

2024-2025  
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE  
MANUAL



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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Behavioral Science Program at the University of North Texas provides training for students seeking a career in behavioral research. Most students who are admitted aspire to a position in academics; however, opportunities for employment in private industry or research institutes also exist. The program offers students training in both basic and applied research. Focus is on high quality training with intensive student-faculty involvement in joint research. Students are expected to participate actively in research with faculty members throughout their tenure in the program. This emphasis on one-to-one training allows students to acquire research skills while working on projects leading to publication or grant application. Each student will eventually develop advanced knowledge and both teaching and research expertise in at least one specialty area.

Specialties available to students are determined by the makeup of departmental faculty. The faculty includes members of reputation in several areas and at present students can pursue advanced study in specialties of Psychology such as Developmental, Human Cognitive Processes, Critical Race Psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience, and Neuropsychology. Students generally do advanced work with a member of the Behavioral Science Faculty; however, depending on interests in particular specialties, students may work with other members of the psychology faculty or in rare instances, professors in other departments at UNT. Involvement in research is expected to prepare the student for the dissertation and will hopefully culminate in several publications and/or presentations prior to graduation. Such involvement should occur soon after admission, during the first year of the program.

The Behavioral Science Program generally requires a minimum of four years to complete with the last two years devoted mainly to research including dissertation. During the first two years, the student will complete the general Behavioral Science core courses **and the Pass Through Masters**. The Behavioral Science specialty area courses are generally completed by the third year.

Each student is expected to file a degree plan with the Graduate School by the end of their first semester. Research mentors are expected to assist students create their degree plan, and if questions arise, students can consult with the program director. Once the degree plan is complete, it must be signed by the student's research mentor, the program director, and department chair. Lastly, the student sends the signed degree plan to the graduate coordinator. Individual plans may be longer but a minimum of 72 hours credit including dissertation is required.

**The goals of the UNT Behavioral Science Program are to train individuals who are:**

- 1) Capable in all aspects of a research program including obtaining funding.
- 2) Published in the field of psychology and have demonstrated potential for long-term contributions to science.
- 3) Competent to teach statistics, research methodology, and at least one specialty area.
- 4) Experienced in multidisciplinary research and knowledgeable in areas of science relevant to

- their specialty.
- 5) Experienced in multiracial and multicultural research, broadly, with an emphasis on their specialty.

## **PROGRAM FACULTY**

Heidemarie Blumenthal, PhD: Experimental Developmental Psychopathology

Adriel Boals, PhD: Coping with Stress, Learning, and Memory (**Program Director**)

Casey Guillot, PhD: Disposition, Emotion, and Addiction Research

Kimberly Kelly, PhD: Neuroendocrine/Behavioral Stress Responses

Ryan Olson, PhD: Sport and Exercise Psychology

Anthony Ryals, PhD: Memory and Cognition, Cognitive Neuroscience

Danica Slavish, PhD: Health Psychology: Sleep, Stress, and Health

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Behavioral Science (BSci) Program at UNT advances understanding of human behavior by applying a range of scientific methodologies across diverse demographic groups. In all of its academic activities, the BSci Program is guided by the ethical principles published by the American Psychological Association and the International Union of Psychological Science. BSci faculty and students strive to study, expand, and disseminate knowledge through mediums such as teaching, publishing and presenting research, and contributing to local, national, and global communities. The program's scientific approach employs a variety of methods and involves theory formation, hypothesis testing, discovery, and abiding skepticism (guardedness even in relation to one's own ideas), as well as a critical examination of the existing scientific literature. BSci faculty highly value collaboration and interdisciplinary science. Graduates from our program have gone on to careers in academia (both research and teaching oriented positions) as well as positions in industry, government, military, medical, and mental health fields. At UNT we value and strive for a culture of respect, dignity, and compassion for all members of our community. We seek to create an educational culture in which people listen to and learn from diverse perspectives. As BSci Program members in the Psychology Department at UNT, we care about our faculty and students' well-being and promote and support a university campus where all members of our community feel included, respected, and safe.

## **BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CORE PRINCIPLES**

### *Commitment to Science*

The Behavioral Science Program is grounded in a commitment to science. Generating and evaluating empirical evidence is the bedrock of our program. We strive for our work to multidisciplinary, cross-cutting, and conform to the ethical principles outlined by the Nuremberg Code and APA Ethical Guidelines. We value all aspects of the scientific method, including creative idea generation, rigorous hypothesis testing, cutting edge

variable measurement, core methodology, critical thinking skills, critical writing skills, and broad dissemination of our work. We do this with passion, commitment, focus, and a desire to never stop learning.

### *Commitment to Training*

We are committed to training the next generation of psychological scientists. This starts with recruiting talented graduate students into our program. Once in the program, we value training in all aspects of science. This includes emphases on methodology, statistical analyses, scientific writing, professionalism, as well expertise in areas of specialization. We expect our faculty to be committed mentors and we expect our students to be committed mentees. This commitment extends to our undergraduates as well, whether it be high quality teaching in the classroom to training undergraduate research assistants in our research labs.

### *Commitment to a Culture of Achievement, Cooperation, and Respect*

The environment in which we work is often just as critical as the work itself. In the Behavioral Science Program, we strive to generate a work culture of achievement, cooperation, and respect. The scientific process is a team effort and we encourage collaboration both amongst members of our program and with members outside of our program. We expect members of our program to support one another, share with each other, lift each other up, and represent our program with pride that forms a culture of community.

### *Commitment to Inclusion & Diversity*

True excellence requires that people from diverse backgrounds be able to work and learn in an atmosphere of respect, dignity, and acceptance. This value is a continuation of our commitment to culture, in that all persons who have a passion for psychological science feel welcome in our program. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion requires each of us to continuously ensure our interactions, our classrooms, and our syllabi be respectful, protect free speech, and inspire academic freedom.

## **APPLICATION AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Before being admitted to the Behavioral Science Doctoral Program, the applicant must meet all the requirements for admission to the Toulouse Graduate School of the University of North Texas. Graduate School Applications and instructions can be obtained from the Toulouse Graduate School at [www.tgs.unt.edu](http://www.tgs.unt.edu).

Second, applicants for graduate psychology degrees must complete the department application process through the department submission portal at [www.psychology.unt.edu](http://www.psychology.unt.edu). The application deadline for all graduate programs in psychology is December 1 preceding the Fall term/semester for which the student is applying. **Review of applications begins on December 1.**

A complete Psychology Department application must include copies of official transcripts from all previous work, three letters of recommendation, a resume, and a statement of personal goals. All documents submitted to the Psychology Department must be electronic copies submitted through the admission portal. Admission is based on a ranking of applicants after review of files by the Behavioral Science Program Committee. Students with the greatest potential to pursue a career in research and make contributions to the scientific literature are

given highest priority. Program faculty's ability to provide training in the specialty area interests expressed in the student's statement of goals is also important.

In the final analysis, all areas are considered, including academic accomplishments, motivation, standardized test scores, letters of recommendation, communication skills, quantitative ability, and impressions from interviews and other interactions. Before accepting an invitation to join the Behavioral Science PhD program, potential students should thoroughly read the Department of Psychology Graduate Manual. They will find in the manual information on financial support, graduate student affairs, course offerings by semester, advising, degree plans, enrollment regulations, registration, and familiarity with the departmental faculty.

The Behavioral Science Program typically admits students with either a bachelor's or master's degree in Psychology. **Those with a bachelor's degree in other majors are also considered, but an equivalent to a Psychology major is required (24 hours in Psychology or other relevant coursework for application to the doctoral program).** Transfer credit may be granted for those entering with a master's degree; this is determined on an individual basis. However, up to 30 hours can be applied to the PhD program on the degree plan. Special or probationary admissions are not made in this program.

## DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Behavioral Science General Core: 51 Hours

<b>PSYC 5700</b>	<b>Advanced Quantitative Methods I</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5710</b>	<b>Advanced Quantitative Methods II</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5090</b>	<b>Advanced Social Psychology</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6030</b>	<b>Biological Bases of Behavior</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5640</b>	<b>Cognition and Affect</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5950</b>	<b>Thesis</b>	<b>6 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6400</b>	<b>Research Methodology Applications</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5010</b>	<b>Human Development</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6560</b>	<b>Psychology of Race in the U.S.</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6210</b>	<b>Multiple Regression</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6610</b>	<b>Independent Research</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC XXXX*</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6210</b>	<b>Adv. Career Development in Behav Sci</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6950</b>	<b>Dissertation</b>	<b>9 hrs</b>

**\*This course can be completed by completing one of the following: PSYC 6610 (Independent Research) OR PSYC 6200 (Special Problems) OR An Elective Course**

**Note:** Independent Research (3 hours each) will be chosen in consultation with the major professor.

**Note:** Thesis and Dissertation proposal/defenses are expected to take place in-person, but can be virtual under extraordinary circumstances, as approved by the thesis/dissertation committee.

