biloxi, MS); Forrest County Juvenile Intervention Court (Hattiesburg, MS). Some sites have highly specialized training experiences (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder; behavioral medicine; substance misuse) whereas others offer more generalized clinical experiences.

***The CTC may require that a student complete additional semesters of in-house practicum before they are permitted to participate in off-campus clinical externship experiences.***

## **PREDOCTORAL CLINICAL INTERNSHIP**

### **Overview of Internship Process**

The clinical psychology program fully conforms to the APPIC (Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers) procedures and requirements pertaining to predoctoral clinical internship application and acceptance. You will be versed in those policies and procedures throughout your training in the program, particularly early in the academic year immediately preceding your internship year. These policies and procedures can be found online at: [APPIC - Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers](#) and [APPIC Match \(natmatch.com\)](#). **The CTC requires that the internship agencies to which you apply be accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).** Students should consider their country of citizenship and licensure requirements in the jurisdiction in which they expect to pursue licensure in weighing the risks and benefits of applying to APA-only or CPA-only accredited internships. Students are encouraged to consult with their major professor and the DCT in arriving at these decisions. It is highly unlikely that any a student will be permitted to apply to an unaccredited internship. However, there may be some extraordinary circumstances that warrant consideration. If you wish to apply to an internship that is not APA or CPA accredited, please provide a written justification to the CTC, who will then consider your request. You must receive approval from the CTC before applying to any unaccredited program.

During your time in the program, the CTC will hold several events to orient you to the internship process. Annually, we will hold internship debriefings (with the cohort who just interviewed so that they can pass on information about their experience); we will also hold meetings to discuss the APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI) process and review how to count hours. Time2Track ([Time2Track | The Easiest Way to Track, Verify, & Manage Experiences](#)) is a fee-based hours tracking application that allows you to export your hours to the APPI Online. You are required to track your hours in this system. You will not be permitted to track hours on paper or to use software not specific to this task (e.g., Excel). You will need to produce reports from the tracking system to report your hours annually (in the Spring) to the DCT and the Clinical Externship Coordinator as well as to report your hours at the time of internship application for DCT verification.

Please note that if you entered the program with a Master's degree from another institution

where you gained supervised clinical hours and you plan to report these terminal master's hours on your AAPI, you need to have your training director, major professor, or primary supervisor from your master's program communicate in writing to the DCT to verify these hours. This information is necessary for the DCT to be able to later verify your terminal master's hours at the time that you apply for internship. Without verification from a representative from your master's program, the DCT will have to choose the option stating that the terminal master's hours cannot be verified.

### **Eligibility to Apply for Internship**

You must hold a successful dissertation proposal meeting and pass your doctoral comprehensive exam no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of your application year, with a first attempt at least by October 1<sup>st</sup>, and be in good standing in the program before the DCT will endorse your APPIC application. In addition, the CTC uses the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP) Expectation for Internship Eligibility (Appendix I) to determine internship eligibility. The only exception to these guidelines is #5 (completed all coursework) if a student has one or two remaining courses to complete due to the timing of course offerings. However, you will only be endorsed as internship eligible if all coursework is completed at the time of leaving for internship.

During the annual evaluation process in the Summer semester before you anticipate applying for internship, the CTC will determine your internship readiness and will vote on whether you should be verified as "internship ready," pending completion of any milestones that still need to be met (e.g., comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal) and barring any circumstances that would change the evaluation of readiness (e.g., professional/ethical concerns). If the CTC is unable to deem you internship ready at the time of the annual evaluation in the Summer semester but foresees the possibility of you remediating the concerns so that you could be internship ready in mid-Fall semester, you will be provided details about the concerns with a remediation plan and a time at which you will be evaluated again for your internship readiness. Finally, the CTC will review and provide feedback on your choice of sites. **You are not permitted to apply for clinical internship until the CTC has judged you to be internship ready and has approved your choices of sites.**

### **Selection of Internship Sites, the Application Process, and Preparation for Interviews**

Early in the Fall semester, the DCT and other members of the CTC will meet as a group with the prospective interns for the purpose of discussing the internship application process and communicating guidelines. We will also review your preliminary list of application sites. The DCT and other CTC members will help you identify potential internship sites that may be a good match for you and assist you with specific items on the internship application form. Your major professor will provide general feedback on your essays and sample cover letter(s). The DCT will not verify you as internship eligible until your major professor indicates that he or she approves your essays/cover letter. The CTC will also assist you in preparing for interviews with a meeting

to review tips as well as conducting individual mock interviews in the Fall semester before actual interviews begin. The CTC fully understands that the internship interviews may require that you be away from campus, and your schedules (e.g., clinic duty, assistantship hours) will be adjusted accordingly. On APPIC Phase I Match Day, the DCT and other members of the CTC will be available to consult with any student who receives notification that they did not match with an internship program. The DCT and CTC can provide further information and assistance with the application for APPIC Phase II Match, if the student decides to apply for the Phase II Match. Even in APPIC Phase II Match, it is necessary that students apply to APA-accredited internship programs only.

### **Internship Debriefing Process: Sharing Experiences with Others**

Each Spring semester (following the completion of internship interviews), at least one of the practicum didactic meetings will be devoted to an internship debriefing. Students who just completed the internship application and interview process will share their experience with more junior students and answer questions to familiarize them with what to expect when they go through the process themselves. The debriefing will be overseen by the DCT and/or other members of the CTC.

### **Program Enrollment During Internship**

While you are on your one-year pre-doctoral internship, you must enroll for a minimum of one credit hour of PSY 881–Internship in Clinical Psychology for **each** of the three academic periods (i.e., Fall, Spring, and Summer) that you are on internship. If you have an early start date, please consult with the DCT as to whether you should enroll in PSY 782 or PSY 881. In addition, you must register for at least 1 hour of PSY 898–Dissertation during the semester that you defend your dissertation if you have not defended prior to your internship year. If you are still working with the Document Specialist to get your dissertation approved by the Graduate School in the semester following your defense semester, you may need to enroll in 1 hour of PSY 898–Dissertation at that time as well. You should keep this policy in mind when scheduling your defense. While on internship, you may register for additional hours of PSY 791–Research in Psychology if you require the credit hours for financial aid purposes. **Students on internship are not on a graduate assistantship and, thus, are not eligible for tuition remission or USM’s graduate student health insurance.**

### **Program Communication with Clinical Internship Agencies**

Your clinical internship agency may provide the DCT with periodic evaluations (e.g., semi-annually) of your progress. These evaluations, in turn, will be made available to the CTC. **We will not award credit for internship until the director of training at the internship site has informed us in writing that you have fully completed all requirements for the internship.**

## **Doctorate Will Not Be Awarded Prior to Confirmation of Internship Completion**

Upon completion of all degree requirements, students in the clinical psychology doctoral program are conferred a Ph.D. in Psychology (Clinical)—the major is psychology and the emphasis is clinical psychology. The Ph.D. degree will not be awarded until all program requirements have been met, including completion of the pre-doctoral clinical internship. **Thus, you will not graduate from the clinical psychology doctoral program when even a small portion of your internship requirement remains to be completed.** The USM DCT will not certify to the Graduate School or Registrar's Office that your internship has been completed until confirmation of that fact has been provided in writing by the appropriate authority (usually the Director of Psychological Services or the Director of Training) at the facility where you are completing your internship.

If grades for the Summer semester are due prior to completion of your internship, you will receive an "Incomplete" for PSY 881 until the notification is received, at which time your grade will be changed to the appropriate letter grade. If you have met all other requirements for the degree and if your change of grade is processed by mid-August, the Graduate School Degree Auditor is able to confer your degree for Summer graduation. If you received an Incomplete at the time Summer grades were due, your transcript will reflect a note indicating the following: "The final internship grade was posted following successful completion of all requirements of the internship. Note date of grade change." Final transcripts for each student will reflect the name/location of the student's internship, that the internship was APA or CPA-accredited, and the exact start and end dates of the internship.

## **SECTION 5: STUDENT PROGRESS**

### **ANNUAL EVALUATION OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Each Summer semester, you will receive a formal, written evaluation of your progress. First, you will be asked to complete an *Annual Student Activity Report* (SAR), which is a self-evaluation that will be used to inform the CTC's evaluation of your work. The SAR will typically cover the period of June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. You will submit an updated copy of your curriculum vitae (CV) with the SAR. Your major professor will draft an initial evaluation based on your SAR and CV information and send it to the DCT.

The CTC will then meet to review the initial information as well as data from the records in your student file, including supervisor evaluations across settings (practicum, externship, and placement evaluations), course grades, and other pertinent academic information. The DCT will finalize the evaluation based on the review of the multiple pieces of information from your file and the CTC discussion. The evaluation includes assessment of your progress in the areas of academic coursework, research, clinical work, assistantship, and professional behavior. Each of



these dimensions is judged according to the following scale: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Fails to Meet Expectations. Your evaluation will also include a statement about your overall standing in the program (in good standing, warning, fails to meet expectations, or probation). If a student's performance is rated as fails to meet expectations in any area, the rating is accompanied by an explanation. If one area is rated as fails to meet expectations, then the student fails to meet expectations for the program. Subsequently, a formal remediation plan outlining the steps the student will need to take to return to good standing in the program will be written and reviewed with the student. Students will be given the opportunity to meet with their faculty advisor or the DCT as appropriate to address questions they may have about their future plans.

### **FAILURE TO MEET EXPECTATIONS AND PROGRAM PROBATION**

A student's status may be changed from "good standing" to "fails to meet expectations" or "program probation" for unsatisfactory academic progress in coursework or for unsatisfactory performance in other training domains, including but not limited to graduate assistantship, research-related duties, clinical practica requirements, externship placements, internship placements, and/or professional or ethical violations or concerns.

Note that students may receive a warning or a status change to fails to meet expectations or probation at other times of the academic year (not only at the time of the annual evaluation). Failure to meet milestone deadlines (e.g., thesis or dissertation proposals/defense deadlines) will result first in a warning at the time of the deadline. If not met by the next deadline, the student's status will be changed immediately to fails to meet expectations. Failing the doctoral comprehensive exam will also result in a change in status to fails to meet expectations (i.e., for coursework). A student may also be given a warning or have a status change to fails to meet expectations because of performance in other training domains, such as assistantship, practicum, externship, or ethical/professional behavior. However, serious violations in these domains may also result in program probation or a termination review. As described in the *Course Grade Expectations and Consequences* subsection in Section 2 and consistent with the Grade Policy for the School of Psychology, students earning non-passing grades (below B-) may receive a warning, program probation, termination review, or automatic dismissal (i.e., depending on the combination of grades). Please refer to that section for specific details.

Any time that a clinical psychology doctoral student fails to meet expectations or is placed on program probation, the basis for the change in status, the term of the status period, and the conditions which must be met to be returned to good standing within the program will be specified in writing in a remediation plan that has been approved by the CTC. The remediation plan may, in part, be developed through consultation with the student. If a student believes that the status is not justified or that the conditions of the remediation plan are unreasonable, the student may appeal in writing to the school director within 10 working days of receipt of the remediation plan. Failure to meet the conditions of the remediation plan to return to good standing within the timeframe described will result in a termination review. If the CTC

determines that the student should be dismissed from the clinical psychology training program, it will so recommend to the school director and the Graduate School.

Students with a change in status to fails to meet expectations or probation will typically remain on such status for a minimum of one semester (but the timeframe may be shorter or longer depending on the circumstances). For example, students who receive a status of fails to meet expectations because of missing a research milestone deadline would be returned to good standing upon completion of the research milestone (assuming it is completed before another deadline). An evaluation to return to good standing may be shorter than one semester, provided that it is a reasonable amount of time to remediate the problem and that the shorter timeframe favors the student (e.g., gives the student the opportunity to return to good standing to possibly apply for internship).

In contrast, students receiving a warning or being placed on probation for unacceptable grades must successfully remediate the unacceptable grade(s), which may require a longer time period than one semester based on course offerings. If placed on probation for unacceptable grades, the student must meet the requirements of the remediation plan, without incurring any additional complaints or problems, for the probationary status to be removed. However, removal of probationary status will **not prevent** dismissal from the program in the event the student earns a subsequent failing grade (a grade of C or lower) in a third course.

It is important to note that sometimes a formal warning is given prior to a change in status (e.g., for missing deadlines on research progress) but sometimes a student will have a status change without a warning (e.g., failing the comprehensive exam results in a status of fails to meet expectations without a warning). Likewise, a student's status could be changed from in good standing directly to program probation or termination review (e.g., earning a second C, earning a D, earning two Unsatisfactory grades for PSY 698 or 898, serious violation in performance or ethical/professional behavior in a training domain). That is, a status of fails to meet expectations does not necessarily precede a termination review. Finally, a student may move from fails to meet expectations status to termination review if the remediation plan is not met in the timeframe allotted. Therefore, it is not necessary for program probation to precede a termination review.

#### **METHODS USED TO FACILITATE PROGRESS OF STUDENT DIFFICULTIES IN THE PROGRAM**

When a student experiences difficulties in the training program, several steps may be taken. These include but are not limited to: (a) reducing the student's course load, (b) approving a request for a formal leave-of-absence through the Graduate School, (c) referring a student for medical treatment or psychotherapy, (d) requiring additional semesters of practicum or other clinical experiences beyond the minimum normally required by the program, and (e) providing additional faculty mentoring and supports.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO PROGRAM DISMISSAL**

The attrition rate in the clinical psychology program is low. When a student does leave, it is usually for a personal reason (e.g., incompatible program fit) rather than an academic reason. There have been a few instances in the past, however, when students have voluntarily withdrawn from the program because of difficulty making progress, and there have been instances when students were dismissed for academic reasons. Failure to meet Program, School, or Graduate School requirements (e.g., reasonable timeline on research, meeting requirements for grades in coursework, passing the comprehensive exam) is grounds for dismissal. Unethical behavior, such as plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty as well as serious ethical concerns in clinical settings, are also grounds for dismissal.

### **GRADUATE SCHOOL PROTOCOL FOR DISMISSAL OF A STUDENT**

The following are some reasons for dismissal of a student with regular status from a graduate program:

- The student did not return to good academic standing following probationary semester(s).
- A GPA of 3.0 was not achieved. (Some programs have more rigorous standards).
- The student did not earn the required improved grade on a retaken course.
- The student failed to meet other remediation criteria.
- The student earned grades that made it impossible to return to good academic standing, thus rendering graduation impossible.
- The student earned a grade of C- or below that could not be retaken because the one allowable retake was used to replace a prior low grade.
- The student earned the 7th hour of C+ or below that could not be retaken because the one allowable retake was used to replace a prior low grade.
- The student failed to show acceptable improvement in research/scholarly progress after a probationary semester.
- The student exceeded the time limit for the degree program without completing the degree.
- The student was proven to have committed academic/research misconduct or other ethical violation.
- The student violated the Code of Student Conduct and required disciplinary action (in this case, dismissal follows review by the Dean of Students).
- The student failed to demonstrate professional competency and/or exhibited conduct inappropriate to the profession.
- The student failed a qualifying exam, comprehensive exam, or defense twice.
- Other (Schools may have discipline-specific policies which stipulate reasons for dismissal).

Students with conditional status who do not achieve the minimal GPA on the first 9 hours of graduate-level coursework (master's = 3.0; specialist = 3.25; doctoral = 3.5) will be automatically dismissed by the Graduate School. Dismissal of these students requires no action by the School.

