

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024/2025

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY	3
II. M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTERS STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY	7
III. M.A. DEGREE CALENDAR	9
IV. PH.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	10
V. PROSPECTUS AND ORAL EXAMINATION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IN ALL DOCTORAL PROGRAMS	17
VI. SAMPLE INVITATION TO PROSPECTUS HEARING	19
VII. GRADUATION CALENDAR PH.D. DEGREE CANDIDATES	22
VIII. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	23
IX. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH	23

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

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

<u>ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
<u>CHAIR</u>			
Chantal Stern, D.Phil.	64 Cummington Mall 610 Commonwealth Ave.	149C 905B	353-2583 & 353-1396
<u>DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS &amp; UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES</u>			
Joanne Hebden Palfai, Ph.D.	64 Cummington Mall	149A	353-2064
<u>ACADEMIC ADVISORS (UNDERGRADUATE)</u>			
Jessica Kelly	64 Cummington Mall	138	353-3943
Katie O'Shea	64 Cummington Mall	134	358-6886
<u>SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY</u>			
Mary Perry	64 Cummington Mall	149B	353-2583
<u>SENIOR STAFF ASSISTANT</u>			
Suzanne Tran	64 Cummington Mall	149	353-2580
<u>PROGRAM COORDINATORS</u>			
Program Coordinator, Clinical			
Nicole Clement	900 Commonwealth Ave.	200E	353-2587
Senior Program Coordinator, Brain, Behavior & Cognition/ Developmental Science/Master's Program			
TBA	64 Cummington Mall	140	353-6423
<u>BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
<u>BUSINESS MANAGER</u>			
Scott Enos	64 Cummington Mall	139	358-1371
<u>BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR</u>			
Geri Wilson	64 Cummington Mall	149D	353-2582
<u>GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR</u>			
TBA	64 Cummington Mall	119	353-4089
<u>SENIOR ACCOUNTS COORDINATOR</u>			
Tyler Ware	64 Cummington Mall	136	353-2688

# 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>
Chantal Stern (B)	64 Cummington Mall	149C	353-2583 &
Chair	610 Commonwealth Ave.	905B	353-1396
Peter Blake (DS)	64 Cummington Mall	115	358-6024
Catherine Caldwell-Harris (B)	64 Cummington Mall	123	353-2956
Chandramouli Chandrasekaran (B)	11 Cummington Mall	210	358-1373
James Cherry (B)	2 Cummington Mall	402A	353-3254
Alice Cronin-Golomb (B, C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	275	353-3911
Director of Graduate Studies			
Rachel Denison (B)	11 Cummington Mall	258	TBA
Brett DiBenedictis (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	135	353-2799
Tracy Dunne (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	130	353-3629
Todd Farchione (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	264	353-9610
Anne Gehrenbeck-Shim (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	133	353-2580
Michael E. Hasselmo (B)	610 Commonwealth Ave.	705B	353-1397
Marc Howard (B)	610 Commonwealth Ave.	705A	353-8448
(LOA SEM I & II)			
Mark Howe (B)	610 Commonwealth Ave.	905A	353-0425
Chloe Jordan (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	112A	353-5314
Deborah Kelemen (DS)	64 Cummington Mall	121	353-2758
Melissa Kibbe (DS)	64 Cummington Mall	117	358-1587
Sam Ling (B)	11 Cummington Mall	260	353-9485
Brain, Behavior & Cognition Program Director (SAB SEM II)			
Qimin Liu (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave	245B	353-9610
Kristin Long (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	212	358-4296
Joseph McGuire (B)	11 Cummington Mall	262	353-7670
Tara Mandalaywala (DS)	64 Cummington Ave.	125	TBA
Diane Mello-Goldner (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	131	TBA
Andrea Mercurio (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	127	353-3204
Samuel Meisel (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	214	TBA
Heidi Meyer (B)	677 Beacon Street	705B	353-4336
(LOA SEM I)			
Michael Otto (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	270	353-9610
Tibor Palfai (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	258	353-9345
Donna Pincus (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	214	353-9610
MA Program Director			
Steve Ramirez (B)	610 Commonwealth Ave.	805A	353-0879
Robert Reinhart (B)	11 Cummington Mall	264	353-9481
Mark Richardson (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	279	353-4662
Kimberly Saudino (DS)	64 Cummington Mall	105	353-3679
Benjamin Scott (B)	610 Commonwealth Ave.	205C	353-6782
David Shim (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	129	353-3111

# DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY (cont.)

<u>FACULTY (CONT.)</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Lisa Smith (C) CARD & Psychological Service Ctr. Director	900 Commonwealth Ave.	209	353-9610
David Somers (B) (SAB SEM II)	11 Cummington Mall	228	358-1372
Amelia Stanton	900 Commonwealth Ave.	257	353-9610
Amanda Tarullo (DS) Developmental Science Program Director	64 Cummington Mall	113	353-3688
Martha Tompson (C) Clinical Program Director	900 Commonwealth Ave.	215	353-9495
Erika Tullgren (LEC)	64 Cummington Mall	105B	358-6270
Nicholas Wagner (DS)	64 Cummington Mall	119	353-3637

## CLINICAL & RESEARCH

<u>FACULTY</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>ROOM</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Yanru Chen (B) Research Assistant Professor	TBA	TBA	TBA
Alyssa Farley (C) Research Assistant Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	TBA	353-9610
Ellen S. Hendriksen (C) Clinical Assistant Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	250	353-9610
Sylvia Kinsky (C) Clinical Associate Professor	TBA	TBA	TBA
Ovsanna Leyfer (C) Research Assistant Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	211	353-9610
Rachel Merson (C) Assistant Clinical Program Director John Otis (C)	900 Commonwealth Ave.	216	353-9610
Commonwealth Ave. 208 Research Associate Professor	353-9610		900
Marie Parsons (C) Research Assistant Professor	590 Commonwealth Ave.	TBA	TBA
Irene Pepperberg (B) Research Professor	610 Commonwealth Ave.	TBA	252-3580
Margaret Ross (C) Research Assistant Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	207	353-9610
Rosemary Toomey (C) Research Professor	900 Commonwealth Ave.	278	358-2037
Robert Wozniak (B) Research Professor	64 Cummington Mall	TBA	TBA
Arash Yazdanbakhsh (B) Research Assistant Professor	64 Cummington Mall	118C	353-3129

<u>JOINT APPOINTMENTS</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Deborah Brief (MED) Assistant Professor	150 S Huntington Ave	232-9500 x4689
Jerry Chen (CAS - Biology) Assistant Professor	24 Cummington Mall	353-2432

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY (cont.)

<u>JOINT APPOINTMENTS</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Kathleen Corriveau (SED) Associate Professor	2 Silber Way	353-3259
Michael Esterman (MED) Associate Professor	150 S Huntington Ave.	857-364-4187
Daniel Fulford (SAR) Assistant Professor	635 Commonwealth Ave.	358-6723
Simone Gill (SAR) Associate Professor	635 Commonwealth Ave.	353-7513
Carolyn Hodges-Simeon (CAS-Anthropology) Associate Professor	232 Bay State Rd.	358-0227
Jana Iverson (SAR) Professor	635 Commonwealth Ave.	358-5480
Terence Keane (MED) Professor	150 South Huntington Ave.	857-364-4551
Brett Litz (MED) Professor	150 South Huntington Ave.	857-364-4131
Susan McGurk (SAR) Associate Professor	940 Commonwealth Ave.	353-3549
Mark Miller (MED) Assistant Professor	150 South Huntington Ave.	857-364-5733
Kim Mueser (SAR) Professor	940 Commonwealth Ave.	353-3549
Anthony Rosellini (MED) Associate Professor	TBA	TBA
Steven Sandage (STH) Danielsen Professor of Psychology of Religion & Theology	745 Commonwealth Ave.	353-3050
Karin Schon (MED) Assistant Professor	72 East Concord St.	358-2118
Matthias Stangl (ENG) Assistant Professor	TBA	TBA

### ADJUNCT FACULTY

Lindsay Butler-Trump (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Jonathan Comer (Adjunct Professor)  
 Joseph DeGutis (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Elizabeth Eustis (Adjunct Research Associate 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)  
 Jason Sherfey (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)  
 Arthur Wingfield (Adjunct Research Professor)  
 Jeremy Wolfe (Adjunct Research Professor)  
 Bonnie Wong (Adjunct Research Assistant Professor)

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTERS STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Candidates for the M.A. in Psychology must complete eight semester courses (32 units). 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.

PS 711 STATISTICS IN PSYCHOLOGY I. This course covers topics in general linear models including multiple regression and logistic regression; multilevel models; survival analysis; interaction effects.

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  
528 – Human Brain Mapping  
529 – Neuroplasticity  
530 – Neural Models of Memory Function  
531 – Imaging & Manipulating Memories  
532 – Neurobiology of Motivation  
720 – Neurobiology of Animal Cognition  
734 – Psychopharmacology  
737 – Memory Systems of the Brain  
822 – Visual Perception  
824 – Cognitive Psychology

#### Clinical

770 – Ethics in Psychology  
773 – Child/Family Assessment  
791 – Social Oppression  
829 – Principles of Neuropsychology  
874 – