

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022/2023

Boston University  
Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences  
64 Cummington Mall  
Boston, MA 02215  
<http://www.bu.edu/psych/>

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## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

Email addresses for all faculty & staff  
can be found on the BU website at  
<http://www.bu.edu/directory/>

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<u>DESKTOP SERVICES SPECIALIST II</u>			
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DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY (cont.)

Program Affiliation:

B = Brain, Behavior & Cognition

C = Clinical

DS = Developmental Science

LEC = Full-Time Lecturer

LOA = Leave of Absence

SAB = On Sabbatical

<u>FACULTY</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
David Somers (B) Chair	64 Cummington Mall 677 Beacon St.	149C 110	353-2583 & 358-1372
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CLINICAL & RESEARCH

<u>FACULTY</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Lindsay Butler-Trump (DS) Research Assistant Professor	64 Cummington Mall	TBA	353-2000
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Rachel Merson (C) Research Assistant Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	216	353-9610
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Steven Sandage (STH) Danielsen Professor of Psychology of Religion & Theology	745 Commonwealth Ave.	353-3050
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ADJUNCT FACULTY

Jonathan Comer (Adjunct Professor)  
 Joseph DeGutis (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Fabio Idrobo (Adjunct Assistant Professor)  
 David Langer (Adjunct Research Associate Professor)  
 Ruth McKenzie (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Sandra Neargarder (Adjunct Research Professor)  
 Yakeel Quiroz (Adjunct Research Associate Professor)  
 Shannon Sauer-Zavala (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Jason Sherfey (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Arthur Wingfield (Adjunct Research Professor)

## M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTERS STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Candidates for the M.A. in Psychology must complete eight semester courses (32 credits). The three courses listed below are required:

PS704 A1 CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN PSYCHOLOGY. This course, offered in the fall semester, is a proseminar in which a number of department faculty present their current research. Topics covered include areas such as brain functioning, language acquisition, cognition, genetic bases of behavior, drugs and behavior, addiction, and selected topics in social psychology, clinical interventions and human development.

MA 614 STATISTICAL METHODS II. This course reviews all basic concepts covered in a first semester statistics course (e.g., CAS MA 613) and presents in detail more advanced topics such as analysis of variance, covariance, experimental design, correlation, regression, and selected non-parametric techniques. This is a problem-solving course in which students carry out analysis of data taken from educational and other social science sources.

PS 901 or PS 902 DIRECTED STUDY IN PSYCHOLOGY. Students, working with a faculty supervisor, undertake an independent research project. A written product is required, which is usually a report of an empirical study or an extensive literature review with a theoretical contribution.

In addition, students must fulfill the comprehensive requirement. The rationale for the comprehensive requirement is that students should demonstrate proficiency in several major areas of psychology. M.A. students must demonstrate knowledge by successfully completing at least one approved course from two of the three programmatic knowledge areas.

### Programmatic Areas

#### Brain, Behavior & Cognition

- 520 – Research Methods for Perception and Cognition
- 521 – Animal Models
- 525 – Cognitive Science
- 528 – Human Brain Mapping
- 529 – Neuroplasticity
- 530 – Neural Models of Memory Function
- 531 – Imaging & Manipulating Memories
- 532 – Neurobiology of Motivation
- 721 – General Experimental I
- 734 – Psychopharmacology
- 737 – Memory Systems of the Brain
- 821 – Learning
- 822 – Visual Perception
- 824 – Cognitive Psychology
- 828 – Seminar in Psycholinguistics
- 831 – Seminar: Neuropsychology
- 832 – Physiological Psychology
- 833 – Advanced Physiological Psychology
- 835 – Attention
- 836 – Molecules & Behavior

## Clinical

732 – Behavioral Medicine  
735 – Motivation  
773 – Child/Family Assessment  
791 – Social Oppression  
829 – Principles of Neuropsychology  
831 – Seminar in Neuropsychology  
860 – Child Therapy  
874 – Seminar: Psychotherapy  
875 – Advanced Psychopathology  
880 – Empirically Supported Treatments  
881 – Addictive Behaviors  
882 – Child/Family Treatment  
883 – Social Anxiety

## Developmental Science

541 – Social Development  
544 – Developmental Neuropsychology  
545 – Language Development  
546 – Cognitive Development  
549 – Developmental Psychopathology  
550 – Childhood Adversity  
743 – Cross Cultural Developmental Psychology  
747 – Infant Development  
790 – Family Theory & Research  
825 – Early Social Cognition  
840 – Developmental Behavioral Genetics  
843 – Life Span Development  
844 – Theories of Development  
847 – Atypical Development  
848 – Developmental Psycholinguistics  
893 – Contemporary Issues: Psychology Family

### Notes:

1) Students may request approval to transfer courses taken previously at other universities by filling out and submitting the GRS petition at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/current-students/phd-mfa-students/transfer-credits/>. Petitions will be forwarded to the department to be evaluated. Students will be required to submit a course description and syllabus to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai, Director of Academic Affairs.

2) Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher; only courses with grades of B- or better will count toward the degree and a student may have no more than two failing grades (lower than a B- or an incomplete grade older than 12 months) on their transcript in order to complete the degree. Additional information on satisfactory academic progress and the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GRS) dismissal policy is available at <https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/suspension-or-dismissal/>.



## M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Two categories of requirements are necessary for the M.A. degree en route to all the Ph.D. programs. Specific graduate programs may have their own additional requirements.

- I. Courses: A minimum of eight graduate level courses, including PS711 (Statistics in Psychology I) or MA 614 (Statistical Methods). Students must obtain prior departmental approval for any course they wish to take outside the Department or the University. Please see Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (jpalfai@bu.edu) for additional information.
- II. Research Activity: Requirements vary by program. For specific questions, see program directors.

**Clinical Program:** First-year graduate students immediately become involved in a clinical research laboratory or program with a faculty member. Students continue to be actively involved in programmatic research with their mentors throughout their tenure, and are also required to explore an additional area of interest (outside of their mentor's laboratory) as part of their Clinical Portfolio. The student must complete and write up a data based project (in publishable format) by the end of the second year.

**Brain, Behavior & Cognition:** First-year graduate students are expected to join a BBC research laboratory upon entering the program. During the first semester, students should work with their primary mentor to develop a training and research plan that will provide them with fundamental research skills necessary for them to embark on designing a research project. Progress on developing research skills and a research project will be evaluated by the mentor at the end of the first year. Students continue to be actively involved in programmatic research with their mentors in year two. The student must complete a project of publishable quality within the first two years.

**Developmental Science:** Year one is an apprenticeship in one of the Developmental Science faculty labs. Students work closely with a faculty mentor chosen early in the fall and during the admissions process on the basis of mutual interests. The purpose of the apprenticeship is to familiarize students with the process of research. During the first year, students should embark on the design of a research project with their mentor. The mentor will evaluate progress on this first year research project at the end of the first year. Year two of students' research activities can be a continuation of those begun in the first year. Alternatively, research activities can be undertaken in a different lab. The goal of research activities begun in the first year (and all research activities) should result in tangible research products including conference presentations/posters, brown bag presentations and manuscripts to be submitted for publication.

## M.A. DEGREE CALENDAR

Jan. 2023 Award      May 2023 Award      Aug. 2023 Award

\*[Intent to Graduate Form](#)    Sept. 23, 2022      Jan. 25, 2023      May 26, 2023

\*Students may fill out a diploma application before they satisfy all requirements. The Diploma application is available at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/ma-ms-academics/graduation-information/grs-intent-to-graduate-for-a-masters-degree/> and is valid only for the graduation date specified. New applications must be filed if students do not graduate as planned. Please note that the August 2023 graduation date is subject to change. For the most recent graduation calendar, please visit the Graduate School website at <http://www.bu.edu/cas/current-students/ma-and-ms-students/graduation-information/>.

PH.D. DEGREE  
2022-2023

Students are admitted to one of the following Ph.D. programmatic areas: Brain, Behavior & Cognition; Clinical; Developmental Science. Time allowed to complete all requirements for the Ph.D. is seven years from the student's date of entry into the program. Milestones for completion of requirements for each program can be found at <http://www.bu.edu/psych/resources/student-resources/phd-resources/phd-milestones/>. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher; only courses with grades of B- or better will count toward the degree and a student may have no more than two failing grades (lower than a B- or an incomplete grade older than 12 months) on their transcript in order to complete the degree. Additional information on satisfactory academic progress and the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GRS) dismissal policy is available at <https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/suspension-or-dismissal/>.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PH.D. PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

I. Courses: In addition to the 8-course M.A. requirement, Ph.D. candidates shall complete a minimum of 8 graduate level courses, including PS712 (Statistics in Psychology II). Minimum course requirements are greater in some programs. Students must obtain prior departmental approval for any course they wish to take outside the Department or the University. Please contact Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (jpalfai@bu.edu) for additional information.