Dismissals will normally be initiated at the end of a semester following the posting of grades unless the dismissal is a result of academic misconduct or unethical/unprofessional behavior.

Dismissal must be initiated using the following protocol:

1. The student's advisor, DCT or school director will schedule a termination review with the student. The purpose of this meeting is to communicate the justification for dismissal with the student and to allow the student to provide written documentation of any extenuating circumstances that should be considered in a decision to dismiss. This meeting should be conducted face-to-face if possible. If the student cannot meet face-to-face, the meeting should take place via telephone, videoconference, or conference call. Email is acceptable but should be used only if personal communication is not possible.
2. If the School chooses to move forward with a dismissal following a termination review, the following items must be submitted to the dean of the Graduate School either electronically as a pdf with electronic signatures or as a hard copy with original signatures:
  - a. A letter addressed to the student articulating the reason(s) for dismissal.
  - b. A completed dismissal form indicating the reason(s) for dismissal and signed by the advisor/DCT, school director, and the college dean.
3. Upon receiving notice of the dismissal, the dean of the Graduate School will send the student a formal letter of dismissal along with a copy of the letter of rationale from the School as an attachment. The dean's letter will inform the student of the following:
  - a. That scheduled classes (including current semester classes and future classes for which the student is pre-registered) must be dropped using the withdrawal process within seven (7) working days of receiving the dismissal letter from the dean of the Graduate School and that if they do not withdraw from classes the Graduate School will initiate the withdrawal.
  - b. The impact of the dismissal on a graduate assistantship, insurance, and tuition.
  - c. The student's right to appeal the dismissal and instructions for filing an appeal.

The letter will be sent to the student by certified mail through the U.S. Postal Service and by email using the student's official USM email address.

## SECTION 6: GRADUATE SCHOOL FORMS AND PROCEDURES

### KNOW THE GRADUATE SCHOOL WEBSITE

The website for the Graduate School ([Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://GraduateSchool|TheUniversityofSouthernMississippi.usm.edu)) includes relevant information, including deadlines, policies, and forms. *All graduate students should be familiar with this site!*

### PRE-GRADUATION PROCEDURES AND THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Please carefully read the version of the Graduate Bulletin that governs your academic career (usually the Bulletin for the year that you entered the program) for relevant regulations, guidelines, and deadlines at least one year before your anticipated graduation (for both your master's degree and your doctoral degree). The Graduate Bulletin can be accessed at: [University of Southern Mississippi - Modern Campus Catalog™ \(usm.edu\)](http://UniversityofSouthernMississippi-ModernCampusCatalog.usm.edu).

The doctoral student must file a variety of documents with the Graduate School. **You are advised to check your files in the Graduate School for completeness of documentation when your dissertation defense form is submitted.** Graduate School staff can assist with this request.

### Documents to be Filed in the Graduate School

#### PROGRESS TO DEGREE FORMS

The Graduate School has a series of forms that must be completed at each step of your graduate training. These forms are referenced throughout this handbook's section on thesis, dissertation, and the comprehensive examination. **To avoid unnecessary delays or unexpected financial charges, it is important that you carefully follow all Graduate School policies.** If you have any questions, feel free to ask your major professor, the DCT, or the Graduate School. The Administrative Specialist for Graduate Programs can also assist with these forms. However, please also realize that it is **your responsibility to ensure that all appropriate forms are filed with the Graduate School on time.**

For completion of these forms, please note the following:

- For both your master's and doctoral degrees, your major is "psychology" and your emphasis area is "clinical." You do **not** indicate adult or child concentration areas on these forms.
- The School of Psychology is in the College of Education and Human Sciences.
- You do not have to list your social security number as long as your emplid (student ID) is listed.
- Your committee members will change between thesis and dissertation (at a minimum, one member will be added for the dissertation if not other changes).

## **Forms:**

**Committee Request Form** –This form lists faculty members that have agreed to serve on your thesis or dissertation committee. This form will be initiated following your completion of the School of Psychology form described in the thesis/dissertation sections of this manual. You will receive a confirmation email from the Graduate School once it has been approved. If you wish to have someone other than a faculty member from the USM School of Psychology serve on your committee, please notify the DCT so that the credentials of the prospective committee member can be submitted to the university for Graduate Faculty Status approval.

**Thesis, Project, Dissertation, or Doctoral Project Proposal Form** – After the thesis/dissertation proposal meeting and formal approval of the respective project, this form is completed following your completion of the School of Psychology form described in the thesis/dissertation sections of this manual and signed by your major professor and the committee. It is also signed by the school director prior to filing it with the Graduate School.

**Oral Defense Results** (for Thesis, Dissertation, and Nursing Capstone) – Prior to your final thesis/dissertation defense meeting, you must complete the School of Psychology form described in the thesis/dissertation sections of this manual so that the appropriate form is prepared for your committee. Following your thesis/dissertation defense, this form is signed by the committee. It is also signed by the school director prior to filing it with the Graduate School. After you defend your thesis/dissertation and make all necessary edits, you will complete a Turnitin check (see Appendix J) and share those results with your major professor who then files the thesis/dissertation approval form. You will then electronically submit your document (formatted using the Graduate School templates and guidelines) to the Document Specialist (via Aquila) for edits and approval.

**Comprehensive and Qualifying Results** –This form will be completed twice in your graduate career (once for your master's degree, unless you are not earning a master's degree at USM, and once for your doctoral degree):

- **Master's Comprehensive Exam.** Prior to your final thesis defense meeting, you must indicate that this form is needed by completing the School of Psychology form described in the thesis/dissertation sections of this manual. This form is completed following the successful **defense** of the master's thesis, which serves as the master's comprehensive exam (indicated on the form). The date of the oral defense is considered the date of the exam, and the exam is considered passed if the thesis defense is passed. This form must be signed by the thesis committee members and the school director. The results of the Master's Comprehensive Exam must be submitted to the Graduate School on or before the last day for submitting signed, final/defended theses to the Graduate School.
- **Doctoral Comprehensive Exam.** This form is completed following the student successfully passing the dissertation proposal and clinical case conference requirements for the doctoral comprehensive exam. These two events may happen at widely different times during the student's career. Likewise, for some students the clinical case conference portion may precede the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral

comprehensive exam requirement, whereas for other students the dissertation proposal portion may precede the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam requirement. Whenever **both** requirements for the doctoral comprehensive exam have been met (either after passing the clinical case conference if it is the second requirement met or after passing the dissertation proposal if it is the second requirement met), the form should be completed. The date that the second requirement was met is considered the date of the exam. If the dissertation proposal was passed on the first attempt **and** the clinical case conference was passed on the first administration or first administration follow-up, the doctoral comprehensive exam is considered passed on the first attempt. If either the dissertation proposal **or** the clinical case conference required a second attempt/administration, the doctoral comprehensive exam is considered passed on the second attempt. When both requirements have been passed, you must complete the School of Psychology form described in the thesis/dissertation sections of this manual to initiate its submission to the Graduate School. This form must be signed by the dissertation committee members, the DCT (if not already a dissertation committee member), and the school director. The dissertation committee signatures verify that the student has passed the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam. The DCT will maintain the clinical case conference records and must sign the form to verify that the student has passed the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam. The results of the doctoral comprehensive exam must be submitted to the Graduate School on or before the last day for presenting the signed, final/defended dissertation to the Graduate School. Completion of the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam formally admits the student to doctoral candidacy. You are not considered a doctoral candidate until the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam has been passed.

#### APPLICATION FOR M.A. OR PH.D. DEGREE (APPLYING TO GRADUATE)

On or before the deadline in the semester before you wish to graduate (**both for the master's and doctoral degree**), you must apply for graduation, which triggers a degree audit. The degree auditor will verify your application and notify you and your advisor/DCT of any problems. You can apply for graduation in the Student Dashboard in SOAR (Application for Degree – Grad) and pay the graduation fee prior to submitting the application. Doctoral students earning the MA degree en route to PhD need to make sure your SOAR account lists the master's degree as your degree plan **before** you route your graduation application in SOAR for approval. The graduate program administrative specialist or the DCT can assist if your account does not list MA as your degree plan.

If, for some reason, you will not graduate in the semester for which you applied, you must go to the same area in SOAR where you applied for graduation and select “Defer Application.”

It is **your responsibility** to ensure that all the necessary paperwork is on file and up to date at the Graduate School. Likewise, please ensure that any paperwork that is sent to the Graduate

School is copied and provided to the graduate program administrative specialist for your student file.

### **GRADUATE DEGREE AUDITOR**

As you prepare your degree applications for review, please note the following:

1. Thesis and dissertation credit remains an E grade until the dissertation is complete AND has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate School.
2. Only 6 hours of thesis credit and 12 hours of dissertation credit will count toward the degree (even if many more hours have been taken). Students sometimes count too many hours for the dissertation and assume this will make up the difference if they have not taken enough other hours. You may consider enrolling for a research class such as PSY 791 when faced with this situation.
3. Courses carrying the numbers 797/897 (Independent Study) do NOT count toward the master's or doctoral degree (therefore, do not register for those courses).
4. Only 6 hours of transfer work is allowed toward both the master's and doctoral degrees *combined*.
5. A grade-point average of B (3.0) or better is required for graduate degrees by the time you complete the course-hour requirements for the degree.
6. An I (Incomplete) is allowed to remain on the record for one semester only. After that semester, it becomes an F. Any incomplete grades will have to be changed to the final grade before a degree can post.

### **PAPERWORK COPIES FOR STUDENT FILES WHILE COMPLETING MILESTONES**

**Absolutely all forms sent to the Graduate School should be provided to the graduate program administrative specialist so that a copy can be placed in your student file for the clinical psychology doctoral program.** It is also strongly recommended that you maintain a copy for your own records.



## SECTION 7: FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND WORK

### ASSISTANTSHIPS/WORK OPPORTUNITIES/FINANCIAL AID

#### Graduate Assistantships

Most graduate students receive a **stipend** through a graduate assistantship assignment (in the School of Psychology, on a research grant, or at an externship site). If you accept one of these appointments, you will commit to work 20 hours per week. Other benefits of a graduate assistantship are a **tuition waiver** (including out-of-state fees) and graduate student **healthcare insurance** (with students paying a portion of the premium). In almost all cases, the school places students in activities that will enhance their training and professional development. Students may, for example, help faculty conduct research (either in-house or at an external site) or serve as teaching assistants within the school. More advanced students may serve as assistants in the Center for Behavioral Health, provide clinical services under supervision at one of our affiliated training sites in the community (i.e., externship), conduct research that is supported by faculty members' grants (which may also occur at an externship site), or be instructor of record for an undergraduate class in the School of Psychology. The school will solicit student preferences for specific assignments, but please be aware that not all requests can be honored. **Please read the following information regarding graduate assistantships carefully.**

- A. To be eligible for a graduate assistantship, **background checks are required** and administered through the USM Department of Human Resources. Students who fail a background check are not permitted to receive a graduate assistantship. Failed background checks may also affect enrollment in a graduate program.
- B. You must have an average of B or better each semester and must perform assignments in a satisfactory manner to maintain a graduate assistantship appointment. In addition, any student who receives a disciplinary action (e.g., warning, fails to meet expectations, or probation) may not be eligible for these assignments. Priority for these assignments goes to students who are in their first four years of graduate training and who are in good standing. School funding for students in the fifth year or beyond is usually not available but has been awarded in some circumstances when resources are available.
- C. If you are on a graduate assistantship appointment, you must maintain a full-time course load during the period of the appointment.
- D. General tuition and the non-resident fee are waived if you hold a graduate assistantship appointment. To qualify for this waiver, you must be registered for courses totaling 9 to 13 hours in the Fall, 9 to 13 hours in the Spring, and the advised number (typically 1 to 3 hours) in the Summer. Courses taken as Audit, certain independent study courses, and some undergraduate courses do not count toward these hours. Students are not *required* to apply for Mississippi state residency after attending graduate school at USM for one year although you are still encouraged to do so. State residency could save you money in the event that you are required to pay tuition (i.e., university policy changes).

If you do declare residency in Mississippi, please be sure to complete the application process and provide the necessary documentation to have your residency status with the university changed. The residency application and detailed instructions can be found on the Registrar's website: [Mississippi Residency | Office of the Registrar | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

- E. Students on a graduate assistantship receive the graduate student health insurance plan. More information about the graduate health insurance policy can be found at: [GA, RA, International Student Information | Employment and Human Resources | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). ***If a student is otherwise insured, the graduate student health insurance plan may be waived by completing the waiver form found at: <https://studentcenter.uhcsr.com/>.*** Here, you can enroll in the insurance plan (to ensure it becomes active in mid-August); otherwise, if you do not actively enroll or actively waive it, you will be automatically enrolled in early September (check the website for specific dates). The student portion of the premium is deducted in increments from the stipend paychecks (12-month coverage divided into 9 payments during the academic year). The insurance is currently provided through UnitedHealthCare ([Homepage | UnitedHealthcare Student Resources \(uhcsr.com\)](#)). Graduate student health insurance benefits are tied to your employment as a graduate assistant. Therefore, you are not eligible for graduate student health insurance while on internship. Many internships offer benefits as part of their compensation package.
- F. Whether functioning as a teaching assistant, research assistant, clinic coordinator, research extern, clinical extern, or instructor of record for your assistantship, you will be asked to collect an evaluation from your assistantship supervisor **each semester**. Therefore, each student who is in residence in the program (i.e., funded by the program) will have a placement evaluation each semester. The type of evaluation form will vary depending on the type of work you are doing for the graduate assistantship. There are three types of placement evaluations: teaching assistant, research assistant, and clinical extern. The evaluation forms and due dates will be distributed each semester. Instructors of record will have at least one class observed by their teaching supervisor, and an evaluation form will be completed for that observation. Likewise, course evaluations will be collected for the graduate student instructor's own student file.

### **Opportunities for Clinical Psychology Students to Teach Undergraduate Classes**

The School of Psychology affords opportunities for advanced clinical psychology graduate students to teach undergraduate classes at USM. At a minimum, graduate students must have completed 18 hours in their discipline before teaching undergraduate classes, and some upper division courses require completion of the MS degree. The school must file paperwork with the Provost's office before you can be credentialed to teach as instructor of record. Clinical psychology students are typically eligible to teach by the Summer semester following their first year. You are urged to consider these opportunities. If you believe you are eligible, it is suggested that you discuss the matter with your major professor and the DCT, as the second or

fourth year in the program are typically good years to teach. All clinical psychology students, whether they intend to teach or not, are also required to take PSY 701, Seminar in Teaching of Psychology (1 hr). For any semester that you teach an undergraduate course, you should enroll in PSY 702 (Practicum in Teaching of Psychology) *if there is room in your schedule* with your major professor, who may serve as your direct supervisor for teaching (your supervisor may also be another faculty member). Your teaching supervisor should approve your syllabus before it is distributed. Likewise, the teaching supervisor should provide feedback on other elements of the course, including Canvas, notes, exams, and other elements for which you require feedback. As indicated above, the teaching supervisor will observe at least one class session and complete a formal evaluation of your teaching based on the observation.

### **Additional Financial Aid**

The Perkins Loan Program (formerly NDSL) is available to graduate students who meet certain needs-based criteria for federal aid. Students who are U.S. citizens may also apply for a Stafford Loan. As of July 1, 2012, all Stafford loans to graduate students are unsubsidized, which means that interest accrues immediately, even during school and deferment periods. It does not mean you have payments during school and deferment periods, but it does mean you will owe that accrued interest when you start making your payments.