**The remainder (21 hours) of the student's program of study will consist of coursework**

**selected in consultation with the major professor, reflecting the student's specialty area of research.** Below is a list of courses that can be used to complete the remainder (21 hours), but other courses both inside the department and/or outside of the department can also be used. In addition to the courses listed below, additional hours of PSYC 6610 can be used to partially or fully complete the remaining 21 hours.

<b>PSYC 5060</b>	<b>Advanced History &amp; Systems</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 5900/5910</b>	<b>Special Problems</b>	<b>1-4 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6200</b>	<b>Advanced Topics</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>PSYC 6900/6910</b>	<b>Special Problems</b>	<b>1-3 hrs</b>
<b>TECM 5170</b>	<b>Grant Proposal Writing</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>TECM 5180</b>	<b>Professional Writing</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6290</b>	<b>Multivariate Analysis</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6270</b>	<b>Structural Equation Writing</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6230</b>	<b>Hierarchical Linear Modeling</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6280</b>	<b>Qualitative Research in Education</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6285</b>	<b>Qualitative Data Analysis in Education</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>EPSY 6240</b>	<b>Technology in Research</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>BIOL 5035</b>	<b>Behavioral Ecology</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>BIOL 5220</b>	<b>Neuropsychopharmacology</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>
<b>BIOL 5751</b>	<b>Neuroscience I: Cells and Circuits</b>	<b>3 hrs</b>

#### **Special Note about PSYC 6950 Dissertation**

The dissertation constitutes 9 semester hours and is initiated only after the student has completed all coursework and passed the Comprehensive Exam.

**Doctoral Program total hours: 72 hours**

#### **PASS THROUGH MASTER'S DEGREE**

Incoming students who have completed a master's thesis should submit a copy of the thesis to their major advisor as soon as possible, but no later than the end of their first semester. The major advisor and program director will jointly decide if the thesis is acceptable. This pass/fail decision will be made within two weeks after receipt of the thesis from the student.

Doctoral students earning a Pass Through Master's while in the program can do so via fulfilling the course requirements below. The pass through master's degree plan must be on file with the graduate school prior to submitting an application for graduation with either the MA or MS degree. Degree plan should be submitted before the end of the first semester of the first year.

**For students who do not enter the program with a master's degree, there will be a requirement to complete a Pass Through Master's, which constitutes 30 hours of the doctoral program requirements. These credits are earned while continuing the doctoral program. Six hours of PSYC 5950 (Thesis) must constitute 6 of the 30 hours. All of the coursework credited toward the master's degree plan must be numbered 5000 or higher.**

**Regarding the Pass Through Master's requirement:**

- A. **Apply to the Toulouse Graduate School for admission. Applications for the pass through master's degree in Psychology are available on the Graduate Coordinator's Virtual Office [website](#). No application fee is required.**
- B. **Submit master's degree plan to the Graduate Coordinator's office. Once the admission application has been approved by the department, the degree plan will be submitted to the Toulouse Graduate School.**
- C. **Submit application for graduation (<http://tsgs.unt.edu/academics/graduation>) for the semester in which the coursework is completed.**

**Note:** Hours needed to satisfy the degree requirements for either the MA or MS degree cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements for the PhD. A separate degree plan will be filed for the master's and doctoral degrees, wherein the doctoral degree plan will be composed of courses that are unique to the doctoral program. Thus, the pass through master's degree plan will constitute 30 hours, and the doctoral degree plan will constitute 42 additional hours.

### **Residence Requirement**

Candidates must meet the doctoral residence requirement as outlined in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

### **MAJOR AREA OF SPECIALIZATION**

Complementing expertise in behavioral science, students in the program will have at least one area of specialization in which their coursework and research are concentrated. Students should develop their area of specialization in concert with their major professor. They should take courses relevant to this area and focus most of their research projects on it. Research projects generally should be supervised by faculty who have relevant expertise. Applicants should confirm that appropriate faculty are available before seeking entry into the program.

### **INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH**

Each student is expected to be active in research and thus several sections of PSYC 6610 will be completed during the four-year program. Students are encouraged to affiliate with a faculty member, sharing their research interests early in the program, i.e., in the first year. The 6610 is an individual research course which can be repeated for credit, and each requires the completion of an independent project with a faculty member. The goal of each project is to produce a publishable product. Students should be heavily involved in preparing papers for publication and making presentations. It is hoped that a publication record can be established before graduation, which is necessary in today's competitive job market. The 6610 gives a student the opportunity to become involved in programmatic research and often this can serve as a preliminary step in developing a dissertation topic. The number of 6610 projects will vary but a minimum of one is required and time spent on research will usually increase as the student advances through the program. Even though the first year is primarily devoted to completing the general core, students should begin to involve themselves in research as early as possible.

## THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is for students to demonstrate the knowledge necessary to earn a PhD. Knowledge should have been accumulated via coursework and participation in scholarly activity, necessarily including empirical research. It should document competence as a scholar and investigator and expertise within a particular topic area. Students will qualify near the end of their graduate training, prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy.

### Key Requirements

1. Students must complete, in advance, the Departmental and Program core curriculum, or be in the final semester of coursework (excluding dissertation hours) and successfully have defended and filed their thesis.
2. The Comprehensive Exam will consist of a comprehensive review paper on a topic determined by the student and their advisor. The review serves as a stand-alone, 'state of the science' paper on the selected topic that gives an in-depth review and critique of the research published on the selected topic. Briefly, reviews will consist of significance of the topic, a expansive discussion of the current state of the literature, synthesis, and future directions. Content should demonstrate competency and expertise on the selected topic. There is no required length. Mentors may vary in expected lengths, so students are encouraged to consult with their major advisor concerning expected length. Much like a manuscript submitted for publication, students may seek advice and comments on the paper from colleagues. However, the writing itself should reflect sole author work.
3. Prior to beginning work, students will work with their advisor on the title and outline of the paper. Once the mentor deems the title and outline acceptable, the student will then complete the "Registration" section of the Behavioral Science Comprehensive Exam ('Comps') Form, located in the program's S drive folder (BSci Comps Form.pdf) and email the form to the comps committee for approval. Once all committee members have signed the form, the student may begin writing the full paper.
4. Students are expected to work on their comprehensive paper with their major advisor until the major advisor agrees it is ready to be graded by the student's committee. Each committee member will independently grade the paper as either 1) Fail, 2) Revise-and-resubmit, 3) Pass (with minor revisions), or 4) Pass (with no revisions) Decisions are typically made within 1-3 weeks, and sometimes longer if the paper was submitted during the summer or winter break, but no longer than 4 weeks. Committee members will record their decision on the aforementioned BSci Comps Form. All committee members must give a grade of pass (either Pass with no revisions or Pass with minor revisions) for the overall decision to be a pass. If one or more committee members grades the paper as a revise-and-resubmit, then the overall decision is a revise-and-resubmit. If two or more committee members grades the paper as a fail, then the overall decision is a fail. All decisions and requested revisions will be communicated from the committee to the student via an email from the major advisor. If the student receives a revise-and-resubmit or Pass (with minor revisions) decision, the committee will give feedback to the student and the student will have the opportunity to make revisions and re-submit the paper. Revise-and resubmit decisions require the full committee to review the revised paper. If a student

receives a decision of Pass (with minor revisions), then the student will make the minor revisions in concert with the major advisor, and the major advisor can judge whether the revised paper is acceptable without review from the other committee members. Students will have a maximum of six weeks to submit any revised papers. All revised submissions will be graded as either pass or fail. All committee members must grade the paper as pass to receive an overall decision of pass.

5. Students will have two options available for having their review evaluated.

**Option 1.** The first option is to form a qualifying exam committee, separate from the dissertation committee to be determined later (the same members may or may not sit on both committees). Committees will consist of 3-5 members. The committee must either, 1) have a BSci program member as Committee Chair, or 2) a non-BSci Chair, but two or more committee members from BSci. This option is likely the most desirable for students who wish to separate their qualifying exam from their dissertation.

**Option 2.** The second option is to form a dissertation committee (minor representatives are not included in the grading of comps papers) who will examine and grade the review paper. The paper can later be blended into the student's dissertation research proposal. However, the comps paper is a stand-alone document that is meant to be more expansive than a dissertation proposal Introduction section. Committees will consist of 3-5 members. The committee must either, 1) have a BSci program member as Committee Chair, or 2) a non-BSci Chair, but two or more committee members from BSci. This option will be available for students who wish to incorporate their review into their dissertation.

Retired faculty may serve as a committee member if agreed upon by the retired faculty, the student, and the committee chair. If the retired faculty was approved to serve on a student's committee **before** they retired, then they may continue serving. If the retired faculty is asked to serve on a committee **after** they retired, then they would need to be nominated as an outside member. An outside member is defined as any person outside of UNT-Denton (e.g. a faculty or researcher at another institution). Any outside member must first be approved by the Toulouse Graduate School before they can serve on any thesis, comps, or dissertation committee. Here is the link to the nomination form:

<https://tgs.unt.edu/webform/nomination-associate-membership>

6. Once a student has passed the Qualifying Exam, the student can enroll in dissertation hours the following semester. Thus, most students will want to complete the Qualifying Exam during the final semester of coursework (excluding dissertation hours).

## THE DISSERTATION

The last 9 hours in the program are dedicated to the dissertation (PSYC 6950). The student will continue to register for dissertation units until the final defense is passed. A grade of PR (in progress) will be assigned for all dissertation hours until the project is completed and filed in the Graduate School. A final grade will be issued for the final 9 hours of dissertation enrollment. Any additional dissertation hours will remain as PR and will not affect the final GPA calculations. For information on dissertation hours and qualifying for departmental assistantships, see: <https://tgs.unt.edu/new-current-students/tbp-eligibility-criteria-and-requirements> .

A dissertation committee is established and will include the major professor and two members of the department faculty. Typically, but not in all cases, at least one of these faculty would be from the Behavioral Science program. In some cases, an additional committee member may be added, or an outside member who is a faculty member from another department. Outside members may not chair a committee alone. In these cases the outside member and a member of the Behavioral Science program must serve as co-chairs.

The first step in this process is to formulate a dissertation proposal in consultation with the major professor. The project should represent a high quality study in the area of specialization and should have the potential to be published in a top-tier journal. The student is expected to have already performed research in this area and should possess expertise in the relevant literature. After a dissertation proposal is completed and approved by the major professor, the written proposal is passed out to the committee. An oral defense of the dissertation proposal is then scheduled. If at the beginning of this meeting the committee believes the project is not ready to be presented, the candidate is informed and the defense is postponed. Otherwise, the defense is conducted and the result is either pass with no changes, pass with changes, or fail, all with feedback from the committee.

If the project is approved, then the student is allowed to proceed with the supervision of the major professor, who except in rare cases, will be the individual with whom the student has been working on research since entering the program. Unless special permission is obtained from the dissertation committee, the student must complete the project as spelled out in the dissertation proposal or a final defense will not be allowed. If changes are needed, this may require another meeting of the committee. It should also be noted that approval of the university Institutional Review Board is necessary before beginning any project using human subjects.

After data collection and analysis are completed, the student in consultation with the major professor will complete the dissertation. When the major professor approves the final product, copies of the completed dissertation are distributed to the committee and to the department chair at least two weeks prior to the oral defense. If at the beginning of the final oral defense the project is not considered ready, the meeting is adjourned and feedback is given. Otherwise, the oral defense is allowed to go forward. The final oral defense centers on the dissertation, but students are expected to demonstrate expertise in their area of specialization as well as regarding experimental methods more generally when discussing dissertation results. The results of the final oral defense will be either pass with no changes, pass with changes, or fail. If the decision is fail, feedback is given. In this case, in consultation with the major professor, necessary changes are made and a second oral defense can be scheduled. If pass with changes is the decision, feedback is given and changes are made.