II. Qualifying Examination/Requirement: The method of completing the qualifying examination/requirement differs in each program. Please see individual programs' sections in this handbook for additional information on the BBC and DS requirements and in the Clinical Program Handbook for more detailed information on the Clinical Program's requirement. Please note that the qualifying exam/requirement must be completed prior to development of the prospectus by students in all programs and students in any program who have incompletes are ineligible.

III. Residency: Each student must satisfy a residency requirement of a minimum of two consecutive, regular semesters of full-time graduate study at Boston University. Students must also be registered in the semester in which they complete degree requirements and in the preceding semester but do not necessarily have to be registered as full-time students. Full-time study is interpreted to consist of full-time commitment to the student's discipline as determined by the Department. Normally this includes access to libraries, laboratories, instructional staff, and other academic facilities of the Department and University. It does not necessarily imply full-time course enrollment. For example, doctoral students carrying one and one-half or more semester courses and holding appointments as teaching fellows or research assistants are automatically considered full-time students for the purposes of residency. If students are not TF's or RA's and are taking fewer than 12 credits, but are eligible for full-time status (e.g. conducting research in addition to coursework), they need to fill out and submit the full-time certification form, available at <http://www.bu.edu/cas/current-students/ma-and-ms-students/student-forms/> (select Continuing Study and Certified Full-Time Registration).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. IN THE BRAIN, BEHAVIOR AND COGNITION PROGRAM

In addition to departmental requirements, there are five requirements of the Ph.D. program in the Brain Behavior and Cognition (BBC) area, which are outlined below.

I. Research training in the laboratory. First-year graduate students commit to a primary mentor upon entering the program and join a BBC research laboratory. During the first semester, students work with their primary mentor to develop a training and research plan that will provide them with fundamental research skills necessary for them to embark on designing an independent research project. Progress on developing research skills and research progress will be evaluated by the mentor each year.

II. Breadth of knowledge. The breadth of knowledge goal will be met by successful completion of coursework, in addition to attendance at seminars and research meetings, and independent reading and qualifications study. \*Four courses from the following list must be taken. For all coursework, the lowest acceptable grade is a B-. Only one B- grade can count toward the breadth requirement. Those Individuals who enter the Program with a Master's Degree will have their requirements established on a case-by-case basis.

### BRAIN, BEHAVIOR, AND COGNITION

Animal Models (PS 521)  
Human Brain Mapping (PS 528)  
Neuroplasticity (PS 529)  
Neural Models of Memory Function (PS 530)  
Imaging & Manipulating Memories (PS 531)  
Neurobiology of Motivation (PS 532)  
Developmental Neuropsychology (PS 544)  
Language Development (PS 545)  
Behavioral Medicine (PS 732)  
Psychopharmacology (PS 734)  
Memory Systems of the Brain (PS 737)  
Visual Perception (PS 822)  
Cognitive Psychology (PS 824)  
Seminar in Psycholinguistics (PS 828)  
Principles of Neuropsychology (PS 829)  
Seminar in Neuropsychology (PS 831)  
Behavioral Modification (PS 890)  
Principles and Methods of Cognitive and Neural Modeling Me (CN 510)  
Learning Models (CN 570)  
Topics in Computational Neuroscience (CN 780)  
Neural Systems: Functional Circuit Analysis (Davison) (NE 741)  
Neural Systems: Cognition and Behavior (NE 742)  
Neural Systems (Barba's) (SAR HS 550)  
Readings in Neuroscience (Barba's) (SAR HS 755)

\*Students may petition to take other relevant courses to count toward the breadth requirement by submitting a request via email, along with a syllabus, to the BBC Program Director.

III. Qualifying Examination. Qualifying exams are structured to provide depth and breadth to the student is training. The goal is for the student to be conversant in several domains that have relevance to the planned dissertation topic. **All coursework must be complete and incompletes must be resolved before the Qualifying exam can be taken.** It is recommended that students take the Qualifying Exam sometime between their second and third year (please see Milestones for completion of requirements at <http://www.bu.edu/psych/resources/student-resources/phd-resources/phd-milestones/>).

#### *Procedures for Scheduling and Writing the Qualifying Examination*

The first step is for students, in collaboration with their thesis advisor, to identify three topic areas and a qualifying committee comprised of three faculty members with expertise in the topic areas. One of these members can be from outside the BBC Program, with the program director's approval. Topic areas should be non-overlapping areas that are relevant to the intended dissertation project.