Applicants for financial aid should apply by **March 15<sup>th</sup>** (priority date) for loans to begin the Fall term. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) may be obtained from the USM Office of Financial Aid: [Office of Financial Aid | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://www.usm.edu/office-of-financial-aid)

### **EMPLOYMENT WHILE A STUDENT-IN-TRAINING**

The USM's graduate program in clinical psychology is designed as an intensive full-time experience, and students are not admitted for part-time graduate studies. A full-time academic schedule, together with an assistantship appointment, normally requires full-time effort that precludes outside work. Consequently, such activity is to be avoided during the period you are in training. However, the CTC recognizes that financial exigencies do occur. Requests for exceptions to this program policy should be submitted in writing to the DCT who will submit it to the CTC for its decision. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be approved only if the CTC judges the requested activity not to conflict with any of the ethical principles or the student's training or to be harmful to the program or otherwise impede the student's University responsibilities. Such employment activity, when approved, would normally come later rather than earlier in a student's program of study.

Consideration of any **off-site clinical activities** of students in their fifth year or beyond (i.e., who are no longer funded by the program) must also be presented to the CTC for approval. Students should submit the location of the work, their title, a description of their job responsibilities, the name and credentials of their supervisor at the site, and a description of the supervision plan (i.e., duration and frequency of face-to-face supervision meetings). Educational experiences out

of state may require special approvals by the university due to state reciprocity agreements for distance education. If approved, the hours are considered “program sanctioned” and can be counted toward the student’s APPIC application. Only hours supervised by a Ph.D.-level psychologist will be considered for program sanctioning for APPIC hours.

Keep in mind that as a student in training, the state of Mississippi and the APA ethics code prohibit you from using the title of “Psychologist” and restrict the professional activities in which you may engage.

### CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

Doctoral students who are no longer on graduate assistantship with tuition remission (typically students in their fifth year and beyond) still must enroll in a minimum of one hour of coursework (usually PSY 898–Dissertation) each Fall and Spring semester until the semester they defend the dissertation, at which time they are required to register for one (1) hour of PSY 898. If you defend your dissertation during a semester in which you registered for 1 hour of PSY 898 but the defense was past the deadline to graduate at the end of that semester and the Document Specialist has not yet accepted your dissertation by the end of that semester, you may have to register for one additional hour of PSY 898–Dissertation the following semester. *You must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour during the semester you graduate.*

Failure to meet the continuous enrollment policy can result in the student having to re-apply to the Graduate School, pay a re-application fee, and a fine for “back tuition” (i.e., 1 hour of tuition for each semester they failed to enroll upon readmission, at the current rate). For continuous enrollment purposes only, the Summer semester is not considered part of the regular academic year. Therefore, an off-site, unfunded student does not have to register for Summer semester hours.

Students no longer on graduate assistantship—including during their internship year—are responsible for paying tuition. Please refer to the tuition and fee schedule located at: [General Tuition & Fees | Business Services | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). The current cost of tuition for the 2024-2025 academic year is **\$550 per credit hour**. The out-of-state fee is waived for PSY 898–Dissertation and PSY 881–Internship in Clinical Psychology courses, so you will not be charged out-of-state tuition regardless of your state of residency during those years.

## SECTION 8: OTHER SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### RESIDENCY

The USM **Graduate Bulletin** specifies a minimum residency requirement for the doctoral degree. The doctoral program in clinical psychology, however, is designed as a five-year program, including the doctoral clinical internship. Thus, our students will far exceed the minimum residency requirements as specified in that document. Students are expected to be full-time students in residence during their first four years in the program. In rare instances, those students entering with an accepted master's degree and thesis are permitted to be full-time students in residence during only the first three years in the program.

### SHORT ABSENCES DURING TIMES OF PROGRAM OBLIGATION

If you have to leave town during the regular semester (Fall, Spring, or Summer), or during your regularly scheduled work time (i.e., including university breaks) if on externship, for any reason, you should clear it with the following people: (1) Director of Clinical Training; (2) your major professor; (3) instructors for any of the classes that you would miss during the time of your absence; (4) your supervisor for practicum (if applicable); and (5) your supervisor(s) for your teaching assistantship, research assistantship, and/or externship. You must secure permission from each of these people before the short-term absence.

If you must leave town during university break periods when you have required hours at your externship or other responsibilities, you need to clear the absence with both the Director of Clinical Training and your externship/other activities supervisor. Please be mindful of expectations beyond your classes/exams when scheduling travel during semester breaks. Although your exams may end early, you likely still have obligations due to your assistantship/externship or practicum/clinical duties. Be aware of those expectations and ensure that you do not depart too early or return too late to meet your obligations. Check in with the DCT and/or your supervisors if you have any questions about travel dates.

If you must leave town because of an emergency, please inform your major professor and any direct supervisors as soon as possible.

### FORMAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Students considering a leave of absence from the program should discuss the matter with the DCT and carefully review Graduate School's policies: [Progress to Degree and Graduation Forms | Graduate Student Success | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). Written requests for a formal leave of absence (*Leave of Absence Request Form*) from the clinical psychology program should be directed to the DCT, who will refer the matter to the CTC. In recent years, medical leaves, emergency leaves, and leaves for other significant personal reasons (i.e., mental health, family medical, death of a loved one) have been approved. The CTC

may request additional supporting documentation before approving a leave of absence. Once approved by the CTC, it must be submitted to the Graduate School for final approval. Leave is usually granted for one academic year. In very rare cases, additional leave beyond one academic year may be granted. Requests for an extension of a leave of absence must be submitted in writing before the current leave of absence expires. Leave extensions will be granted for no more than one academic year at a time.

Students who are on a formal leave of absence are required to withdraw from the university. As such, their graduate assistantship, tuition waiver, and university health insurance will be terminated. If a student takes a leave during a semester, he or she will be required to pay a prorated rate for their tuition. A student may not have access to university facilities and support during the period of leave.

At the expiration of a leave of absence, the student must submit a readmission form, which can be found at the *Application for Graduate Readmission* link at: [Application for Graduate School \(usm.edu\)](https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/readmission). However, because the student is returning from an approved leave, the readmission fee is waived by the Graduate School.

## **PREGNANCY AND PARENTING DURING GRADUATE SCHOOL**

The decision to start a family is a very personal one. For students that do so during their graduate studies, we are committed to supporting them in a non-discriminatory manner that is best suited for the student and their families. Parenting is a full-time job and can be difficult while also trying to meet the intensive demands of doctoral training. Therefore, students who are considering starting a family may benefit from a discussion with their major professor and/or DCT so that appropriate future planning may take place regarding their plan of study and progress through the program. Such a discussion is not required but could benefit the student by increasing their awareness of all the resources and factors to consider and enabling faculty to best support them. Similarly, expecting students or spouses/partners are encouraged to talk with the DCT early in the pregnancy to access appropriate supports and identify how the student's parental needs can be met within the policy constraints of the university and resources of the program. While a student may choose to request a formal leave of absence from the program (see policy above), many students have successfully managed starting a family and caring for an infant with minimal disruption to their progress to degree. The Graduate School policy for maternity leave can be found here: [Maternity Leave for Graduate Assistants | Graduate Student Success | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/maternity-leave). Additional university policies and resources pertaining to pregnancy and parenting rights are provided here: [AA/EEO Policies | Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/maternity-leave). For students on internship, APPIC also offers guidelines: [APPIC GUIDELINES FOR PARENTAL LEAVE 1-21-16.pdf](https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/maternity-leave).

## **PROGRAM DEADLINES FALLING ON A WEEKEND/HOLIDAY**

All program deadlines that fall on a weekend or holiday are pushed to the **next business day**.

All program deadlines that fall on a weekend or holiday are pushed to the **next business day**.

## **RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**

### **Faculty Research Labs**

In addition to collecting data in the Center for Behavioral Health and in field settings, the clinical psychology faculty members conduct research in the following laboratories within OMH (some faculty have additional space in other buildings):

Clinical Laboratory Suite A (OMH 228)

- Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders Lab (Directed by Dr. Stephanie Smith)

Clinical Laboratory Suite B (OMH 237)

- Child Routines and Behavior Lab (Directed by Dr. Sara Jordan)

Clinical Laboratory Suite C (OMH 217)

- The Social Cognition and Recovery in Schizophrenia lab (Directed by Dr. Kelsey Bonfils)
- Psychophysiology, Emotions, and Treatment (PET) Lab (Directed by Dr. Megan Renna)

OMH 233

- Psychophysiology, Emotions, and Treatment (PET) Lab (Directed by Dr. Megan Renna)
- Child and Family Equity Prevention & Research (CAFÉ PR) Lab (Directed by Dr. Freddie Pastrana Rivera)

### **Office and Other Workspace**

If your assistantship assignment requires a workspace to complete your duties, the school will assign a work area to you. Consult your immediate supervisor as soon as you receive your assignment. A designated conference area is available for graduate students who teach undergraduate classes to hold office hours and meet with their students. Graduate students who work specifically in a faculty member's research laboratory may be assigned appropriate workspace in those facilities by that faculty member. There is a clinical psychology graduate student workspace that is housed in the former ODC room (in OMH 214 suite). There is also a designated space that TAs can sign out for office hours in OMH 203.

### **Colloquia and Seminars**

The school, clinical psychology program, and other entities, sponsor speakers, colloquia, and seminars throughout the year. All clinical psychology graduate students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities for learning and professional development, including attending departmental colloquia conducted in non-clinical as well as in clinical areas. Please note that attendance at certain seminars/workshops/colloquia may be considered mandatory. If so, it will be communicated in advance to students, and students should attend unless otherwise excused by the DCT.

### **Grants and Funding**

The ability to attract research funding reflects peer approval of a scientific research program and is an important skill for scientist-practitioners to acquire. Graduate students are therefore strongly encouraged to seek both internal and external funding to support their research under the mentorship of their major professor. In recent years, our students' research has been funded by the National Collaborative on Gun Violence Research, Sigma Xi, the National Institute of Mental Health, the Military Suicide Research Consortium, DHHS Administration for Children and Families, American Psychological Foundation, APAGS/Psi Chi Junior Scientist Fellowship, Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology, and various internal entities. It is recommended that you speak to your mentor about grant opportunities in your research area. There are many opportunities for students to seek funds—particularly for dissertation support—through a variety of national organizations and funding agencies. Before submitting applications, students must have their major professor review and approve all application materials.

The Clinical Psychology Program has several avenues for internally supporting graduate student research. First, clinical psychology students can submit a proposal for a **Clinical Psychology Travel Grant** to reimburse allowable expenses to travel and present research at a regional, national, or international conference. Students who are first authors and/or presenting authors are eligible to apply. Students may be awarded one travel grant per academic year (August to July). Every effort will be made to fund as many students as possible. The total amount of each grant will vary depending on availability of funds, number of applications, and level of conference, with a maximum grant amount of \$150. A call for submissions for a Clinical Psychology Travel Grant will be announced twice yearly for conferences within the specified timeframe.

Second, clinical psychology students can apply for a **Thesis/Dissertation Grant**. Each student is eligible for a lifetime maximum amount of \$250 to help fund his or her thesis or dissertation. That is, the amount may be awarded in part for the thesis and in part for the dissertation, or it may be awarded in full for either the thesis or the dissertation. Funds for the thesis/dissertation grant are awarded as reimbursements after project costs have been incurred and proper documentation has been submitted. To apply, students complete a short application with a budget and budget justification. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.



Third, students are chosen for the **Clinical Psychology Outstanding Research Award** and the **Clinical Psychology Outstanding Service Award** based on their annual evaluations. The research awards are designed to recognize one first through third year graduate student and one advanced (post-third year) graduate student who have excelled in research. Research accomplishment will be evaluated as a whole, rather than on one specific study. A student winning the award at one level is not eligible at that same level in subsequent years. However, a student winning the research award at the beginning level can later receive the advanced level award. There is one service award for the program. Finally, the student who receives the highest score on their clinical case conference each year will be awarded the **Clinical Psychology Case Conference Award** (the “Couchie”). Each award will consist of a \$200 grant to be used to reimburse expenditures related to your program of research or to receive additional specialized training in the research or clinical domain. Award winners for research and service will be notified during the Fall semester whereas the award winner of the “Couchie” will be notified in the Spring semester.

### **Membership in Professional Organizations**

#### MISSISSIPPI PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (MPA)

The Mississippi Psychological Association (MPA) holds its annual three-day meeting during the Fall of each year. Graduate students in clinical psychology are encouraged to enrich their professional and scientific socialization to our discipline by attending this meeting. Many of your graduate student colleagues will be presenting their research, and many workshops and other presentations will be of particular interest to clinical psychology graduate students. Student membership status, at a reduced fee, is available for psychology graduate students who wish to affiliate with MPA. More information about MPA can be obtained from the website: [Mississippi Psychologist Association - Mississippi Psychological Association \(mpassoc.org\)](http://mpassoc.org).

#### NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Most clinical psychology graduate students at USM affiliate with regional or national psychology organizations such as the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Association for Psychological Science (APS), or with other organizations with more specific missions such as the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT), Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), Society for Personality Assessment (SPA), or American Association of Suicidology (AAS) among others. Many of these organizations also provide reduced rates for student membership. Many students also join Psi Chi, a psychology honor society, or Sigma Xi, a science honor society. Both Psi Chi ([Psi Chi, The International Honor Society in Psychology](http://psi-chi.org)) and Sigma Xi ([Home \(sigmaxi.org\)](http://sigmaxi.org)) award funds for graduate student research projects.

## Keys

Students in the clinical psychology program receive a main key to the external doors to OMH and FGH. Your major professor will provide access to the research laboratory spaces (e.g., code to lockbox). Upon the recommendation of your assistantship supervisor or research advisor, and the approval of the school director, you may be assigned other keys. You should discuss this matter with your supervisor/advisor. Key assignment, when approved, is coordinated by the graduate program's administrative specialist or their designate. Please return keys promptly after your assignment is complete. The school may charge you for lost keys or keys that are not returned. Under no circumstances should school-issued door keys be duplicated or given to others without permission.

## Message Boxes

Graduate student message boxes are in the Center for Behavioral Health. You may use your message box to receive mail that is professional or training related. To have mail delivered to your message box, use this address: **School of Psychology, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive, #5025, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5025**. If you are a new student, check your message box when you arrive on campus. All students should check their message boxes periodically. Your instructors, faculty advisor, school administrative specialists, various offices across campus, as well as your graduate student colleagues, will be communicating with you through your departmental message box. Please do not have your personal mail addressed to the School of Psychology. If you need a campus address for your personal mail, you may rent a box at the U.S. Post Office branch located in the Thad Cochran Building on campus.

## iTech Services Including USM Email Account

You will need to activate your USM email account to allow you access to e-mail and other electronic resources. Such an account will be issued to you at no charge by Information Technology (iTech), located in Cook Library Room 103. Once your university account is established, please provide your e-mail address to the DCT and the graduate program administrative specialist. Many of you will also have accounts from other ISPs or service providers. Please provide e-mail addresses for all accounts you use regularly, so we can reach you promptly if necessary. You should **check your @usm.edu account regularly** or ensure it is forwarding information to another email address that is checked.

iTech can also help you with accessing the wireless internet on campus, access SOAR, change your password, download mobile apps, get your email synced with your mobile phone, etc. See the iTech student hot sheet for more information: [Student Hot Sheet | iTech | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). You can also call 601.266.HELP (601.266.4357).

