

Cognitive Program Master's/Doctoral Requirements And Other Program Guidelines (10/23/06 revision)

This document presents the requirements of the Cognitive Program for completion of the MA and Ph. D. degrees and also describes other program-related guidelines and considerations. The requirements described here consist of specific dates by when certain progress milestones should or must be completed, along with particular course requirements. Certain of the progress milestone dates and course requirements are common across all programs in the Department, but others are specific to the Cognitive Program and thus may differ from the requirements listed by other programs.

Recommended and Final Progress Milestones Dates

It is expected that each student in the Cognitive program will complete the following progress milestones on or before the recommended dates, but no later than the final dates shown below. PLEASE NOTE that many of these dates are not the same every year because semesters don't necessarily begin and end on the same days. Students need to consult current and future University academic calendars and Graduate School calendars to determine the exact dates that apply to them. Last defense dates for Spring and Summer sessions, respectively, are usually around (but may not always be exactly on) 4/14 and 7/14 each year. ALSO NOTE that students who entered the Cognitive Program prior to Fall, 2006 can elect to use the published deadlines in effect at the time of their matriculation, or the current dates, whichever are more favorable to them. However, the milestones below will apply to all students entering in Fall, 2006 or thereafter.

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Recommended date</i>	<i>Final Date</i>
1st Year Project	September 15 th (Year 2)	January 15 th (Year 2)
MA Proposal	Last day of Spring semester (Year 2)	Last day of Fall Semester (Year 3)
MA Defense	Last day to defend MA Thesis for Spring graduation (Year 3)	Last day to defend MA Thesis for Summer graduation (Year 3)
Preliminary Exam (Doctoral Written)	1 st day of classes Fall semester (Year 4)	Last day of Summer Session (Year 4)
Doctoral Proposal (Doctoral Oral)	Last Day of classes Spring semester (Year 4)	Last Day of classes Summer Session (Year 5)
Doctoral Defense	Last day to defend Dissertation for Spring graduation (Year 5)	Last day to defend Dissertation for Summer graduation (Year 6)

The procedures applicable to each of these milestones for Cognitive Program students follow those described in the Departmental General Requirements booklet (Appendices 3, 4 and 6) except for the Preliminary Exam (Doctoral Written), which is described in the next section.

Cognitive Program Preliminary Exam Structure

Rather than a traditional written examination, the Cognitive Program preliminary exam has been structured so as to encourage doctoral candidates to engage in academic behaviors similar to those required of them on a professional level. This exam presently follows the three-part

structure described below. The first part requires that the doctoral candidate develop a set of teaching materials for a course in Cognitive Psychology including a completed syllabus and a comprehensive set of lecture notes with PowerPoint slides or other appropriate visual aids. The second part requires that the student deliver one of the prepared lectures to an examination committee to be constituted as described below. The third part requires that the student submit a completed draft of the introduction to their dissertation research project. Given the preparation and materials development required for this exam, students should plan to begin their work on it well in advance of the desired examination date.

Preliminary Exam Committee

Preliminary exams are evaluated by a committee consisting of the student's advisor and two other faculty members within in the Department selected by the student in consultation with his or her advisor. At least one of two remaining committee members should be a faculty member within Cognitive Program. The third member can be selected from the Department at large. Departmental faculty who have declared either primary or secondary interests in the Cognitive area (see Program Director for this list) may be selected as third members without any further approval process. A faculty member other than those with declared primary or secondary interests in Cognitive may be appointed to the preliminary exam committee, but only with approval of the Cognitive Program. This approval should be solicited from the Program Director in advance of committee formation. Preliminary examination committees should be formed by the student at least 30 days prior to the first day of the scheduled exam. Two weeks prior to the scheduled preliminary exam, the student must submit to the Committee a complete listing of the lecture topics that will be included in the completed course materials. One week prior to the exam the committee will inform the student in writing of which lecture from the student's list has been selected for presentation. This communication also will include details about how and when the deliverables for each part should be submitted/presented by the student. The Director of Graduate Studies will be copied on this communication.

Exam Part 1: Lecture Notes

This part of the examination is designed to prepare the student to teach a survey course in Cognitive Psychology. Completion of this part requires the student to turn in a syllabus and complete set of lecture notes and other appropriate materials (e.g. PowerPoint slides, handouts, etc.) for 42 classes that meet for 50 minutes each, three times per week in a standard academic semester. The committee will evaluate these materials on the 6-point scale described in Appendix 7 of the Departmental General Requirements booklet. All materials related to this part must be submitted according to the committee's instructions prior to the end of the scheduled exam time on Day #1 of the Departmental preliminary exams.

Exam Part 2: Lecture

The student will be required to give one of the prepared 50-min. lectures to the committee. The specific lecture will be chosen by the committee from the list of lecture topics submitted by the student two weeks prior to the exam (see above). The committee will choose the topic of the lecture and will inform the student of it at least 1 week before she or he is to deliver the lecture to

the committee. Both the quality (clarity) of the lecture's delivery, and its content (accuracy and amount of information) will be evaluated. The final score on this part will be given on the 6-point scale described in Appendix 7 of the Departmental General Requirements booklet and will reflect a weighted average of the quality (40%) and content (60%). This part should be completed according to the committee's instructions prior to the end of the scheduled exam time on Day #2 of the Departmental preliminary exams.