The student, in collaboration with the committee members, will then compile a list of 25 readings for each topic along with a brief description and justification for the selection of these three topics. These reading lists should be approved by all three committee members. Each member of the committee must be willing to compose two questions based on their list and must be willing to grade the exam.

The next step is to forward the topics, descriptions, and reading lists to the program director, who will send these materials to the BBC faculty for their approval. The student will be informed within two weeks as to whether or not their topics are approved.

The final step is to arrange a time for the exam. The BBC program administers qualifying examinations any time of the year, contingent upon the approval of the three faculty members on the Qualifying Exam Committee. The examination is administered in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences by the primary mentor. Students will receive two questions per day for three days, separated by one day of rest. This is a closed book examination. Students do not receive the questions until they sit for the exam. Each faculty person grades their section as pass, fail or honors. Occasionally, a truly outstanding set of answers will be given a grade of honors. In order to pass the examination, students must receive a "pass" grade on their answers to all three sections

Any section that does not receive a passing grade may be re-administered (with new questions) at the discretion of the Qualifying Exam Committee. If the re-written question is not passed, students may be given the option to take part or the entire exam again (at the discretion of the Qualifying Exam Committee), or they may be asked to leave the Program. The scheduling and supervision of the qualifying exam must be arranged by the dissertation advisor.

IV. BBC currently supports and encourages students to attend relevant colloquia including BBC colloquia, those from the graduate program for Neuroscience (GPN), the Center for Systems of Neuroscience (CSN), and Center for Memory and Brain (CMB). Students should discuss with their primary advisor which are the most relevant seminars to attend. These may also include seminars at Harvard, MIT, BU Medical School, Sargent College and area hospitals. Students are encouraged to attend seminars throughout their training.

V. The Annual Progress Report must be submitted and, if requested by the primary mentor, a conference with BBC faculty must be attended to discuss progress in the program. Once per year, after completion of the spring semester, students will be required to hand in a progress report. A sample progress report form can be obtained from the Senior Staff Assistant ([psych@bu.edu](mailto:psych@bu.edu)). This will enable the primary faculty

mentor and BBC faculty to evaluate students' progress in a variety of domains: 1) coursework for the departmental and program requirements; 2) establishment of a committee for the qualifying exam; 3) research and dissertation progress.

The BBC faculty mentor will meet regularly with each student to assess progress and in later years this meeting should include dissertation committee members. BBC faculty mentors, as well as students, can schedule a meeting with the BBC Director on an as needed basis.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. IN THE CLINICAL PROGRAM

Please refer to the Clinical Program's Student Handbook for specific program and licensure requirements.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

The program in Developmental Science (DS) is designed to provide students with advanced training in the field of developmental psychology, with an emphasis on early childhood. The program represents the breadth of the discipline, offering research opportunities across different developmental domains using multiple methodologies, and exploring the integration of basic developmental science with practice and policy. The coursework and research training focus on the following core themes:

- Continuity and change
- Major domains – cognition; social cognition; language and socio-emotional development
- Contexts of development – genetic; neurobiological; family and culture
- Development in typical and atypical populations

#### Course Requirements

Among the 8 courses (post-M.A.) required for the Ph.D., PS 844 (Theories of Development), PS 716 (Psychological Research Methods), PS 718 (Advanced Quantitative Methods), and PS 909/910 (Professional Issues in Psychological Science) are required of all students in the Program in Developmental Science.

#### Additional courses for the Ph.D. in Developmental Science include:

A: At least 4 courses from the following list (or equivalents) of courses on Domains and Contexts of Development

- CAS PS 541 Social Development
- CAS PS 544 Developmental Neuropsychology
- CAS PS 546 Cognitive Development
- CAS PS 550 Childhood Adversity
- CAS PS 560 Cross-Cultural Psychology
- GRS PS 750 Mind and Language
- GRS PS 840 Developmental Behavioral Genetics
- GRS PS 843 Lifespan Development
- GRS PS 847 Atypical Development

Students may petition on a case-by-case basis to count courses taught in other schools or departments at BU toward the Domains and Contexts of Development requirements.

## Research Involvement

Developmental Science students are required to become actively engaged in research as soon as possible, and to seek out research experiences that will prepare them for their own dissertation research and beyond. Doctoral students should learn about the research interests and activities of faculty in the Developmental Science Program and elsewhere in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences - please see the description of faculty research projects at <http://www.bu.edu/psych/research/> and lab-specific websites at <http://www.bu.edu/cdl>. Discussions with faculty members, and with other students, will help new students to locate research opportunities.