We ask that you **use your USM email account for all official business** related to your role as a graduate student in the clinical psychology doctoral program. It is imperative that your USM

email account be used in any written materials for collection of data with human subjects, per the IRB regulations.

If you use an email signature, do not identify yourself as a “doctoral candidate.” Doctoral candidacy is a specific designation by the Graduate School that comes later in your graduate career (i.e., you are not formally admitted to doctoral candidacy until after the doctoral comprehensive exam is passed). Furthermore, this term can be confusing to the lay public. You should use the term “graduate student in clinical psychology” if you choose to identify yourself as such in your email signature.

### **Eagle Alert**

Your USM email account will also receive information from Eagle Alert, which warns students, faculty, and staff about imminent danger and emergency situations. You can receive campus emergency alert notifications via email, text message, and voicemail. You may change your information or opt out of the personal phone and text message portion of Eagle Alert (whereas campus email notifications are required) at: <https://www.usm.edu/police/eagle-alert.php>.

### **Clinical Psychology Program Group Email and SharePoint**

A considerable amount of program information (e.g., notices of policy changes, program events, upcoming deadlines) will be communicated through our clinical group email ([clinical@usm.edu](mailto:clinical@usm.edu)). Before the beginning of your first year, the DCT will add you to the clinical group email using your USM email account. Once added, please check your email regularly for any announcements. Students should also feel free to post relevant announcements to the clinical group email.

In addition to the clinical group email, information is regularly updated on the [USM Clinical Psychology Resources - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#). This site provides important information, forms, upcoming program events, upcoming deadlines and due dates, and funding and award applications. Information is posted here so that it is easily accessible and does not require searching through old emails for postings. However, students will also be notified of any new information, deadlines, etc. on the clinical group email. **Because this information is readily available, it is your responsibility to keep up with program events and due dates.**

### **School of Psychology Graduate Student Group Email and Teams**

A considerable amount of school information relevant to all graduate students in psychology is communicated from the school director’s office via the psychology graduate student group email ([psychology-grads@usm.edu](mailto:psychology-grads@usm.edu)) to which you will be automatically enrolled. Again, please check your email regularly for any announcements from this group email.

The School of Psychology maintains a centralized electronic filing system for all graduate

paperwork and access to handbooks and other documents which support your overall progression in the clinical graduate program. All graduate students will be invited to the School of Psychology Graduate Programs Teams account. Here you will have access to shared documents, evaluation forms, etc. and can access your electronic student file. Students are prohibited from modifying or deleting any files from the Teams site as these serve as the official records during your time as a graduate student. All annual evaluation materials will be stored here in a folder which only the student, Director's office and program faculty can access.

### **Unauthorized Use of School Resources**

School computers, copy machines, copy paper, long distance telephone lines, supplies, and other resources are to be used only for official school/CBH business (e.g., when required as part of your graduate assistantship) and then only when specifically authorized by the school director or your immediate faculty supervisor.

### **USM Student Accessibility Services**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) is USM's designated office to assist the University in its commitment to protect the civil rights of students with disabilities. SAS protects students from discrimination and offers reasonable accommodations to give them equitable access to university courses and resources. Disabilities covered under the ADA may include but are not limited to ADHD, learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic health disorders, temporary injuries, and pregnancies. If a student feels that they need classroom or housing accommodations based on a disability they should contact SAS by phone at 601-266-5024, by email at [sas@usm.edu](mailto:sas@usm.edu), in person by visiting the SAS office located in McLemore Hall, Room 112, or online at [Student Accessibility Services | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](https://www.usm.edu/student-accessibility-services).

### **Personal Counseling and Psychotherapy Services**

Numerous services are available in the areas of personal, social, and marital counseling as well as psychotherapy. On-campus services include the University Student Counseling Services. Off-campus facilities include Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources, which is a publicly supported mental health facility located about three miles from campus at 103 S. 19th Street, as well as several private practitioners in psychology and psychiatry. The USM student insurance plan is also accepted by numerous providers throughout the state who have in-person and tele-appointments for a \$20 copay (along with \$250 deductible and 20% co-insurance). The insurance also offers unlimited free virtual therapy ([HYcounseling | UnitedHealthcare Student Resources \(uhcsr.com\)](https://www.uhcsr.com)). Clinical psychology faculty members do not accept clinical psychology graduate students as psychotherapy clients because of the harmful dual relationship such an arrangement would create. The faculty maintain a list of mental health resources and providers that is available for students and is shared regularly with the program. This resource list can also be requested from your major professor or the DCT at any time.

## **Services and Organizations Designed to Support and Respect Student Diversity**

There are many student organizations at USM designed to support special interests or diversity among the student body. The Office of Leadership & Student Involvement, located in Room 110 of the Hub, will be happy to provide additional information on these organizations. Phone: 601.266.4403. Go to their website at [Office of Leadership and Student Involvement | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#) for a list of registered student organizations. In addition, the program offers a Clinical Diversity Committee that is open to student membership and plans training and events related to diversity broadly defined. Dr. Kelsey Bonfils is the faculty advisor for the diversity committee. There is also a Graduate Students of Color Organization on campus that serves the entire campus community and is open to both students of color and other interested students. Dr. Pastrana Rivera from our program serves as one of the faculty advisors for this group.

## **Opportunities to Become Involved at the Graduate School**

The Graduate School affords opportunities for graduate students to become involved in leadership roles and research. Interested graduate students may want to seek serving as the school representative for the **Graduate Student Senate**. The USM Graduate Student Senate is composed of a representative from each school nominated by the director. The senate meets regularly to cover agenda items pertinent to graduate students throughout the University. More information can be found at: [Graduate Student Senate | Graduate Student Success | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). The **Susan Siltanen Graduate Student Research Symposium** offers an opportunity for participants to see presentations of scholarly research from various disciplines of undergraduate and graduate study. The graduate student participants make presentations and discuss their research with other students, faculty, and guests. The top ranked presentations in each area are eligible for monetary awards. Information about the symposium is found at: [Susan A. Siltanen Graduate Student Research Symposium | Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

## **APPEALS, GRIEVANCES, AND OTHER POLICIES**

### **Graduate Student Appeals of CTC Decisions**

You may appeal any decision made by the CTC. A written appeal is normally directed to the DCT who will present the matter to the CTC. Your appeal may contain a request to present your case to the CTC in writing. If you are still dissatisfied with the decision of the CTC, you may take the matter directly to the school director (see Grievance Policy below).

## **Grade Review Policy**

The instructor (defined as one who has the responsibility for a content course, special problem course, practicum/internship course, research course, thesis, or dissertation) has the authority over all matters affecting the conduct of the class, including the assignment of grades. Student performance will be evaluated according to the criteria made available to all students within the first two weeks of each semester. Grades are not to be determined in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

If you disagree with the final grade given by an instructor, an orderly appellate procedure is available. You must initiate the appeal procedure within 30 school days (excluding Saturday, Sunday, and official student holidays) of the beginning of the semester subsequent to the one in which the grade was awarded, or 120 calendar days after the issuance of Spring semester grades, if you are not enrolled during the Summer term. The procedure assures due process for you as well as for the instructor. The policies and procedures governing grade review can be obtained from the Provost's webpage: [Policies, Procedures & Forms | Internalportal | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

## **Office of the Dean of Students**

The USM Office of the Dean of Students may be able to assist students in understanding their rights and responsibilities, provide guidance regarding issues impeding academic progress, and offer advice regarding grievance and appeals policies and procedures ([About Us | Office of the Dean of Students | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#)).

## **Graduate School Grievance and Appeals Policy**

This procedure follows the Grievance and Appeals Procedures included in the Graduate Bulletin ([Viewing Graduate School Appeal and Grievance Process \(policystat.com\)](#)) and gives the student due process. You must log in using your USM credentials through the PolicyStat policy management system.

1. School Level. The student will submit a signed letter to the School Director within fifteen (15) working days of notification of dismissal from the Dean of the Graduate School or other action that prompts a grievance or appeal. The letter must state the action for which the student is filing an appeal or grievance and explain the basis of the appeal or grievance. The School Director will review all pertinent material, interview the student and relevant faculty member(s), and render a decision on the appeal/grievance, normally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal/grievance. The decision of the Director will be submitted to the student via certified mail and the student's official USM email account. This correspondence will also be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School.

2. Dean of the College Level. If the student chooses to appeal the school decision, they must submit a written appeal within ten (10) working days of the emailed notification of the school decision to the Dean of the College. The Dean will review the appeal and render a decision on the appeal, normally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the College Dean will be submitted to the student via certified mail and the student's official USM email account. This correspondence will also be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School.
3. Dean of the Graduate School Level. If the student chooses to appeal the College Dean's decision, they must submit a written appeal within ten (10) working days of the emailed notification of the College Dean's decision to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate Dean will convene a Graduate School Appeals Committee (made up of faculty who are members of the Graduate Council and one graduate student) which will review all pertinent materials and hold an official hearing on the appeal. Normally, the hearing will be held within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the written appeal as long as the university is in session or within ten (10) working days of the university beginning a session. The student may attend the hearing and a representative of the School may also attend the hearing or respond to the appeal in writing. The Appeals Committee will submit a letter detailing their decision to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate Dean will send the student a letter indicating the Committee's decision via certified mail and the student's official USM email account.
4. Provost Level. If the student chooses to appeal the Graduate School Appeals Committee's decision, they must submit a written appeal within ten (10) working days of the emailed notification of the Committee's decision to the Provost. The Provost will review all appeal materials and render a decision on the appeal, normally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Provost will be submitted to the student via certified mail and the student's official USM email account. This correspondence will also be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School.
5. President Level. If the student chooses to appeal the Provost's decision, they must submit a written appeal within ten (10) working days of the emailed notification of the Provost's decision to the President. The President will review all appeal materials and render a final decision on the appeal, normally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the President will be submitted to the student via certified mail and the student's official USM email account. This correspondence will also be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School. The decision of the President is final.

For an outline of the student grievance process, see USM's Institutional Policies webpage on the grievance policy at: [Academic Appeals and Grievances | Internalportal | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/academic-appeals-and-grievances).

For additional information regarding FERPA and your right to amend possible inaccuracies of your student records, contact the Registrar's office.

### **Policies on Sexual Harassment, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity**

The University of Southern Mississippi, in its efforts to foster an environment of respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the university community, is committed to maintaining a work-learning environment free of sexual harassment. It is the policy of the university that no member of its community shall sexually harass another. Any employee or student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action including dismissal. Sexual harassment is illegal under both state and federal law.

Information about the University's sexual harassment and other affirmative action and equal opportunity employment (AA/EOE) policies can be found at: [Equal Employment Opportunity Statement | University | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#). Information about the Title IX office at USM can be found here: [About Us | Title IX | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

### **Records Access Policy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), or the Buckley Amendment, deals with the subject of access to educational records, and it requires institutions to establish policies which set forth the procedure by which these records are to be reviewed or inspected. University policy in this matter is specified in the current **USM Student Handbook** as well as at: [Viewing Southern Miss and FERPA Compliance Policy \(policystat.com\)](#).

### **Class Attendance and Use of Laptops in the Classroom**

It is expected that you attend all class sessions, are punctual, participate actively, and are respectful of your instructors and peers. If you are unable to attend a class because of illness or unforeseen circumstance, you must contact your instructor as soon as possible and arrange a way to make up what was missed in class. It is imperative that you contact your instructor ahead of time if you need to miss class for a professional obligation (e.g., research conference).

Student use of laptop computers is permitted in class insofar as they are used for notetaking, references materials for discussion, and follow **course syllabi and instructor guidelines**. The use of laptops for other purposes (e.g., emailing, social media, instant messaging, video chat, playing games, Internet browsing), except as explicitly authorized by the course instructor, constitutes **unprofessional behavior**. The use of other electronic devices during class is prohibited. Although laptops are generally allowed in class, it is up to the discretion of the instructor, and any instructor may determine that laptops are not permitted in general—or during specific class meetings. Certainly, computers do not need to be accessed during all activities of a class. For example, if classmates are delivering a presentation, there is no reason



that other students should have their laptops open. Students misusing laptops or using other electronic devices during class (e.g., texting on cell phones) may be dismissed from class and may receive other disciplinary consequences at the discretion of the instructor and/or the CTC. **Professional behavior constitutes an important domain in faculty evaluation of student performance.**

### **Considerations for Social Media**

Clinical psychology doctoral students should carefully consider how they present themselves via social media, such as Facebook. Current or potential clients or undergraduate students as well as peers and supervisors/employers may view online information. Thus, students should monitor their privacy settings carefully and should consider the type of information that they display that could be seen by such an audience. Clinical psychology doctoral students should never discuss clients/patients or students (even if deidentified) via social media.

### **General Guidelines for Dress Code**

Students should dress appropriately for the setting in which they are working. When seeing clients in the Center for Behavioral Health (CBH), running participants in the lab, teaching a course, or otherwise representing the clinical psychology doctoral program, professional dress (i.e., business casual) is expected. Refer to the *CBH Operations Manual* for more information about expectations for presenting yourself in the CBH. You may need to adhere to a more specific dress code when working at an externship site, so be sure to know the dress expectations there and to follow them. Finally, keep in mind that clients come to the CBH to seek help from professionals. When you are in the CBH during business hours, even if you are not scheduled for a session, you may come in contact with clients. Therefore, you should be dressed in a manner that is acceptable in a professional setting.

### **Child Care**

College policy prohibits students from bringing children to class. There are childcare providers in the community, and many of these have a waiting list. If you have dependent children, we recommend that you begin to make your child arrangements well before you arrive on campus. Please reach out to the DCT or clinical faculty if you are in need of recommendations of childcare providers in Hattiesburg or the surrounding area.

### **Other Relevant Policies and Webpages**

Information about academic standards, due process, and grievances can be found in The Graduate Bulletin ([University of Southern Mississippi - Modern Campus Catalog™ \(usm.edu\)](http://www.usm.edu/moderncampus)).

A full listing of USM student support services can be found at: [Current Graduate Students | University | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://www.usm.edu/currentgraduatestudents).

The website for the registrar's office includes valuable information including academic calendars, course schedules, and information about graduation and may be accessed here: [Office of the Registrar | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://Office of the Registrar | The University of Southern Mississippi (usm.edu)).

### **A RECOMMENDATION TO RETAIN YOUR SYLLABI**

It is recommended that you permanently retain a copy of the course syllabus for each of the graduate courses you take during your program of study at USM, as well as a copy of the **Graduate Bulletin**. Such information is occasionally useful to various state licensing boards, to the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, or to other agencies as they review your application for licensure or other credentialing.

### **A DATE YOU MAY NEED TO KNOW IN THE FUTURE**

Our graduates occasionally contact us to obtain the date the clinical psychology program at USM was initially accredited by the American Psychological Association. Such information is sometimes required for various application forms. The USM doctoral program in clinical psychology has been fully accredited by the American Psychological Association since **April 27, 1979**. That information may also be found in the listing of accredited programs that appears each year in **The American Psychologist** and on the APA website at: [APA-Accredited Programs](http://APA-Accredited Programs).

For information about our accreditation status, you can contact the [Commission on Accreditation](http://Commission on Accreditation) of the American Psychological Association, which can also be reached at:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242  
Phone: 202-336-5979  
TDD/TTY: 202-336-6123  
Fax: 202-336-5978  
[apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)

### **A FINAL REQUEST**

**Please keep your address, e-mail, and telephone number current with the DCT, graduate program administrative specialist, and the USM Alumni Office after you graduate!** The program or the school occasionally find it necessary to contact its graduates, and it is important that we maintain up-to-date contact information, particularly to gather information from our past graduates that is needed for reaccreditation.