Once all changes are completed, the dissertation is signed by all committee members. The departmental chair will sign the final defense form which will have been sent to the Graduate Coordinator after a student's application for graduation is received by the graduate school. For security reasons, signatures on the final defense form are only scanned for insertion into internal records at UNT. They are not released for open access electronic publishing. Upon obtaining final approval from the major professor, the dissertation is then filed with the graduate school.

Theses and Dissertation proposals/defenses are expected to take place in-person, but can be virtual under extraordinary circumstances.

## MINOR AREA OF STUDY

Students can choose a minor area of study, but a minor is NOT required. The minor must be an approved minor area of study by the Graduate School. Each minor is regulated by the department in which it occurs, and students must complete all requirements stated by that department for the minor area of study. These requirements may vary from department to department. The Graduate Schools requires that if a student declares a minor, that student must have a member from the minor program on the dissertation committee. A popular minor area of study with students in our program is the Statistics minor, which is regulated by the Department of Research, Measurement, and Statistics, which is regulated by the Department of Educational Psychology. Additional information about this minor can be found at: [http://catalog.unt.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=19&poid=9265](http://catalog.unt.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=19&poid=9265)

## ANNUAL REVIEW OF STUDENTS

Once a year, typically near the end of the Spring semester, or as necessary, the program committee will evaluate students. In the Spring or Summer of each academic year, students complete annual review forms in preparation for program review of their performance. The program committee reviews the academic progress of students in three areas: Coursework, Research, and Professional Development. Students are expected to make satisfactory progress in each of these areas and will be informed of any identified weaknesses. All students will receive written feedback, including an overall evaluation of either *Meeting Expectations* or *Not Meeting Expectations*. A student earns a 'Not Meeting Expectations' eval if at any time during an academic year, a student becomes more than one semester late in meeting one or more of the milestone deadlines stated in our program manual **AND** still has not completed this milestone by the end of the spring semester of that academic year. An example would be the manual states that students are expected to complete their thesis proposal by the end of fall semester of their second year. Hence being more than one semester late would be still not having their proposal completed by the end of the spring semester of their second year. When annual review letters are sent to students, it is followed with an individual meeting between the student and mentor to discuss the annual review and allow students to ask any questions they may have.

On rare occasions, advisors or other faculty may identify serious deficiencies in one or more areas, which will be reported to the program committee and others as required. In this case, and depending upon the severity of the deficiencies, the recommendation may be to place the student on probation or to dismiss the student from the doctoral program. When the recommendation concerns probation, students meet with the program committee at the next regularly scheduled program meeting to discuss the apparent deficiencies and the recommendation of probation. If the program committee decides on probation, students are asked to meet with their program advisor in order to formulate a plan of action to restore their good

standing in the program. The program committee then reviews this action plan to determine if additional requirements are to be added.

Dismissal of the student from the doctoral program in psychology will occur if: (a) very severe deficiencies exist and a period of probation does not result in a constructive course of corrective action, or (b) the student fails to make satisfactory improvement in area(s) of deficiency during the probationary period.

When the recommendation of the program committee is to consider dismissal of the student from the program, the procedure described in the UNT Psychology Department Student Handbook is followed.

Should a student fail to complete the roles and responsibilities necessary to make satisfactory progress in the program, the program committee will convene to discuss a remediation plan. Students who continue to not make satisfactory and continuous progress through their coursework, research, and professional development will be dismissed from the program. Expected timelines for progression through the program are listed below:

**DEADLINES and ACADEMIC STANDING** (Note that these are program deadlines, which are supplemental to the Graduate School's deadlines)

***Filing a Degree Plan:***

\* Students are expected to successfully file the degree plan by the end of the first year.

1. If students have not successfully filed a degree plan before the last day of the Fall semester of their 2nd year, they will be placed on probation for “failure to make adequate progress” with a tailored remediation plan.
2. If students have not successfully filed a degree plan by the end of the Spring semester of the 2nd year, they will be dismissed from the program for “failure to make adequate progress”, unless the student has otherwise received special permission from the program.