Exam Part 3: Introduction to the Dissertation

The student's complete introduction to his or her dissertation constitutes the third part of the exam. The introduction should be a thorough literature review of the dissertation's topic as well as a substantial critical analysis of the literature. It should also include a description of the specific research question to be addressed in the dissertation, along with a discussion of its theoretical significance. The committee will evaluate this part on the 6-point scale described in Appendix 7 of the Departmental General Requirements booklet. The completed introduction should be submitted according to the committee's instructions prior to the end of the scheduled exam time on Day #2 of the Departmental preliminary exams.

Grading and Outcome Notification

The grading of the overall exam will consist of three separate scores, each representing an average of the three committee member's 6-point scale scores for that part. A student will pass the exam only if his or her average score for each part is 3.5 or better.

Written notification of performance will be provided to all students within three weeks after the exam date. In addition, a student's committee members may write comments highlighting specific strengths and weaknesses in the various parts of the student's performance. These comments, if available, will be included with the notification letter.

Students who fail the exam may request their average scores for each part. Students must retake any part(s) of the preliminary exam on which they failed to achieve an average score of 3.5 or better. Students must complete all necessary retakes at the next available exam opportunity, and they can retake each failed part only once.

MA and Ph. D. Cognitive Course Requirements

The overall course requirements for the Cognitive MA and Ph. D. degrees are shown below, along with a sample 5-year curriculum. NOTE THAT some of the following course requirements are departmental while others are program specific. The Cognitive Core courses included in the following requirements will be drawn from those key topics Program faculty deem to be important for a student's professional development and competence as a Cognitive Psychologist. Graduate seminars may be based on the substantive research interests of particular faculty. The availability of any specific Cognitive Core course or graduate seminar will depend on overall Departmental and Program teaching needs and requirements.

MA Requirements (Minimum of 30 credits including):

- Quantitative Methods I and II (3 credits each for a total of 6 credits)

- One additional quantitative course (3 credits)
- Two Cognitive Core courses (3 credits each for a total of 6 credits)
- One graduate seminar (3 credits)
- The remaining 12 credits are flexible including master's thesis credit hours (maximum = 6 for thesis credit), graduate seminars, or other courses.

Ph. D. Requirements (Minimum of 72 credits consisting of 30 credits from MA requirements plus 42 additional credits that include the following):

- Either Advanced Research Methods or Psychological Measurement (3 credits)
- Two additional sections of Cognitive Core (3 credits each for a total of 6 credits)
- The remaining 33 credits may be earned via additional graduate seminar courses, directed readings, and resident or non-resident dissertation research (maximum of 12 credits total for dissertation research, resident and non-resident combined)

NOTE THAT in accord with general Departmental and Graduate School policies, a student will be considered "full time" only if they carry at least 9 credits per semester until they accumulate 60 credits. After 60 total credits and completion of remaining required courses, "full time" status can be maintained with just 1 credit per semester. However, a total of 72 credits are required for the doctoral degree and students must be enrolled for at least 1 credit in each semester (including Summer sessions) prior to their graduation.

Sample 5-year Cognitive curriculum schedule (credits in parentheses)

<i>Year 1 Courses</i>	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>	<i>Cumulative Credits</i>
	Quantitative Methods I (3)	Quantitative Methods II (3)	
	Graduate Seminar #1 (3)	Cognitive Core #1 (3)	
	Research/Directed Readings (3)	Research/Directed readings (3)	
<i>Credits</i>	9	9	18

Year 2 Milestones: First year project presentation; MA proposal defense

<i>Year 2 Courses</i>	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>	<i>Cumulative Credits</i>
	Elective Quantitative Course (3)	Research/Directed readings (3)	
	Graduate Seminar #2 (3)	Cognitive Core #2 (3)	
	Thesis Research (3)	Thesis Research (3)	
<i>Credits</i>	9	9	36

Year 3 Milestone: MA thesis defense

<i>Year 3 Courses</i>	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>	<i>Cumulative Credits</i>
	Advanced Research Methods or Psychological Measurement (3)	Research/Directed readings (3)	
	Graduate Seminar #3 (3)	Graduate Seminar #4 (3)	
	Research/Directed Readings (3)	Cognitive Core #3 (3)	
<i>Credits</i>	9	9	54

Year 4 Milestones: Written Prelims; Doctoral Oral

<i>Year 4 Courses</i>	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>	<i>Cumulative Credits</i>
	Graduate Seminar #5 (3)	Cognitive Core #4 (3)	
	Research/Directed Readings (6)	Dissertation research (3)	
<i>Credits</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>69</i>

Year 5 Milestone: Doctoral Defense

<i>Year 5 Courses</i>	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>	<i>Cumulative Credits</i>
	Dissertation research (3)	Dissertation research (1)	
<i>Credits</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>73</i>

Annual Evaluations of Student Progress by Program Faculty

Primary annual evaluations of student progress will be conducted by program faculty in the last month of the Spring Semester. In preparation for those evaluations, all program students must submit an updated copy of their CVs together with an annual report containing the following information related to research, teaching, service, and professional goals.