**SECTION 9: APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: APAGS-INSPIRED USM CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

### Preamble

The American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) deems a number of rights for students to be indispensable to the fair, equitable and respectful treatment of every psychology graduate student throughout their education and training. The USM Clinical Psychology PhD program strives to meet the APAGS ideals and created this list so that students may be aware of their rights, both those for which there are current USM or program policies that are enforceable as well as those that we consider to be aspirational. Aspirational rights are not considered to be enforceable (i.e., actions or information relevant to the rights are managed outside of the USM Clinical Psychology PhD Program and are not under control of program faculty). Program faculty want to support and advocate for students regarding any difficulties they are having, including grievances related to the items below, and encourage students to speak with faculty about their rights and possible ways to manage any problems in these areas. Where an applicable policy can be cited, that information is provided.

### **Rights Covered by Existing USM Policies**

#### **1. Institutional Environment**

**1.1** Right to respectful treatment by faculty members, colleagues, staff, and peers (See APA Ethics Code Principle E and USM's conduct policies).

- Expectations for conduct of faculty, staff, student employees (including GAs), and others on campus, as well as procedures for related complaints can be found in the Code of Ethical Conduct available in USM's policy database: <https://usm.policystat.com/> (PolicyStat ID: 7338966)
- There is also a specific Code of Student Conduct that may be relevant and is available through the Office of the Dean of Students: <https://www.usm.edu/dean-students/code-student-conduct.php>

**1.2** Right to have professional and personal information handled in a sensitive and respectful manner such that personal information is only disclosed when it is deemed necessary for educational or training purposes, and that students are informed prior to any such disclosure (See Ethical Standard 7.04).

- USM faculty and other employees are bound by the university's FERPA policy to handle student information sensitively and not disclose information about students to outside parties except in some limited circumstances. The policy, which indicates the appropriate office to report potential FERPA violations to, is available in the policy database: <https://usm.policystat.com/> (PolicyStat ID: 7298291)
- There may be rare exceptions in which a faculty member is legally required to disclose information of a personal nature. For example, if a student reports an event to a faculty member that falls under Title IX (e.g., sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking) or Clery Act (i.e., certain crimes that occur on campus), the faculty member would be required to report this information to university officials. Should faculty be required to disclose a student's information, the situation will be discussed with the student.
- Beyond this, faculty treat students as junior colleagues and respect their privacy to the extent possible. If it is necessary to discuss something of a personal or professional nature that is impacting a student's performance, faculty will do this in a respectful manner and limit the discussion to

individuals who need this information for training and/or educational purposes. Students' professional or personal information of a sensitive nature will not be discussed with other students.

## 2. Program Policies

**2.1** Right to publicly available, accurate, and up-to-date descriptions of costs, the availability of financial support, and the likelihood of ongoing support throughout training to be provided prior to or immediately following the program's interviews for prospective students (See Ethical Standard 7.02).

- Faculty provide information about current minimum Graduate Assistantship support levels during program interviews
- Additionally, information about tuition waivers, fees, and expected duration of funding can be found in our *Policy and Procedures Manual for Clinical Psychology Graduate Students* (hereafter: "Handbook") section 7 and on the USM Clinical Psychology website under "Student Outcomes, Admissions, and Other Data": <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-programs/psychology-clinical.php>
- Current USM tuition and fees are posted to the university website: <https://www.usm.edu/business-services/general-tuition-fees.php>, and the Graduate School has general information about financial support on their website: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-admissions/funding-resources.php>
- Actual stipend levels are set by the USM Administration when funding comes from USM sources (e.g., TA), by faculty PI and their funding agencies when the support comes from a grant, and through negotiation between faculty and clinical sites when funding comes from externships. All of these are not under the complete control of program faculty and are subject to change (see item 1.2 under aspirational rights for more information). However, we try our best to provide applicants and current students with accurate information about our expectations for funding. We also strive to provide students with information about any expected changes to their funding situation in a timely manner. Students receive a GA Contract at least once per year or upon a change in placement that indicates the salary and dates of hire for the position.

**2.2** Right to accurate and up-to-date information from research advisors and thesis/dissertation committee members on professional factors that could impact student training, career development, and timely program completion.

- Students are provided with feedback about professional factors through ongoing discussions with clinical and research supervisors. They also receive end of semester evaluations in Practicum and annual evaluations from the Clinical Training Committee that provide information about their professional development across multiple areas.
- In the event that there is an issue of notable concern such as a failure to follow program policies or to make sufficient progress to degree, students will receive feedback from faculty outside of scheduled evaluations. They may receive a warning, remediation plan, or other sanctions as noted in the Handbook (section 5).
- Our practices are consistent with APA's Ethics Code, including section 7 (education and training): <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>

**2.3** Right to access and exercise formal written policies regarding leave and accommodations as they pertain to pregnancy, parenting/caregiving, bereavement, medical or mental illness, and disability.

- Section 8 of the Handbook contains information about program policies regarding leaves of absence, short absences, and pregnancy/parenting
- The Graduate School also has information about requesting a leave on their website, including specific information about parental leave: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/leave-of-absence-policy.php>

**2.4** Right to access and exercise formal written policies and procedures regarding academic and placement/internship requirements, administrative procedures, evaluation, advisement, retention, average "time to degree," and termination (See Ethical Standard 7.02).

- The Handbook contains information about program requirements (sections 2, 3, & 4; Appendix B; Appendix F), administrative procedures (sections 5, 6, & 7), evaluation of students (sections 3, 4, & 5), advisement (section 2), and termination procedures (section 5). Program structure and expected time to degree information is found in Appendices B and F. Information about actual student retention and average time to degree is available on the website under "Student Outcomes, Admissions, and Other Data": <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-programs/psychology-clinical.php>
- CTC maintains information regarding number of clinical hours reported by prior students who were successful with the internship match which can be made available periodically and upon request.

**2.5** Right to express opinions and have representation on campus committees relevant to professional development, with voting privileges where appropriate.

- CTC supports students' abilities to express opinions and will advocate for students to have appropriate representation in relevant forums/committees in the university more broadly. CTC faculty members strive to promote free and open communication between faculty and students, both within and outside the program.
- All members of the program (faculty and students) are expected to express opinions in a respectful and professional manner.
- See the Handbook, section 1 (Overview) for information about CTC student representatives. Two students are elected by their peers each year to serve as CTC representatives, attend meetings with the CTC weekly, and serve as liaison with the DCT.

**2.6** Right to exemption from new graduation or program requirements, developed after admission, that might result in a delay of graduation, unless necessary for compliance with accreditation standards or state licensure laws.

- Students are expected to complete the plan of study that was in place when they joined the program. If program requirement changes are made during their course of study, students may request to move to the newer plan of study or remain on the one that was in place at the time of matriculation. As noted, there may be some cases where accreditation, legal, or other higher-level standards change and new requirements could be made of all students, regardless of term of admission.

### 3. Professional and Educational Training Opportunities

**3.1** Right to appropriate professional training (e.g., teaching, research, clinical practice) in the current standards and practices of the discipline and specialty area (See Ethical Standard 7.01).

- Students receive training in teaching, research, and clinical practice consistent with both their track (adult/child) and with a generalist model that allows for some clinical training across tracks. Our training is consistent with the APA Ethics Code guidelines for education and training (section 7).

**3.2** Right to be evaluated by faculty consistent with current ethical practices in employment, progression through the program, and grading, solely on the basis of academic performance, professional qualifications, and/or conduct (See Ethical Standard 7.06).

- Annual evaluations, semester evaluations, dissertation comprehensive exam scores, and class grades are done in a manner consistent with USM/program policies (outlined in our Handbook) and the APA Ethics Code guidelines for education and training (section 7). Across domains, CTC faculty conduct evaluations based solely on students' academic and clinical performance, professional qualifications, and relevant conduct in various settings (classroom, lab, Center for Behavioral Health, externships, etc.).

**3.3** Right to [quality mentorship](#).

- All faculty members on the CTC strive to provide quality mentorship. Consistent with the APAGS mentoring position statement (<http://www.apa.org/apags/issues/mentoring-position-statement.aspx>), mentorship relationships with students aim to include mutual respect, constructive feedback, support to meet program milestones and other requirements, discussions about professional and career development, and provision of relevant clinical and/or research and/or service opportunities.
- While students most often have a primary mentoring relationship with one faculty member, students are welcome to bring concerns to the DCT or any CTC faculty member for guidance. Office hours are provided at the start of each semester for all CTC faculty.
- Mentors and students are required to complete research agreement forms for all semesters in which students are enrolled in thesis or dissertation credit (PSY 698, PSY 898) as well as general research hours (PSY 791). These forms outline research expectations for the student and are maintained in student files.
- Lab expectations are specific to individual faculty members and may be managed/communicated in various ways. However, faculty members are encouraged to engage in conversations regarding expectations of the student and of the mentor at regular intervals and may choose to use more formal means to communicate these such as lab contracts or mentor/mentee agreements.
- Students are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the mentoring relationship to their mentors directly without fear of retaliation. Mentors are encouraged to solicit such feedback in an open and non-defensive manner. Feedback from all members of the program (faculty and students) should be provided in a professional and constructive manner. As noted above, students who are concerned about discussing difficulties with their mentor are encouraged to seek guidance from the DCT, another CTC member, or the School Director on how to navigate these conversations.
- The CTC may solicit program-wide feedback regarding mentoring relationships via climate surveys or other means. Individual faculty members may choose to implement lab-specific surveys of perceptions of faculty mentorship.
- While there is not a policy through which quality mentorship is defined or governed, should students feel they are receiving poor mentorship that has not improved after giving feedback to

their mentor, they may choose to discuss this with the DCT (or School Director, as appropriate) or follow procedures laid out below for subsequent rights.

**3.4 Right to change advisors and committee members for professional and personal needs.**

- In section 2 of the Handbook (under “Major Professor”) it states

*“In those rare cases in which a student wishes to identify a new major professor, the student should first discuss this change with both the current and prospective mentor. The student must next notify the DCT in writing. The DCT will contact the current and proposed major professor to confirm the proposed change in mentors and will then notify the CTC of this change.”*

- Committee members can be changed, provided the student’s major professor and the new committee member agree, by requesting a new Committee Request Form that will need to be approved by the Graduate School. New committee members who are from outside the program or USM will need to seek university approval for Associate Graduate Faculty Status. Committees must continue to meet composition policies for the program (Handbook, section 3) and the Graduate School (at least 50% current USM Graduate Faculty).

**3.5 Right to receive timely, ongoing feedback on all areas of trainee competency and the opportunity to address growth areas with support from faculty.**

- As noted above for right 2.2, students are provided with feedback about professional factors through ongoing discussions with clinical and research supervisors. They also receive end of semester evaluations in Practicum and annual evaluations that provide information about their professional development across multiple areas.

- In the event that there is an issue of notable concern, such as a failure to follow program policies, make sufficient progress to degree, or an ethical problem, students will receive feedback from faculty outside of scheduled evaluations. They may receive a warning, remediation plan, or other sanctions as noted in the Handbook (section 5).

- Our practices are consistent with APA’s Ethics Code, including section 7 (education and training): <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>

**3.6 Right to co-authorship in publications when the student has made significant contributions of ideas or research work (See Ethical Standards 8.11 and 8.12 a-c).**

- Faculty regularly include students as co-authors and support students in writing first author papers. Some labs may use procedures such as a pre-project authorship agreement or publication contract (examples: <https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2015/06/determining-authorship>).

- Specific authorship procedures within each lab are up to the discretion of the faculty member and authorship conventions vary across labs, universities, and fields. Students are encouraged to have conversations about authorship with their mentor (or other senior investigator if collaborating outside of the lab) to develop a shared understanding of authorship expectations early on in the research process.

**3.7 Right to freely communicate and collaborate with other academic colleagues.**



- Communicating with academic colleagues who have similar interests (e.g., at a conference) is a fundamental component of professional development for students and faculty alike. These conversations can expand our research programs and connections to the field.
- The program expects that a student representing USM (e.g., presenting data from a study collected using USM resources and/or with a USM faculty member) should include relevant authors, including their major professor, and should gain the approval of the major professor before submitting a conference abstract or manuscript.
- As noted in the Handbook (section 2), we have a policy of working with researchers outside of your major professor's lab (including those at other universities):  
*"students should obtain approval from their major professor before volunteering for additional work in another professor's lab to ensure that they do not become too overloaded and are staying on track for their independent research projects."*
- If a student is on track in the program and has the approval of their major professor, they are encouraged to collaborate with other researchers, with or without their primary mentor's involvement, in order to advance their research training and opportunities.

**3.8** Right to lead, assemble, and participate in organizations and activities outside the academic program (e.g., intramural teams, university clubs, community organizations).

- Students are welcome to pursue such activities in their personal life (e.g., intramural team) and encouraged to do so in their professional life (e.g., student representative to a scientific organization outside of USM). The faculty do not view students' outside involvement as under our purview in most circumstances; however, if a student is not meeting expectations in the program due to inability to manage program responsibilities along with other professional or personal pursuits, faculty may advise or require that a student reduce other commitments.

**3.9** Right to wellness and to engage in self-care as a routine practice throughout training (See Ethical Standards 3.05 and 3.06).

- The faculty are supportive of our student's well-being and encourage students to regularly engage in self-care. The faculty recognize that graduate school is a busy and stressful time and encourage students to develop good time management skills and self-awareness so that they may regularly engage in self-care.
- Faculty are open to discussions of self-care and sensitive to the delicate balance that program members must strike, given our many responsibilities. If students are experiencing difficulties finding time for self-care or managing their responsibilities, they are encouraged to discuss these concerns with their mentor or a supervisor.
- A list of mental health resources for graduate students is maintained by the program and available to students. This list will be distributed to students on a yearly basis, but is also available whenever needed by reaching out to the DCT or your major professor. Faculty are available to help assist students or their loved ones in getting connected with mental health resources.

**4. Work Environment**

**4.1** Right for students providing services during training (e.g., teaching, research, clinical, and administrative graduate assistantships) to enjoy the recognitions, rights, privileges, and protections afforded to employees under state, provincial, territorial, and national labor laws.

- Graduate Assistants at USM are subject to the same guidelines and protections afforded to non-student university employees. These include but are not limited to policies enforced by these units:
- USM's Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity covers needs for accommodation and concerns about discrimination related to being a member of a protected group:  
<https://www.usm.edu/affirmative-action-equal-employment/aaeeo-policies.php>
- USM's Title IX Office can be a resource for concerns related harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or pregnancy and parenting status:  
<https://www.usm.edu/title-ix/index.php>
- Graduate Assistants employed on outside funding (e.g., externship, external grant) could be subject to additional or slightly different policies depending on the requirements of that agency. Students with questions about this should consult the appropriate supervisor and/or DCT.

**4.2** Right to study and work in an environment free of exploitation, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on one's student status, race, ethnicity, skin color, national origin, religion, political beliefs, economic status, age, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, disability, medical or mental health conditions, ancestry, citizenship, military veteran status, or any other identity salient to the individual in admissions and throughout education, employment, and placement (See Principle E and Ethical Standards 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.08).