Students, in their first semester, should locate a faculty member with whom to work and a lab to join. During their first year, they should embark upon research activities including literature review, data collection, data analysis, and report writing. In their second year, it is expected that students will make a Brown Bag presentation on the research they began during their first year in the program. Students may choose to work with more than one faculty member or research group, or may choose to switch from one to another during the year, as long as agreed-upon responsibilities are fulfilled. As they progress through the graduate program, students should undertake more demanding and sophisticated research responsibilities, ultimately leading to publications and the preparation of papers for presentation at professional conferences. Students should also keep a log of their research experiences and should be prepared to discuss them with their advisors.

Students are allowed to take no more than four Directed Studies in Psychology (GRS PS 901/902) during the first two years. In some cases, students may take additional Directed Studies with approval from the Program Director.

## Departmental Service Requirement

Beginning in the second year, students are required to engage in substantive service each year at the program level and/or the departmental level. This may include joining the Developmental Science Prospective Students' Day Committee, the Developmental Science Colloquium Committee, or the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Students whose labs use Babybase are also required to participate in at least one recruitment event per semester. Students who take the initiative to create new programs or events in service of DS or the department, such as organizing workshops or panels open to all DS undergraduate research assistants, can also count this effort to fulfill their annual DS service requirement.

Students with leadership service roles at the university level, such as in the graduate student union or on university-level committees, may petition to count this role as their DS service requirement for the year.

Service within one lab, such as mentoring undergraduates or organizing lab-based recruitment, is valued and expected of all doctoral students. Service to the lab is *not*, however, a substitute for departmental service. Similarly, professional service outside the university is valued and encouraged but does not count for the DS service requirement.

## Developmental Science Brown Bag and Colloquia Series:

Students in the Developmental Science Ph.D. program are required to attend all colloquia organized by the program and to participate in the regular Brown Bag and Meeting of the Minds series. These are regularly scheduled on Wednesday afternoons; a time period that should be reserved for Developmental Science program activities. Students are required to present their research formally during the Brown Bag series in

their second year of the program. The Brown Bag presentation is similar in format to a conference talk. Students are also required to present research in progress during Meeting of the Minds once each academic year (except for their second year). Meeting of the Minds presentations are an opportunity for DS students to discuss current projects with the DS community and receive feedback and advice. Examples of appropriate Meeting of the Minds topics include presenting the protocol of a planned study; data analyses in progress; or a dilemma the student is grappling with on a current research project.

### Qualifying Requirements

Students should aim to complete their Qualifying Requirements, which marks their progress toward their dissertation, by the end of summer of their second year. Completion is required by the end of the spring semester in their third year in the program. Students should assemble a Qualifying Committee (three members of the DS faculty) who will guide, evaluate and provide final approval for the qualifying requirements. Students must complete the Empirical Paper and one option from Section 2 with a passing grade.

- 1) Empirical Paper: All students must submit an empirical paper presenting original research conducted by the student that is suitable for publication, with the student as first author. The paper will be evaluated in terms of its potential for publication. Empirical papers that have been accepted for publication in a scholarly journal (e.g., *Child Development*, *Cognition*, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *Developmental Science*) do not require further evaluation by the committee. This paper must be written according to APA Publication Manual Guidelines – 7th edition.
- 2) In addition to the Empirical Paper, students must complete ONE of the following three options:
  - a. Research Grant Proposal: The research proposal should be 6-8 pages in length and should include, at a minimum, the following sections: Specific Aims, Background / Significance, Methods (including Analysis Plan and Power Analysis), and Potential Problems / Alternate Strategies. Students who submit a grant proposal following these general guidelines, and are approved for funding, do not require further evaluation by the committee. Students are welcome to expand and adapt a submitted grant proposal to these guidelines in order to submit it for their second qualifying requirement (e.g. an NSF or Clara Mayo proposal can be expanded to the required length and to include these sections).
  - b. Registered Report: The Registered Report should adhere to the general template or journal-specific guidelines available through OSF at <https://cos.io/rr/>. Students are encouraged to pre-register their study on OSF, whether or not they choose to submit the Registered Report for peer review. If students are using archival data, it is acceptable to write a Registered Report to pre-register analyses. If the Registered Report is peer reviewed and accepted to a scholarly journal, it does not require further evaluation by the committee.
  - c. Systematic Review: Students select a topic in the field of Developmental Science and conduct a systematic review, that is, an exhaustive search of all relevant work on the topic and a synthesis and critique of the state of the field on this topic. Students are encouraged to conduct a meta-analysis, but may also choose to conduct a qualitative (narrative) systematic review. Students are urged to consult the guide to best practices for systematic reviews published in *Annual Review of Psychology* (Siddaway, Wood, & Hedges, 2019). The paper will be evaluated in terms of its potential for publication. Systematic reviews that have been accepted for publication in a scholarly journal (e.g., *Psychological Bulletin*; *Cognitive Development*; *Infancy*) do not require further