***Thesis Timeline:***

\* Students are expected to successfully *propose* the thesis prior to last day of the Fall semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

1. If students have not successfully *proposed* the thesis by the end of the Fall semester 3<sup>rd</sup> year, they will be required to attend the first program meeting of the following Spring semester to discuss their progress with the committee.
2. If students have not successfully *proposed* the thesis before the last day of the Spring semester of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year, they will be placed on probation for “failure to make adequate progress” with a tailored remediation plan.
3. If students have not successfully *proposed* the thesis by the end of the Fall semester 4<sup>th</sup> year, that student will be dismissed from the program for “failure to make adequate progress”, unless

the student has otherwise received special permission from the program.

\* Students are expected to successfully *defend* the thesis before the last day of the Fall semester of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

1. If students have not successfully *defended* the thesis prior to the end of the Fall semester of their 4<sup>th</sup> year, they will be required to attend the first program meeting of the following Spring semester to discuss their progress with the committee.
2. If students have not successfully *defended* the thesis prior to the last day of the Spring semester of their 4<sup>th</sup> year, they will be placed on probation with a tailored remediation plan.
3. If students have not *defended* by the end of the Fall semester 5<sup>th</sup> year, they will be dismissed from the program for “failure to make adequate progress”, unless the student has otherwise received special permission from the program.

#### ***Comprehensive Exam Timeline:***

\* Students are expected to pass their comprehensive exam before the last day of the Spring semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

1. If students have not passed their comprehensive exam before the last day of the Fall semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year, they will be required to attend the first program meeting of the following Spring semester to discuss their progress with the committee.
2. If students have not passed their comprehensive exam before the last day of the Spring semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year, they will be placed on probation.
3. If students have not passed their comprehensive exam by the last day of the Fall semester of their 6<sup>th</sup> year they will be dismissed from the program for “failure to make adequate progress”, unless the student has otherwise received special permission from the program.

#### ***Dissertation Timeline:***

\* Students are expected to *propose* their dissertation by the last day of the Fall semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

1. If students have not *proposed* by the end of the Spring semester 5<sup>th</sup> year, they will be required to attend the first program meeting of the following Fall semester to discuss their progress with the committee.
2. If students have not *proposed* their dissertation prior to the last day of the Fall semester of the 6<sup>th</sup> year, they will be placed on probation with a tailored remediation plan.
3. If students have not *proposed* their dissertation by the last day of the Spring semester of the 6<sup>th</sup> year they will be dismissed from the program for “failure to make adequate progress”, unless the student has otherwise received special permission from the program.

\* Students are expected to *defend* their dissertation by the last day of the Spring semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Note: One year covid ‘Stop-the-clock’: All students who were a member of our program between January 2020 and December 2022 are granted a one year ‘stop-the-clock’ for meeting the milestones in our program manual. In other words, eligible students will receive an extra year to meet all milestones.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Requests for a temporary leave of absence must be filed with the program committee in advance of the leave (See Department Graduate Manual and UNT Graduate Catalog for details).

## **FACULTY MENTOR – STUDENT MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS**

The Behavioral Science program follows the mentorship model in which students are assigned one or more primary faculty mentors. Mentors will be identified in the letter students receive accepting them into the program. Mentors will be responsible for facilitating student professional development. Specific responsibilities will include provision of advanced training in research, writing, and publication as well as extension of advice on teaching where appropriate. Mentors and mentees are expected to meet at least once a month during the fall and spring semesters, working together to achieve training goals. Within the first two weeks of each Fall semester, students are expected to complete a first draft of an Individualized Development Plan (IDP; copies of the standard IDP form can be obtained from the program director). The main purpose of the IDP is to summarize goals for the academic year. Mentors are expected to meet with their mentees no later than the end of September each year to go over the IDP and make agreed upon revisions if necessary. Though the IDP is used to set agreed upon goals for the academic year between mentors and mentees, it is important to understand that the IDP is not a formal contract. In addition, in lieu of the standard IDP form, mentors and mentees may choose to use an alternative IDP document (such as one with a more open format consisting of written paragraphs), as long as the alternative IDP document is reasonably similar to the standard IDP form in terms of the content it covers. Students are expected to reach out to their mentors as needs arise for guidance, and to honor trusted agreements (e.g., assignment due dates). Mentors and mentees are expected to respond as promptly as possible to one another’s emails and other communications. Mentors are expected to convey quality mentorship that best helps mentees achieve their goals within the program and become competitive for jobs and post-doctoral fellowships after graduation. If students become dissatisfied with their mentors or decide a different mentor or set of mentors would better help them achieve their professional goals (e.g. a major change in the research interests of the student), then the student may switch faculty mentors, as long as newly selected mentors agree to the change.