- As noted above in 4.1, these issues are dealt with by the following USM units:
- USM's Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity: <https://www.usm.edu/affirmative-action-equal-employment/aaeeo-policies.php>
- USM's Title IX Office: <https://www.usm.edu/title-ix/index.php>
- Students are encouraged, but not required, to discuss concerns related to this with the DCT or other program faculty to get support and guidance in these matters.

**4.3** Right to work under clearly expressed and mutually agreed-upon job descriptions and work or training conditions.

- Graduate Assistantships are covered in the Handbook in section 7 in general terms. Specific assignments are made each year and, after the first year, students review job descriptions sent out by the Externship Coordinator and rank their choices based on this information. Additional conversations about expectations for each position are generally undertaken by the faculty/field supervisor and the student before or at the beginning of the position.
- Graduate Assistants also receive a Graduate School Memorandum for Assistantship Award annually from the School of Psychology noting their rate of pay, dates of work, and requirements and expectations of a Graduate Assistant.
- If there is a concern in this area that cannot be resolved via direct conversations with a student's supervisor, concerns about externship conditions should generally be directed to the Externship Coordinator and concerns about School or Psychology or grant-funded placements should be directed to the DCT and/or the School Director.

**4.4** Right to perform only those tasks that relate to academic program requirements, professional development, and/or job duties.

- Graduate assistantships are developed and managed by faculty to ensure that they support student training. Other tasks that students engage in involving teaching, research, and clinical practice are closely connected to their career development. Assistantships vary in terms of required tasks, but all provide opportunities for professional growth as a psychologist-in-training and support the mission of the School of Psychology.
- As noted above, concerns about externship conditions should generally be directed to the Externship Coordinator, and concerns about School of Psychology or grant-funded placements should be directed to the DCT and/or the School Director. Concerns about being asked to perform other tasks that are clearly outside the scope of your training requirements (e.g., picking up your supervisor's dry cleaning) should also be directed to the DCT and/or the School Director.

**4.5** Right to provide constructive and professional feedback to supervisors, directors, administrators, and staff concerning the quality and content of supervision.

- Students provide feedback about clinical supervision via the semester feedback survey. Students can also include feedback about research supervision and courses in faculty teaching evaluations.
- If a student has concerns about their direct supervisor or a staff member that cannot be resolved via conversation with the relevant person, they should speak to the DCT and/or the School Director. If a student has concerns about the DCT they should speak to the School Director or Associate Director. If there are concerns about other levels of administration the student can be counseled about the appropriate person to go to by the DCT, School Director, or Associate Director.

## 5. Appeals and Grievances

**5.1** Right to clearly defined official grievance procedures and informal complaint procedures.

- Information regarding appeals, grievances, and other policies at the program level are in the Handbook, section 8.
- More information regarding appeals and grievances can be found at the following websites:
  - Student grievance processes: <https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/carescomplaintsgrievancesappeals.php>
  - Office of Student Outreach and Support: <https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/student-outreach-support.php>
  - Office of the Provost: <https://www.usm.edu/provost>
  - Graduate School grievance policy: <https://usm.policystat.com/policy/10628161/latest/>
- As described at the end of this document, it is recommended that conversations on these topics are directed to the DCT, School Director, or Associate Director for guidance about appropriate steps. Students are not required to consult with program or School faculty/staff prior to filing a complaint or grievance; we offer this to support students so that they may direct their complaint appropriately in a large university system.

**5.2** Right to whistleblower protection for exposing professional, ethical, or legal violations (See Ethical Standard 1.08).

- Whistleblowing may be necessary if a situation violates the APA Code of Ethics or for other reasons. Information regarding USM's whistleblower protection policy can be found here: <https://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-pres-gc-001>

### **5.3 Right to due process for any accusation of violation or infraction.**

- Students are afforded due process through various university appeals and grievance procedures, as outlined in each specific policy (see links for 5.1 above)
- Of note, faculty participate in procedures regarding due process governed by the above policies and as defined in the Faculty Handbook. Consistent with departmental and university policies outlined in the Faculty Handbook, faculty may not make unilateral decisions regarding a student's status in the program and all matters regarding violations or infractions will bring in varying levels of governance as necessary (CTC, School Director, Dean, etc.)

### **5.4 Right to be free of reprisals for exercising the rights contained in this document (See Ethical Standard 1.08).**

- Students will not be penalized in overt or covert ways for exercising the rights outlined in this document. The CTC developed this Appendix as a show of our support for the rights herein.

Resources and additional information regarding these student rights and other general student responsibilities can be found in:

- This Handbook
- The Department of Psychology Graduate Student Handbook (on the School of Psychology SharePoint)
- The Graduate Bulletin: <https://catalog.usm.edu/content.php?catoid=27&navoid=1650>

## **Aspirational Rights**

### **1.1 Right to affordable insurance inclusive of health and mental health care coverage.**

- Current USM-specific health insurance policies are determined at the university level and subject to change. Program faculty advocate for affordable, comprehensive coverage but do not have decision-making authority. The health insurance information for the current year can be found on the HR website: <https://www.usm.edu/employment-human-resources/ga-ra-international-student-information.php>

### **1.2 Right to fair compensation proportional to cost of living for services provided during training (e.g., graduate, teaching, and research assistantships).**

- As noted in 2.1, stipend levels are set by the USM Administration when funding comes from USM sources (e.g., TA), by faculty PI and their funding agencies when the support comes from a grant, and through negotiation between faculty and clinical sites when funding comes from externships. Faculty do not have control over USM stipend rates and policies are subject to change. The Dean of the Graduate School sets minimum GA stipend rates and allocates funding to College Deans for

dissemination to Schools. Thus, School of Psychology GA hiring policies and budget are stipend rates established and overseen by the Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences. However, we try our best to provide applicants and current students with accurate information about our expectations for funding.

- Students will be informed of their compensation each year in writing via the Graduate School Memorandum of Award, though compensation is subject to change if the source of the funding changes in some manner (e.g., externship site funding decreases) or if the student needs to change positions (e.g., for unsatisfactory performance). Faculty advocate for fair compensation whenever possible.

### **Violations of Rights**

Many of the rights listed above are associated with specific program or USM policies already in existence. If a student feels that there is a violation of one (or more) of these rights, they should first try to resolve things directly with the person(s) about whose behavior they are concerned. If that does not produce a satisfactory outcome, the student should follow the information presented below the relevant right to determine the best person/office to speak with. If not otherwise indicated, grievances or concerns associated with the rights listed in this document should be directed to the DCT in most cases, as the DCT has the responsibility to manage concerns that impact students and should be a resource in these cases. This could be done verbally initially, if desirable, or else written in an email. If the DCT is involved in the reason for the concern, or otherwise not the preferred option for the student, the student may also approach the School Director or Associate Director. It is unlikely that both the School Director and the Associate Director would be faculty from the Clinical Psychology program in any given year, so having these options available allows the student to consult with someone outside the program if needed. Although it is desirable to resolve issues within the School of Psychology given a shared understanding of the program's goals and requirements, should a student feel that they are unable to discuss their concern with any faculty from the School of Psychology, the Office of Student Outreach and Support is available. Information about the Office of Student Outreach and Support can be found at the following link:

<https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/student-outreach-support.php>

Sanctions for program members (faculty or students) related to violations of these rights are determined by the associated USM, School of Psychology, or program policies listed above and if not otherwise indicated would be imposed by the CTC (for students) or the person's direct supervisor (for faculty).

## APPENDIX B: CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM GENERAL FIVE-YEAR COURSE PLAN

### Important Notes:

- All *in-residence students* will register for **9 to 13 hours total** during each regular academic semester (Fall and Spring).
  - Of these 9 to 13 hours, each student (depending on other course load) will have anywhere from 1 to 9 hours of research. Research hours will be a combination of PSY 691 and/or PSY 698 if *pre-masters* or a combination of PSY 791 and/or PSY 898 if *post-masters*. Students need to register for the combination of research hours **as advised**.
  - Students must register for 9 to 13 hours to ensure their tuition waiver. 13 hours is standard.
- All *in-residence students* must register for Summer semester hours. Summer hours will vary from 1 to 3 hours depending on year in the program and internship start date. It is imperative to register for the number of hours **as advised** because tuition waivers are hour-specific for each student depending on course requirements.
- *Students entering the program with their master's degree* will have some modifications as follows:
  - These students begin with PSY 791/PSY 898 for research credits. These students do not take PSY 691 or PSY 698 at USM. In the first semester, these students register for 3 hours of PSY 791–Research in Psychology.
  - These students can waive up to 2 courses (6 hours) and would have a modified schedule accordingly. USM will not permit transfer of graduate courses taken as part of a completed degree program, although up to 6 hours of such courses may be waived. Please note that waived courses will not show on your doctoral transcript.
- The sample course sequencing below assumes students will take content courses as quickly as possible (note: there are some variations in course content load for adult and child students due to timing of offerings for these concentration areas). Any student may have modifications to the sample course sequencing based on course offerings or otherwise delaying course content to a later semester after consultation with the DCT and major professor.
- All *off-site students* (even if not yet on internship) must register for a minimum of 1 hour for Fall semester and 1 hour for Spring semester to maintain continuous enrollment. Otherwise, the student will have to apply for readmission with the Graduate School (for a fee). Off-site students do **not** have to be enrolled during Summer semester to maintain continuous enrollment (but do have to enroll for PSY 881–Internship in Clinical Psychology during their final summer semester of internship).
  - Students who are in the program 5+ years **BEFORE internship** would have extra research hours (either PSY 791 or PSY 898) in Year 5, etc. (**as advised**).

**Important Notes (continued):**

- *All students* must register for at least 1 hour of PSY 698–Thesis/PSY 898-Dissertation during the semester that they **defend** the thesis or dissertation. If the document is not completely finalized with the Document Specialist by the graduation deadlines for the current semester, the student will need to register for an additional 1 hour of PSY 698–Thesis/PSY 898-Dissertation for the subsequent semester. Your committee chair cannot enter a grade (“P” [pass]) for PSY 698-Thesis/PSY 898-Dissertation until your document is fully accepted and approved by the Graduate School. Note that in order to graduate with the master’s or doctoral degree at the end of the defense semester, the student must successfully orally defend and submit the document to the Document Specialist by the deadlines set forth by the Graduate School. Defense and initial submission deadlines typically occur in March, June, or October (see Graduate School website for a current list of deadlines).
- *All students on internship* typically register for 1 hour of PSY 881 in Fall, Spring, and Summer. If the student has an early start date and was not enrolled in PSY 782 during the summer, they may be asked to enroll in 1 hour of PSY 881 during the first summer of internship. However, even if a student’s internship ends August 31<sup>st</sup>, the student takes the third (and last) hour of PSY 881 in Summer semester [in this case, students are assigned an Incomplete (I), which is changed to the actual grade following completion of the internship.]

**Sample Course Sequencing:****FIRST YEAR*****Fall Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 777-Psychological Disorders of Childhood <b>OR</b> (depending on offerings for semester)	3	PSY 777-Psychological Disorders of Childhood <b>OR</b> (depending on offerings for semester)	3
PSY 780-Adult Psychopathology		PSY 780-Adult Psychopathology	
PSY 641-Adult Cognitive Assessment	3	PSY 642 - Psychoeducational Assessment I	3
REF 762 – Quantitative Analysis II	3	REF 762 – Quantitative Analysis II	3
PSY 701-Teaching of Psychology Seminar	1	PSY 701-Teaching of Psychology Seminar	1
Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898	3	Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898	3
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>

***Spring Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
REF 830 Multivariate Analysis	3	REF 830 Multivariate Analysis	3
PSY 661-Research Evaluation	3	PSY 661-Research Evaluation	3
PSY 736-Introduction to Clinical Skills	3	PSY 736-Introduction to Clinical Skills	3
PSY 742-Empirically Supported Tx of Adults <b>OR</b> (depending on offerings for semester)	3	PSY 734-Child Behavior Therapy <b>OR</b> (depending on offerings for semester)	3
PSY 740 Objective Personality Assessment		PSY 640-Beh/Emot Assessment of Children	
PSY 791/ 698 <b>OR</b> 791/ 898	1	PSY 791/ 698 <b>OR</b> 791/ 898	1
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>

***Summer Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (Junior – child)	1	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (Junior – adult)	1
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>1</b>

**SECOND YEAR*****Fall Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 777-Psychological Disorders of Childhood <b>OR</b> (depending on course taken first year)	3	PSY 777-Psychological Disorders of Childhood <b>OR</b> (depending on course taken first year)	3
PSY 780-Adult Psychopathology		PSY 780-Adult Psychopathology	
PSY 607 Ethics and Current Issues	3	PSY 607 Ethics and Current Issues	3
PSY 768-Psychometric Theory	3	PSY 768-Psychometric Theory	3
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (Assessment - adult)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (Assessment - child)	3
PSY 791/698 <b>OR</b> 791/898	1	PSY 791/698 <b>OR</b> 791/898	1
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>13</b>



### ***Spring Semester***

<b><u>Adult Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>	<b><u>Child Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>
PSY 742-Empirically Supported Tx of Adults <b>OR</b> (depending on course taken first year)	3	PSY 734-Child Behavior Therapy <b>OR</b> (depending on course taken first year)	3
PSY 740 Objective Personality Assessment		PSY 640-Beh/Emot Assessment of Children	
PSY 679-Advanced Developmental	3	PSY 679-Advanced Developmental	3
PSY 750-Social Psychology	3	PSY 750-Social Psychology	3
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3
PSY 791/698 <b>OR</b> 791/898	1	PSY 791/698 <b>OR</b> 791/898	1
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>

### ***Summer Semester***

<b><u>Adult Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>	<b><u>Child Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>

### **THIRD YEAR**

#### ***Fall Semester***

<b><u>Adult Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>	<b><u>Child Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>
PSY 624-Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience	3	PSY 624-Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience	3
PSY 716-Cognition and Emotion	3	PSY 716-Cognition and Emotion	3
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3
Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	4	Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	4
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>

#### ***Spring Semester***

<b><u>Adult Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>	<b><u>Child Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>
PSY 734-Child Behavior Therapy	3	PSY 742-Empirically Supported Tx of Adults (if offered)	3
PSY 718-History of Psychology	3	PSY 718-History of Psychology	3
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3
Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	4	Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	4
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>

#### ***Summer Semester***

<b><u>Adult Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>	<b><u>Child Concentration</u></b>	<b><u>Hrs</u></b>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>

**FOURTH YEAR*****Fall Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (child)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (adult)	3
PSY 613-Cultural Bases of Behavior	3	PSY 613-Cultural Bases of Behavior	3
Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	7	Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	7
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>

***Spring Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (either)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (either)	3
		PSY 742-Empirically Supported Tx of Adults (if not taken in 3 <sup>rd</sup> year)	3
Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	10	Combination of PSY 791 &/or 698 <b>OR</b> 791 &/or 898 (or some Elective hours)	7-10
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>

***Summer Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (either)	3	PSY 782-Clinical Practicum (either)	3
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>

**FIFTH YEAR \******Fall Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1	PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>

***Spring Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1	PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>

***Summer Semester***

<u>Adult Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Child Concentration</u>	<u>Hrs</u>
PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1	PSY 881-Internship in Clinical Psychology	1
<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>	<b><i>TOTAL HOURS</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>

\* Student must register for 1 hour of PSY 898–Dissertation during the semester that the dissertation is defended. Student may need to register for an additional 1 hour of PSY 898–Dissertation for the semester following the defense semester if previous semester’s graduation defense dates were missed.

**APPENDIX C: CLINICAL ADVISING FORM**

Student name \_\_\_\_\_ ID Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Year entered \_\_\_\_\_ Concentration \_\_\_\_\_ Major professor \_\_\_\_\_

Course	Course Title	Semester Taken (include current)	Grade	Notes (e.g., waived/transferred, substituted)
PSY 607	Ethics and Current Issues			
PSY 613	Cultural Bases of Behavior			
PSY 624 <sup>c</sup>	Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience			
PSY 640 <sup>a</sup>	Beh/Emot Assessment of Children			
PSY 641	Cognitive Assessment			
PSY 661 <sup>b</sup>	Research Evaluation			
REF 762 <sup>b</sup>	Quantitative Analysis II			
REF 830 <sup>b</sup>	Multivariate Analysis			
PSY 679 <sup>c</sup>	Advanced Developmental Psychology			
PSY 701	Teaching of Psychology Seminar			
PSY 718	History of Modern Psychology			
PSY 716 <sup>c</sup>	Cognition and Emotion			
PSY 734	Child Behavior Therapy			
PSY 736	Introduction to Clinical Skills			
PSY 740 <sup>a</sup>	Objective Personality Assessment			
PSY 742	Empirically Supported Tx of Adults			
PSY 750 <sup>c</sup>	Advanced Social Psychology			
PSY 768	Psychometric Theory			
PSY 777	Child Psychopathology			
PSY 780	Advanced Psychopathology			
PSY 881	Internship in Clinical Psychology			

**Note.** Use blank lines above for electives or other courses required under your handbook year. Use back if necessary.  
<sup>a</sup>Most students take either PSY 640 (if child) or PSY 740 (if adult); put N/A for the other course if not taking as an elective; <sup>b</sup>Course is required for your M.A. degree; <sup>c</sup> Three of four of these courses are required for your M.A. degree.

**PSY 782 – Clinical Practicum**

Child or Adult	Supervisor	Semester Taken (include current)	Grade	Notes (e.g., externship only; no clinic clients)

**Note.** Use back if needed for additional semesters.

PSY 782 – Clinical Practicum (cont'd)

Child or Adult	Supervisor	Semester Taken (include current)	Grade	Notes (e.g., externship only; no clinic clients)

Thesis prospectus \_\_\_\_\_ Thesis defended \_\_\_\_\_ Diss Proposed (Comps A) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Thesis proposed \_\_\_\_\_ Case Conference (Comps B) \_\_\_\_\_ Diss Defended \_\_\_\_\_

PRE-MASTER'S

PSY 691 – Research				PSY 698 – Thesis (need 3)		
Semester	# Hours	Grade		Semester	# Hours	Grade

POST-MASTER'S

PSY 791 – Research				PSY 898 – Dissertation (need 9)		
Semester	# Hours	Grade		Semester	# Hours	Grade

## APPENDIX D: THESIS PROSPECTUS

*A total of 2 pages maximum; single-spaced; 1-inch margins; 12 point font; you must include the section headers but not the additional instructional details; you must include the signature line; any figure or table counts in the 2-page limit; citations should be made in the text but a reference list is not required.*

### **I. Aims/Goals**

Briefly describe the aim/goals of the project. What question(s) will this study help to answer? [One paragraph]

### **II. Rationale**

Provide a brief rationale for the proposed study. Why is the study worth pursuing? How will it contribute to the literature? You will probably want to cite some relevant studies here, but this should not be an exhaustive literature review. [Two paragraphs]

### **III. Hypotheses**

What do you expect to find? [One paragraph]

### **IV. Method**

Briefly discuss the design of the study. Detail your methods and procedures (including the types of measures you plan to use, even if you have not yet selected specific instruments). Identify the source of your data: Who will the participants be, from where will they be sampled, and how many participants will you need? How will the design of the study allow you to answer the question(s) from Part I? [Two paragraphs]

### **V. Proposed Analyses**

How will you analyze the data? What statistics do you anticipate using? [One paragraph]

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Approved: Director of Clinical Training

---

Date

## APPENDIX E: THESIS/DISSERTATION PROPOSAL COVER MEMO

(A copy should be given to each committee member as a cover memo when distributing a thesis or dissertation PROPOSAL for committee review)

### The University of Southern Mississippi Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program

TO: <committee members>

FROM: < committee chair>

DATE:

RE: <student's name> Document

Check one:  Thesis  Dissertation

Attached is a copy of this student's document for your inspection. Please read it and return your comments directly to me by \_\_\_\_\_ if possible, which allows two weeks for review. The student will schedule the formal committee meeting **after** the two-week review period, pending all committee members agree that the meeting can be held at that time.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. The document appears to be ready for a formal committee meeting. My corrections are indicated in the manuscript, which will be provided after the meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Significant modifications should be addressed at the meeting. I am providing feedback now, but I do not need to see another revision of the document before scheduling a formal committee meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Major modifications or revisions are needed to the document. I am providing feedback now, and I would prefer to see another revision of the document **before** scheduling a formal committee meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Other disposition (see comments below).

Comments for b, c, or d (use back as necessary, or provide comments in the document):

**APPENDIX F: CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM MILESTONE TIMELINE GUIDELINES**

Requirement	Deadline	Consequence if Missed
Thesis Prospectus Approved	May 1 of first year	<b>WARNING</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she did not meet the expected deadline for the thesis prospectus, which also will be reflected in the student's annual evaluation.
	Aug 31 of second year	<b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she failed to meet expectations for research, which will be documented in the student's annual evaluation for the research category. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT.
Thesis Proposal Approved	Jan 31 of second year	<b>WARNING</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she did not meet the expected deadline for the thesis proposal, which also will be reflected in the student's annual evaluation.
	May 1 of second year	<b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she failed to meet expectations for research, which will be documented in the student's annual evaluation for the research category. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT.



Appendix F: Program Milestone Timeline (continued)

Requirement	Deadline	Consequence if Missed
Thesis Final Defense Approved	Aug 1 of second year	<b>SUGGESTED GUIDELINE</b> Guideline for the student, but no consequence if not met.
	October 15 of third year	<b>WARNING</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she did not meet the expected deadline for thesis defense, which will be reflected in the student's annual evaluation.
	January 31 of third year	<b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she failed to meet expectations for research, which will be documented in the student's annual evaluation for the research category. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT. The CTC may modify the student's schedule (e.g., no practicum or reduced client load) to free up time to complete the thesis.
	May 1 of third year	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b> Depending on the circumstances, the CTC will develop another <b>remediation plan</b> <sup>a</sup> or terminate the student from the program.
	August 1 of third year	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW/FUNDING WITHDRAWN/NO CLASS REGISTRATION</b> Barring extraordinary circumstances, the student will be terminated from the program or allowed to continue in the program but only allowed to register for 1 hr (PSY 698-Thesis). If the student remains in the program, he/she will not be allowed to participate in practicum or externship and will receive no funding (again, barring extraordinary circumstances). Likewise, another written <b>remediation plan</b> <sup>a</sup> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT.
	Dec 1 of fourth year	<b>TERMINATION</b> Barring extraordinary circumstances, the student will be terminated from the program at this time.

Appendix F: Program Milestone Timeline (continued)

Requirement	Deadline	Consequence if Missed
Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Clinical Case Conference portion	Spring of third year	<p>The student will be automatically scheduled for the clinical case conference portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam in Spring of third year. Students planning to stay a fifth year may petition the CTC to defer the clinical case conference until Spring of fourth year.</p> <p>The student must pass the doctoral comprehensive exam to apply for internship. If a student fails the first clinical case conference or first clinical case conference follow-up <sup>b</sup>, the student's status will be changed to <b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> for the doctoral comprehensive exam, which will be documented in the student's annual evaluation for coursework. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT.</p>
Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Dissertation Proposal portion	October 1 of application year	<p>The student must pass the doctoral comprehensive exam to apply for internship. See more about this portion of the exam in dissertation proposal section below. The student can attempt a second dissertation proposal by November 1 and still apply for internship if passed. <b>NOTE:</b> The student must pass the clinical case conference portion and the dissertation proposal portion of the doctoral comprehensive exam to successfully pass the exam. See the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam section of the Handbook.</p>
Dissertation Proposal (to apply for internship) Proposal Distributed  Proposal Meeting	September 1 of fourth year  October 1 of fourth year	<p>The student cannot apply for internship and will have to wait for a subsequent year to apply for internship.</p> <p>If the initial proposal is failed, the student must successfully propose (have project approved) by November 1 of application year. The student cannot apply for internship until the dissertation is successfully proposed.</p>

Appendix F: Program Milestone Timeline (continued)

Dissertation Proposal Meeting (to remain in good standing)	October 1 of fourth year	<b>WARNING</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she did not meet the expected deadline for dissertation proposal, which will be reflected in the student's annual evaluation.
	May 1 of fourth year	<b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she failed to meet expectations for research, which will be documented in the student's annual evaluation for the research category. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT. The CTC may modify the student's schedule and/or sanctioned employment to free up time to complete the dissertation proposal.
	September 1 of fifth year	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b> Depending on the circumstances, the CTC will develop another <b>remediation plan</b> <sup>a</sup> or terminate the student from the program.
Dissertation Final Defense Approved	Summer, prior to the first day of internship	<b>SUGGESTED GUIDELINE</b> Guideline for the student, but no consequence if not met.
	Internship completion	<b>WARNING</b> The student remains in good standing but will receive a letter that documents the timeframe for completion to avoid a change in program status.
	End of semester immediately post-internship	<b>FAILS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS</b> The student will receive a letter that documents that he/she failed to meet expectations for research. A written <b>remediation plan</b> will be developed in collaboration with the student, the major professor, and the DCT.
	One academic year post-internship <sup>c</sup>	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b> Depending on the circumstances, the CTC will (a) develop another <b>remediation plan</b> <sup>a</sup> or terminate the student from the program.

**NOTE:** These requirements and deadlines are guidelines with which students are typically expected to comply. The CTC recognizes that unexpected life events and exceptional circumstances do occasionally occur. Therefore, the CTC maintains the authority to modify these deadlines and consequences as necessary to accommodate unusual circumstances (e.g., leave of absence, medical problems, death of a loved one, requirement to extend training timeline if not in good standing) of individual students based on the consensus of the faculty.

Under certain circumstances, and in consultation with the student, the CTC may determine that a formal leave of absence (arranged through the Graduate School) is appropriate for the student.

Students receive a grade in PSY 698 and PSY 898 of S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory) each semester until the project is completed. If a student fails to maintain satisfactory progress on thesis or dissertation projects for 2 semesters, **they may be dismissed by the Graduate School regardless of the deadlines set forth in this document.**

Any student receiving a status change to fails to meet expectations or who has a termination review will be provided with a written remediation plan that outlines the steps that need to be taken (with timeline) to get back in good standing with the program.

<sup>a</sup> Each written remediation plan following a **termination review** will require an **automatic termination review** at the end of the semester to re-evaluate the student's status (or at an earlier date if an earlier review date is specified in the remediation plan).

<sup>b</sup> See the *Doctoral Comprehensive Examination* section of this document regarding follow-up clinical case conference or second clinical case conference (if first clinical case conference or first clinical case conference follow-up are not passed).

<sup>c</sup> For students who complete their internship late in their training (particularly those who entered the program with a master's degree and, thus, their doctoral clock began their first year), the eight calendar year limit set forth by the Graduate School may supersede this dissertation milestone timeline. If so, students' coursework will expire and they will have to petition for a revalidation exam and pay a revalidation fee (see the *Graduate Bulletin* for more details).

### Clinical Psychology PhD Program Milestone Guidelines – Cheat Sheet

Requirement	Deadline	Consequence if Missed
<b>Thesis</b>		
Thesis Prospectus Approved	May 1 of 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	<b>WARNING</b>
	Aug 31 (beginning) of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	<b>FTME</b>
Thesis Proposal Approved	Jan 31 of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	<b>WARNING</b>
	May 1 of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	<b>FTME</b>
Thesis Final Defense Approved	Aug 1 (end) of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	<b>Suggested Guideline</b>
	Oct 15 of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	<b>WARNING</b>
	Jan 31 of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	<b>FTME</b>
	May 1 of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b>
	Aug 1 (end) of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	<b>TERM REVIEW/FUNDING WITHDRAWN/NO CLASS REGISTRATION</b>
	Dec 1 of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year	<b>TERMINATION</b>
<b>Doctoral Comprehensive Exam</b>		
Case Conference Portion	Spring of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	<b>FTME/can't apply for internship*</b>
Dissertation Proposal Portion	Oct 1 of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year	<b>Can't apply for internship*</b>
<b>Dissertation</b>		
<i>To apply to internship:</i>		
Proposal Distributed	Sept 1 of Application Year	<b>Can't apply for internship*</b>
Proposal Meeting	Oct 1 of Application Year	<b>Can't apply for internship*</b>
<i>Program expectations:</i>		
Dissertation Proposal Meeting	Oct 1 of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year	<b>WARNING</b>
	May 1 of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year	<b>FTME</b>
	Sept 1 of 5 <sup>th</sup> Year	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b>
Dissertation Final Defense Approved	Summer, prior to starting internship	<b>Suggested Guideline</b>
	Internship completion	<b>WARNING</b>
	End of semester immediately post-internship	<b>FTME</b>
	One academic year post-internship	<b>TERMINATION REVIEW</b>

Notes: FTME = Fails to meet expectations. The academic year begins at the start of the semester, which is typically mid-August, so August 31<sup>st</sup> would fall at the start of the year and August 1<sup>st</sup> would fall at the end of the year. These are guidelines for the standard plan in the program; faculty will use judgment when applying them for students who are on a longer than 4-year plan at USM or who otherwise have a unique situation. \*The Doctoral Comprehensive Exam must be passed (including successful proposal of the dissertation) before a student can apply for internship (in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year); students planning a 5<sup>th</sup> year may request to delay the case conference to the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

## APPENDIX G: CLINICAL CASE CONFERENCE EVALUATION FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

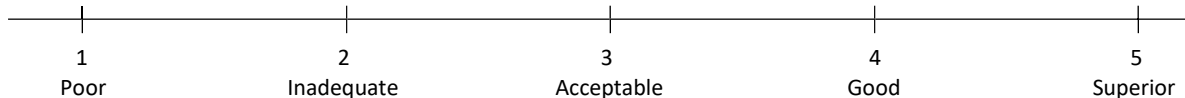
Date of Clinical Case Conference: \_\_\_\_\_ Rater: \_\_\_\_\_

*Each attending faculty member will complete this form independently. Ratings will be aggregated across faculty to calculate average dimension scores and a grand mean. For each of the 11 items, place an "X" on the line to represent the student's performance (from 1-Poor to 5-Superior) on that dimension during clinical case conference.*

*Please note that Items 1-8 assess core domains of competency and are rated as part of the student's Comprehensive Exam Part B score. Items 9-11 evaluate general presentation skills but do not factor into the student's Comprehensive Exam Part B score. Provide qualitative feedback for strengths, areas for improvement, and overall assessment of clinical case conference performance.*

### Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Part B

1. Objective intake or assessment data were summarized clearly and integrated into case conceptualization.



2. Case conceptualization was clear and communicated precipitating factors as well as factors contributing to the maintenance of symptoms (including sufficient and relevant background information).

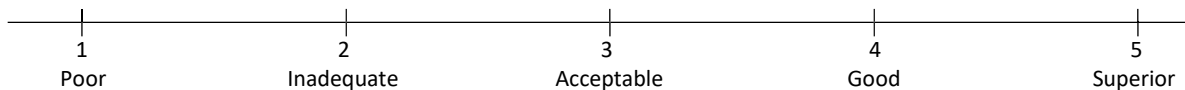


3. Treatment or assessment recommendations followed directly from the objective data and case conceptualization.



4. Therapy: Student described therapeutic progress and response of client to treatment.

Assessment: Student described approach to assessment feedback and response of client.