evaluation by the committee. This paper must be written according to APA Publication Manual Guidelines – 7th edition.

Notes:

1) The Empirical Paper must be on a separate topic from the student's eventual dissertation. Students are permitted to include, in their dissertation, the research proposed in the Grant Application or Pre-Registered Report submitted for the Qualifying Requirement. The dissertation also can be informed by literature reviewed for the Systematic Review.

2) A student who fails a qualifying paper may be given an opportunity to re-write the qualifying paper, at the discretion of his or her Qualifying Committee. Students who fail a re-write may be terminated from the Program.

3) Qualifying requirements cannot be fulfilled by writing two Empirical Papers. It is expected and encouraged that students will write more than one empirical paper in their first 2-3 years in the program. However, the purpose of the qualifying requirements is to support students in developing a skill set in multiple forms of academic writing.

### Annual Review

Once per year, at the end of the spring semester, students will be required to hand in a progress report that enables program faculty to evaluate students' progress in: 1) coursework for the departmental and program requirements; 2) establishment of a committee and progress towards completion of the qualifying requirements; 3) research (i.e., what research activities have been pursued, have students submitted their work for presentation or publication). A sample progress report form can be obtained from the Senior Staff Assistant ([psych@bu.edu](mailto:psych@bu.edu)). The student is expected to meet with their mentor to discuss the progress report prior to submitting it to the Program Director.

## PROSPECTUS AND ORAL EXAMINATION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IN ALL DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

**Please note that all coursework and any incompletes must be finished prior to scheduling the prospectus hearing.**

### Development of Prospectus and Selection of Dissertation Committee

After successful completion of the Qualifying Examination, the candidate and the first reader proceed to select a dissertation problem and a framework for the research. The first reader must have a primary or joint appointment in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences. The Brain, Behavior & Cognition Program requires that the first reader is also a member of the student's program. However, the Program will entertain petitions for exceptions to this policy, subject to the requirement that a member of the Program is actively involved in the student's dissertation research and serves as second reader on the dissertation committee. A second and third reader are chosen and consulted during this period. All three readers critically review the Prospectus drafts. **Please note that all three readers are required to attend the prospectus hearing. One committee member, who is not the first reader, can attend via audio/video communication during the prospectus hearing.**

Special Service Appointments: The department must submit a request for a Special Service Appointment for any reader who is not a member of the Boston University faculty. Initiating such appointments requires a letter from the student's first reader outlining the person's expertise. A current CV must be attached. The

letter and CV needs to be sent electronically to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu))

Research Ethics: Research involving human subjects must be reviewed by the University Institutional Review Board. The applications are available at <http://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/compliance/human-subjects/submitting-an-irb-protocol/>. Please contact Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)) with any questions. All animal research requires review by the University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Please discuss with your mentor the specific ethics training requirements necessary for the conduct of research in your area.

### Format of the Prospectus

The prospectus should contain: 1) an introduction, 2) a description of methods, 3) a description of research design (including the hypothesis of each experiment and information such as the number of subjects and a data analyses plan), 4) a trouble-shooting section at the end of your document indicating what might go wrong and is the study valuable if hypotheses are not supported, etc., and 5) a bibliography. The abstract should not be included in the prospectus. The abstract is submitted separately. (Please see instructions under prospectus hearing procedures.) The prospectus must not exceed twenty double-spaced pages, not including the title page or the bibliography. The title page should not be numbered. Margins should be 1” on all sides and the font of the entire document, including headers, should not be smaller than 11 point. Appendices should be reserved for non-essential information. Please note that a description of measures is essential information and should, therefore, be included in the text of the prospectus.