Student Annual Report Categories

1. *Research.* Brief description of research activities over the past year including the stage of each project, publications or conference presentations that have or will emanate from the work, and the projected timeline for completion.
2. *Teaching.* Description of any teaching done during the past 12 months. This should include a description of TA duties performed for which faculty member or designation if the student was the instructor of record. Also relevant are guest lectures and any informal teaching activities such as supervision of undergraduates in the research lab or consulting activities.
3. *Service.* Provide overview of any service activities engaged in since last evaluation. These should include any service to the Department, College, University, field or local community.
4. *Goals.* The goal statement should include (but is not limited to) a description of (a) the activities that the student plans to engage in over the next 2-3 years, which should be updated yearly, (b) whether he/she plans to acquire the teaching certification, and if so, when (s)he would like to be instructor of record and which course (s)he is interested in teaching, (c) if he or she plans to pursue the quantitative minor, (d) where (s)he is with respect to progress milestones, and (e) eventual career goals.

Additional information about any student can be submitted by faculty outside of the program who may have supervised the student's teaching or other activities.

Evaluation Criteria

The result of each annual evaluation will be a determination of whether or not each student is in **good standing** with regard to progress related to research, teaching, service and goals. Program faculty will review each student's progress with respect to the recommended and final milestone dates, as well as other qualitative information (e.g., course work, performance of TA/RA duties, involvement in and contributions to the Program/Department, etc.), and will collectively determine if the student shall be deemed to be in good standing. All determinations related to student standing will be made based on a simple majority vote of all program faculty. The student's advisor will then draft a feedback letter to the student detailing student strengths as well as any suggestions or recommendations related to areas of research, teaching, service and goals. All feedback letters will be circulated to program faculty for comment prior to being sent to students.

For students not in good standing, the letters must contain a specific plan agreed to by the advisor and the student according to which the student can regain good standing. This plan should detail specific strategies and deadlines by which any unmet requirements will be completed, along with a date before the end of the following semester by when the student could regain good standing status if some or all of the actions and accomplishments outlined in the plan occur. These plans must be reviewed by program faculty before the feedback letter is sent to each student.

Following the receipt of annual feedback letters, all students should set up an appointment with their advisor to discuss the annual evaluation results and their progress in the program. Separate appointments can be made with the Program Director if students so desire. Students may elect to respond in writing to their written evaluations. Such responses should be directed to faculty advisors with a copy to the Program Director. Students not in good standing will have 30 days to appeal their status to the graduate committee.

Funding

Funding is guaranteed for Years 1-5 provided that the student remains in **good standing**. Petitions for a 6th year of funding will be considered by the Program for students in good standing who have been actively involved in research but who have not yet completed the dissertation. Those petitions approved by the Program will be forwarded to the Graduate Committee.

Failure to remain in good standing automatically results in probationary status, which if not remedied by the end of the subsequent Fall semester, will result in loss of all Departmental funding. Students can exit from probation and regain **good standing**, pending program approval, given that the progress goals outlined in the student's feedback letter are achieved by the end of the Fall semester.

While grant funding cannot be terminated automatically, PIs are strongly encouraged to remove grant funding when Departmental funding is lost. Exceptions to this would be expected to be rare.

Supplementary Evaluations

At the end of each Fall semester, a supplementary evaluation will be conducted to gauge progress of students who have previously been determined to be on probation. Feedback letters regarding progress toward goals will be sent to these students including any notices of funding terminations that are appropriate.

The Invitation to Apply for Doctoral Candidacy

In accord with general Departmental policy, students must receive an invitation from the Program to apply for doctoral candidacy. Ordinarily, these invitations will be issued at the end of the third year, but before Prelims are taken. In some cases, a decision to invite may be delayed beyond the end of the third year in the event the MA Thesis Defense has not yet occurred. Students not invited to apply will not be able to complete Prelims or embark on Doctoral dissertation work.

Generally, invitations to apply for Doctoral Candidacy will be issued to all students in **good standing** provided that the results of annual evaluations by program faculty do not reveal other significant reasons for concern. Students who are not in good standing will not be invited to apply for candidacy.

Program Transfers

The Cognitive Program offers the following as recommended guidelines for those wishing to transfer to or from the Program:

- Cognitive faculty must formally vote to accept students wishing to transfer into the Program.
- Students who are not in good standing are not be allowed to transfer out of the Program.
- When a Cognitive student transfers out of the Program that student's stipend should remain with the Program, or Cognitive should be given a new stipend for the next year's recruiting class. This policy is necessary to prevent programs from becoming disadvantaged over time as a result of transfers.

Also, it should be noted that students do not have to transfer out of Cognitive to have a non-Cognitive advisor supervise their research. All that is required is Program approval, which can be petitioned for through the Program Director.