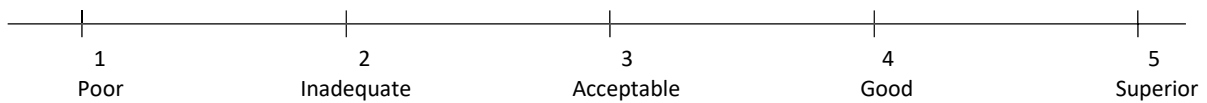


5. Therapy: Student described anticipated or encountered barriers to treatment and plans to overcome them.

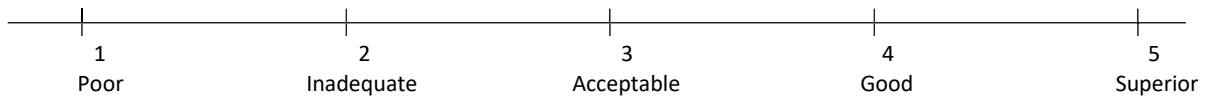
Assessment: Student described anticipated or encountered barriers to the assessment process or recommendations given and plans to overcome them.



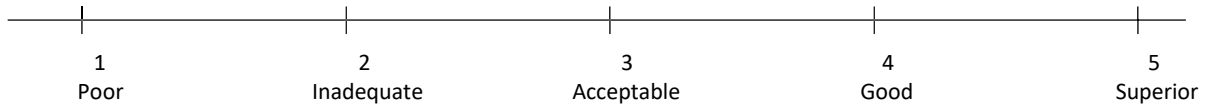
6. Student described the rationale (i.e., evidence base & decision-making process) for their assessment battery and/or treatment approach.



7. Student discussed how cultural factors influenced their approach to assessment, case conceptualization and/or treatment.

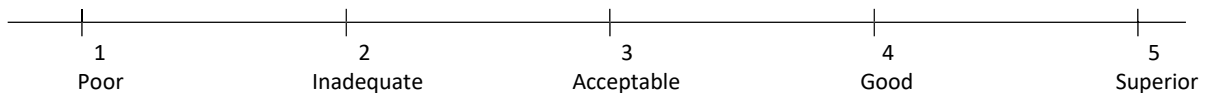


8. Student described ethical considerations relevant to their assessment, case conceptualization, and/or treatment approach.

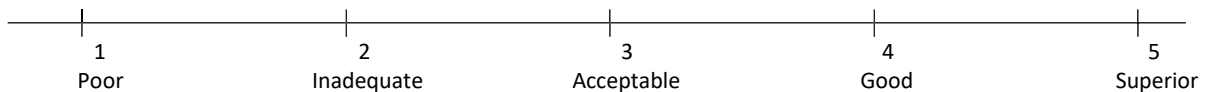


**Presentation Skills (Scores do not contribute to Comprehensive Exam Part B)**

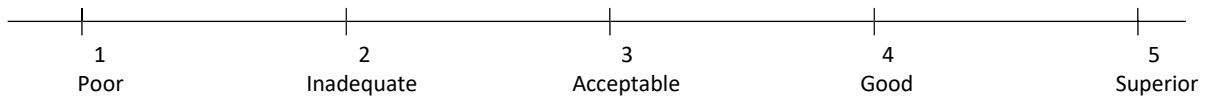
9. Visual presentation of client information was clear.



10. Preparation and ability to discuss the case with ease (e.g., not just read from slides/notes).



11. Student's response to faculty questions.



Qualitative Feedback

Strengths displayed by the student during the clinical case conference:

Areas of improvement based on student's performance during the clinical case conference:

Overall assessment of student's clinical case conference performance:



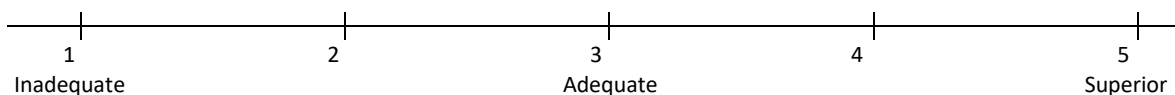
**APPENDIX H: DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM: DISSERTATION PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORM**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dissertation Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

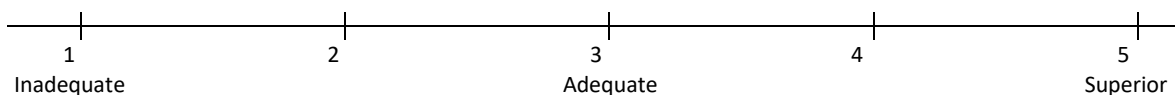
**Date of Dissertation Proposal:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Rater:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Each attending dissertation committee member will complete this form independently. Ratings will be aggregated across faculty to calculate average dimension scores and a grand mean. For each item, place an "X" on the line to represent the students' performance (from 1-Inadequate to 5-Superior) on that dimension as reflected in the written dissertation proposal and the oral proposal meeting.*

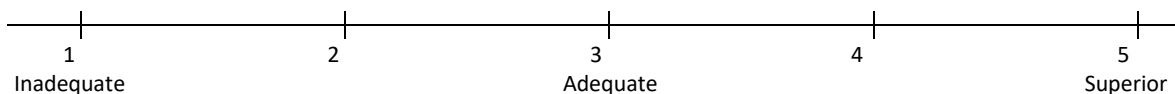
**1. Attention to relevant prior literature**



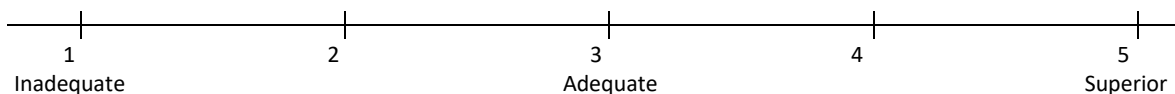
**2. Ability to integrate the literature reviewed**



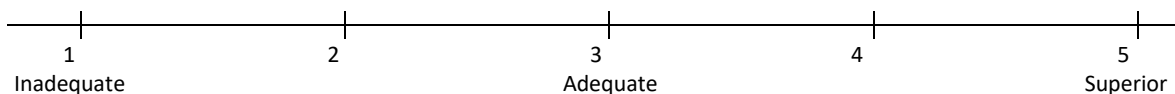
**3. Study purposes/goals/hypotheses follow from theory and/or empirical findings**



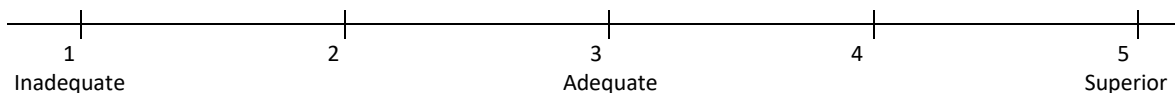
**4. Strength of the study design/research methods**



**5. Appropriateness of the statistical analyses to address the questions posed**



**6. Demonstrated knowledge of psychometrics**



## APPENDIX I: CUDCP INTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY

### COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY DIRECTORS OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY EXPECTATION FOR INTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY

1. Trainee meets or exceeds foundational and functional competencies as outlined by the Assessment of Competency Benchmarks Work Group.
2. Trainee successfully completed a master's thesis (or equivalent).
3. Trainee passed program's comprehensive or qualifying exams (or equivalent).
4. Trainee's dissertation proposal has been accepted at the time of application to the internship.
5. Trainee successfully completed all required course work for the doctoral degree prior to starting the internship (except hours for dissertation and internship).
6. Trainee completed an organized, sequential series of practicum experiences supervised by at least two different clinical psychologists that involve formalized practicum experience in evidence-based assessment and therapy. The Trainee completed at least 450 face-to-face hours of assessment/intervention and at least 150 hours of supervision by a clinical psychologist who routinely employed individual and/or group supervision models and at least one or more of the following intensive supervision methods (e.g., direct observation, co-therapy, audio/videotape review). During early formative years, the ratio of face-to-face hours to supervision hours approximated 1:1 and increased to around 4:1 as the Trainee developed intermediate to advanced clinical skills.
7. Trainee has contributed to the scientific knowledge within psychology, as evidenced by:
  - a. Publishing an article in a refereed journal or a book chapter as an author or co-author, or
  - b. Presenting at least three papers/posters/workshops at regional, national, or international professional conferences or meetings.
8. Trainee was enrolled in a program that conducts formal annual evaluations of each student for purposes of monitoring trainees' developing competencies and assuring that only students making satisfactory progress are retained and recommended for doctoral candidacy and entry into the profession. This annual program review of each student utilizes evaluations obtained from different faculty and supervisors and covers the full range of competencies including academic, research, clinical skills, and ethical professional behavior. Trainee has been rated as meeting expectations and possessing the required competencies at the time of applying for internship.

Adopted January 22, 2011

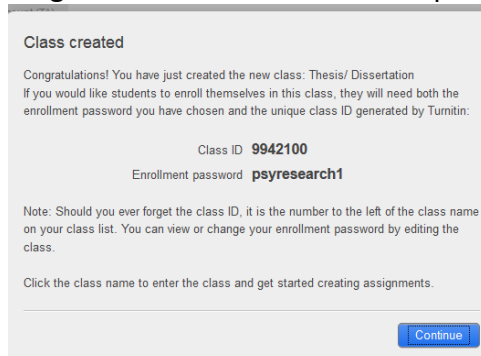
## APPENDIX J: TURNITIN PROCEDURE

(from the 2018-19 Graduate Student Handbook of the School of Psychology)

TurnItIn is now required for all final drafts of the Thesis or Dissertation prior to being submitted to the Document Specialist. It is suggested that students make final edits following the defense meetings and then upon approval from the Major Professor, take the following steps to check for plagiarism. It will be the student's responsibility to provide the Major Professor with the final document and the Originality Report from TurnItIn prior to submitting the initial thesis or dissertation document to the graduate school. The Major Professor should determine what, if any, action needs to be taken after reviewing the Originality Report. The steps for the Student and the Major Professor are described below. Contact [bonnie.nicholson@usm.edu](mailto:bonnie.nicholson@usm.edu) if you encounter any problems.

### Students

1. Prior to submitting the final draft of the thesis or dissertation to the Document Specialist, the student will be responsible for generating an Originality Report on TurnItIn.
  - a. Go to: [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)
  - b. Log in using your e-mail and password (if you have not previously used turnitin, please create an account)
  - c. Click the tab "Enroll in a Class"
  - d. Log in using the class ID and Enrollment password pictured below.



- e. Find the Assignment labeled: **Thesis/ Dissertation** & submit your thesis or dissertation file as a Microsoft word document.
- f. Wait until the "Similarity" section changes from "Processing" to a bar with the % similar reported.
- g. Click "View" and upon receiving the Originality Report, print and/or send to your Major Professor (On the bottom left of the Originality Report, click the printer symbol. You can choose to download a PDF to save to your computer to e-mail to your major professor).

### Major Professors

1. The Major Professor should receive the Originality Report in an email and review the report.

Bibliographic references and quotes have been excluded. Please do not simply refer to the percentage noted on the first page. It is important to review the entire document.

2. Take whatever action may be necessary at this time to finalize the document for submission. Students can be required to submit the document again if changes are required. Resubmission follows the same steps as outlined above. Note: the documents do not become part of the TurnItIn repository.
3. When the major professor is satisfied with the final product, they should send the originality report to the Document Specialist ([DocumentSpecialist@usm.edu](mailto:DocumentSpecialist@usm.edu)) and note that the committee has accepted all changes to the document. At this point the student can be instructed to submit their final draft to the Document Specialist via Aquila: [Aquila Submission | Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#).

## APPENDIX K: PAPERWORK AND PROCEDURE GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

### Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program Paperwork and Procedural Guidelines for Students

- You are responsible for initiating **all** paperwork described (note: this may mean requesting a specific form from your major professor or the administrative specialist for graduate programs).
- This information is available in other various forms (including the Graduate School website, clinical psychology program Sharepoint, and clinical psychology program handbook). If there is a discrepancy, **the Graduate School website is the most up-to-date resource to follow**. Make yourself aware of these expectations and follow these directions. Plan ahead. Ask your major professor or the DCT if you are unclear of an expectation.
- Be sure to obtain all necessary signatures on all forms for which signatures are required.
- For both your master's and doctoral degrees, on forms that are filed with the Graduate School:
  - Your major is "Psychology" and your emphasis area is "Clinical" on all paperwork that goes to the Graduate School. You do **not** indicate adult or child concentration areas on these forms.
  - The School of Psychology is in the College of Education and Human Sciences.
- Be sure that a copy of anything that is sent for file at the Graduate School is copied and placed in your **student file** for the program. Do not deliver forms to the Graduate School without providing the original for copy (or providing a copy of it) for your student file.
- Paperwork and procedures may change during your time in the program, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you are using the most up-to-date information and forms as well as following the most current procedures. *The current student handbook and the current graduate bulletin and Graduate School deadlines supersede this document in the case of any conflicting information.*
- The Graduate School website is: [Graduate School | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://GraduateSchool|TheUniversityofSouthernMississippi.usm.edu).
- The program website is: [Psychology \(Clinical\) - Doctorate | Graduate Programs | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](http://Psychology(Clinical)-Doctorate|GraduatePrograms|TheUniversityofSouthernMississippi.usm.edu)
- The program Sharepoint is: [USM Clinical Psychology Resources - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](http://USMClinicalPsychologyResources-Home.sharepoint.com)
- The graduate program administrative specialist in the School of Psychology prepares all required forms for the Graduate School and ensures they are submitted. See the thesis and dissertation sections for complete instructions.
- Please **keep the DCT aware when you propose or defend your thesis or dissertation**. This information is tracked in a milestones checklist for all graduate students. A quick email will suffice.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

**SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY  
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY CONTACTS**

<b><u>Clinical Psychology Faculty:</u></b>	<b><u>Email:</u></b>	<b><u>Office Phone:</u></b>
Bonfils, Kelsey <i>Assistant Professor</i>	<a href="mailto:kelsey.bonfils@usm.edu">kelsey.bonfils@usm.edu</a>	601.266.6479
Jordan, Sara <i>Professor, Director of School of Psychology</i>	<a href="mailto:sara.jordan@usm.edu">sara.jordan@usm.edu</a>	601.266.4587
Pastrana Rivera, Freddie <i>Assistant Professor</i>	<a href="mailto:freddie.pastranarivera@usm.edu">freddie.pastranarivera@usm.edu</a>	601.266.6742
Renna, Megan <i>Assistant Professor</i>	<a href="mailto:megan.renna@usm.edu">megan.renna@usm.edu</a>	
Smith, Stephanie <i>Associate Professor, Director of Clinical Training</i>	<a href="mailto:sd.smith@usm.edu">sd.smith@usm.edu</a>	601.266.6256
<b><u>Staff:</u></b>		
Dionne Payton <i>Undergraduate Programs Administrative Specialist</i>	<a href="mailto:dionne.payton@usm.edu">dionne.payton@usm.edu</a>	601.266.4473
TBD <i>Graduate Programs Administrative Specialist</i>		
Carol Morgan <i>School of Psychology Administrative Specialist</i>	<a href="mailto:carol.morgan@usm.edu">carol.morgan@usm.edu</a>	601-266-4592