## **UNACCEPTABLE PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

In all aspects of training, student behaviors that are deemed as professionally problematic may result in program sanctions. Included among the sanctions is dismissal from the program in cases where problematic behaviors cannot be corrected. If professionally problematic behaviors are in clear violation of ethical or legal standards, they may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

## **FACULTY-STUDENT CONFLICTS**

From time to time, professionals in academic, organizational, or health care settings encounter difficulties that arise in their relationships with other professionals. These sorts of problems also can occur in professional training relationships. Faculty and students strongly are encouraged to work out problems and difficulties with one another within their professional relationship. Students are also encouraged to discuss the manner with the Program Director (or department chair/ombudsperson if conflict is with the program director), who will then attempt to resolve the conflict. When students approach the Program Director, they have the right to state that all contents of the upcoming conversation is *strictly confidential*. In this scenario, the Program Director may not share any content of the conversation with anyone else, similar to Client-Therapist confidentiality. This policy is to ensure that students can share their concerns with the Program Director in a confidential manner.

An important caveat to this policy of confidentiality occurs if a student discloses any information concerning sexual harassment or threat of homicide or suicide. In concordance with Texas Senate Bill 212, all University of North Texas employees are required to report all events of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that involve a current student or employee. These reports are made to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further, if you tell us you plan to hurt yourself or someone else, or of any abuse of a vulnerable population (e.g., a child), we are also required to report this information to the authorities. In addition, UNT policy requires faculty to report credible allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to OEO (Equal Opportunity) immediately. Hence students should understand that some of the information disclosed in an otherwise confidential meeting, may be shared by the Program Director (or faculty member) to the appropriate authorities, if required by the law.

If the student's conflict is with the Program Director, students can approach the Psychology Faculty Ombudsperson, with which students can have a similar confidential conversation. Students have the agency to address their concerns with any member of the faculty, student body, administration, or others, as they deem appropriate and in consideration of trust, comfort, and confidence with such persons. If students have issues that are not confidential, but want to be addressed, students should communicate the issue to the BSci Student Representatives, who will then formally bring the issue up at the next BSci Committee Meeting.

When the results of these efforts are unsatisfactory to either party, the difficulty may be brought to the program committee for resolution. Resolution begins with an advisory phase. During this phase, the student identifies to the program director (or department chair/ombudsperson if conflict is with the program director) or a faculty member to serve on the advisory committee. The faculty member in conflict also identifies a faculty member to the program director (or department chair/ombudsperson) to serve on the advisory committee. These two appointees identify a third faculty member to the program director (or department chair/ombudsperson) to serve on the advisory committee and to chair the committee. This ad hoc committee is charged by the program director (or chair/ombudsperson) to meet with all parties in order to understand the conflict and determine a course of action to resolve the conflict.

## **GRADE APPEALS**

The procedure for grade appeals is provided in the UNT Graduate School Catalogs.

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT**

The program cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities (cf. Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act). If you experience any problems in getting reasonable accommodations, please contact the UNT Psychology Department Liaison or the ODA. Also, the program complies with the University's policies concerning discrimination and sexual harassment. If you have any complaints please contact the UNT departmental chairperson or UNT Equal Opportunity Office.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

Students/Faculty/Supervisors/The program does not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law.

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Financial support is available on a competitive basis through the Psychology Department via teaching and research assistantships as well as teaching fellowships. Further information regarding teaching appointments may be obtained from Dr. Don Dougherty, Chair of the Psychology Department. Competitive scholarships/fellowships are also available through the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies (<http://tsgs.unt.edu/future-students/funding-your-graduate-education/awards>). All students are also encouraged to pursue external funding opportunities through APA, Psi Chi, and research societies in their areas.

Newly admitted students should explore funding opportunities from both UNT and external sources as early as possible to take advantage of opportunities with early deadlines. For example, APA offers funding for entering first year graduate students with applications due in June (<http://www.apa.org/about/awards/apags-psi-chi.aspx>).