### Prospectus Hearing Procedures

- I. Two weeks before hearing, the following documents must be submitted electronically to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai at [jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu):
  - A) A copy of the full prospectus, which must not exceed twenty double-spaced pages.
  - B) A single document containing a 2 to 3 page abstract of the prospectus, along with an invitation to the faculty (p. 19). The invitation should indicate: 1) time and location; 2) committee members; 3) place (Rm. 149A) where faculty and others may find a full prospectus. The Senior Staff Assistant ([psych@bu.edu](mailto:psych@bu.edu)) will assign the hearing room for students who would like to schedule their defenses at 64 Cummington Mall. The Clinical Program Coordinator ([nclement@bu.edu](mailto:nclement@bu.edu)) will schedule the room for students who would like to schedule their hearings at 900 Commonwealth Ave.

### II. The Hearing:

The candidate, the three readers and any other interested faculty meet to assess the Prospectus. The Prospectus must be approved and signed on the Dissertation Prospectus Approval Form (available on the GRS web site at <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/grs-phd-forms-policies-procedures/grs-dissertation-and-graduation-procedures/>, select Dissertation Prospectus) by all three readers, after any required revisions are made by the student. The three readers now become the candidate's permanent Dissertation Committee.

### III. After the Hearing and approval by the three readers:

The candidate submits an electronic copy of the final version of the prospectus and the signed Dissertation Prospectus Approval Form to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)), who will obtain approval from Dr. Alice Cronin-Golomb, Director of Graduate Studies, and Dr. David Somers, Chair. After approval has been obtained, the candidate will be notified.

SAMPLE INVITATION TO PROSPECTUS HEARING  
(Attach to abstract)

TO: Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences Faculty

FROM: Your Name

RE: Dissertation Prospectus Hearing

The assessment for my dissertation prospectus will be held on Friday, October 14, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences, Room 150, 64 Cummington Mall.

The dissertation title is "The Problems Encountered and Pitfalls Avoided in Writing a Graduate Student Guide to the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences".

The first reader is \_\_\_\_\_, Ph.D.; the second reader is \_\_\_\_\_, Ph.D.; and the third reader is \_\_\_\_\_, Ph.D. of the University of Massachusetts.

Attached is an abstract of the prospectus. A copy of the complete prospectus is on file in the office of Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai (Room 149A).

## Preparing the Thesis

During the process of dissertation research, the candidate is expected to consult with members of the Dissertation Committee. All readers review the candidate's first thesis draft. It is suggested that the thesis be written in a form that need not be radically altered for publication. Students should consult with their dissertation advisor about the appropriate format to follow. For those students planning to use APA style, the APA Publication Manual is available for purchase from:

American Psychological Association  
Publications Office  
1200 17th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036.

All students should also obtain A Guide for the Writers of Theses and Dissertations from <http://library.bu.edu/theses>.

## Dissertation Oral Defense

The Orals Committee consists of the three readers and two additional committee members, one of whom serves as committee chair. The first reader and the committee chair must have primary appointments in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences. All five committee members are required to attend the final oral examination. One committee member, who is not the chair of the committee or the first reader, can attend via audio/video communication during the final oral examination. The first reader and the student are responsible for setting the date of the Oral Examination.

AT LEAST FIVE WEEKS BEFORE THE ORALS DATE, students must:

\_\_ obtain a copy of the Ph.D. Schedule of Final Oral Examination with Abstract Approval cover sheet from the GRS web site (<http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/grs-phd-forms-policies-procedures/grs-dissertation-and-graduation-procedures/>, select Schedule of Final Oral Exam with Abstract) and submit the form and the abstract to the major professor for approval. After the major professor approves the abstract by signing the form, please submit an electronic copy of both the abstract and Schedule of Final Oral Examination with Abstract Approval cover sheet to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)) who will obtain approval from the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. Students may need a longer lead-in time during the summer months because faculty are often away. Please note that the abstract must be written in a clear and concise manner and must strictly follow University guidelines for formatting.

Notes:

- Although the Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations states that there is no limit to the abstract, the department requires that it does not exceed 350 words. A sample abstract can be found at: [http://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content\\_id=24728519](http://library.bu.edu/ld.php?content_id=24728519).
- While GRS requires that the Schedule of Final Oral Exam with Abstract be submitted three weeks before the date of the hearing, students need to submit these materials to the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences five weeks in advance of the hearing date to allow ample time for review and to obtain the necessary signatures.

AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE ORALS DATE, students must:

\_\_ after approval and signatures are obtained from the major professor, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Chair, the dissertation abstract along with the Ph.D. Schedule of Final Oral

Examination with Abstract Approval cover sheet is submitted by Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai to GRS for review by the Dean. After the abstract has been reviewed by the GRS Dean, students will be notified as to whether or not it has been approved or if revisions are required. If revisions are required, students will need to resubmit a revised copy to GRS.

\_\_ submit a draft of the dissertation emailed as a .pdf to the GRS Records Office at [grsrec@bu.edu](mailto:grsrec@bu.edu) for the Graduate School's format review.

AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE ORALS DATE, students must:

\_\_ submit electronically one (1) invitation to the Dissertation Defense (same format as invitation to the prospectus hearing on p. 19) and one (1) copy of the approved abstract to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)).

\_\_ submit electronically a copy of the full dissertation to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai at [jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu).

The responsibility of the Orals Committee is to determine whether the candidate has presented an adequate defense of the Dissertation. Only one FAIL vote is permissible for a pass. If it is determined that a re-examination will be permitted, the Examination Committee will make recommendations regarding any necessary changes in the thesis. The Dissertation must be approved and signed by the Readers. Revisions may be requested.

UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE ORALS EXAMINATION, students must:

\_\_ submit an electronic copy of the signed Examination Report Form (obtained from the first reader) and signed signature page, signed by the three readers, as well as the final signed copy of the dissertation to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)).

\_\_ submit the final approved dissertation to the Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) web site (<http://www.etsadmin.com/bu>).

\_\_ submit the electronic Contact Information Form online (<https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/graduation-information/>, Click on Final Dissertation Submission).

\_\_ submit the Dissertation Processing Fee of \$115, which can be paid online via credit card by clicking on the link provided at the Guide for Writers of Theses and Dissertations (<http://www.bu.edu/library/guide/theses/>, under Library Submission).

2022/2023 GRADUATION CALENDAR  
PH.D. DEGREE CANDIDATES

A candidate must be registered for the semester in which degree requirements are completed and during the preceding semester.

	<u>Jan. 2023 Award</u>	<u>May 2023 Award</u>	<u>Aug. 2023 Award</u>
Dissertation Prospectus	As soon as approved but no later than six months before dissertation defense	As soon as approved but no later than six months before dissertation defense	As soon as approved but no later than six months before dissertation defense
<u>*Intent to Graduate</u>	Sept. 23, 2022	Jan. 25, 2023	May 26, 2023
Dissertation Abstract submitted to Department for review (submitted to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai)	At least five weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least five weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least five weeks prior to Final Oral Exam
<u>Schedule of Final Oral Examination with Abstract Approval</u> submitted to GRS office to be approved by the Associate Dean	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam
Properly Formatted <u>Draft</u> of Dissertation emailed as a PDF to <a href="mailto:grsrec@bu.edu">grsrec@bu.edu</a>	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam	At least three weeks prior to Final Oral Exam
Last date to hold Final Oral Examination	Dec. 2, 2022	April 7, 2023	July 7, 2023
**Last date for submission Dissertation to ETD ( <a href="http://www.etsadmin.com/bu">http://www.etsadmin.com/bu</a> ), Dissertation Processing Fee to GRS Office, <u>Contact Information form</u> , BU Doctoral Exit Survey, and Survey of Earned Doctorates	Dec. 9, 2022	April 14, 2023	July 14, 2022
Last date for submission to ETD and Dissertation Processing Fee to GRS Office for graduation in the next semester without registering for that semester	Jan. 9, 2023	May 8, 2023	Aug. 4, 2023

\*The intent to graduate form is available online at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/graduation-information/intent-to-graduate-form-for-phd-students/> and is valid only for the graduation date specified. New applications must be filed if students do not graduate as planned. Please note that the August 2023 graduation dates are subject to change. For the most recent graduation calendar, please visit the Graduate School website at <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/grs-forms-policies-procedures/grs-phd-forms-policies-procedures/grs-dissertation-and-graduation->

[procedures/](#).

\*\*All Ph.D. requirements are complete only when the copy of the dissertation has been certified as meeting the standards of GRS and accepted by the library.

## APPENDIX

### Collaborative Research

The faculty member and student should discuss ownership of data and authorship on presentations/publications early enough in the process so that each is aware of his/her role, and should publicly acknowledge one another's contributions at conferences, in written work, etc. Guidelines about authorship and authorship order are addressed further in the APA Ethical Standards, available at <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx?item=11>.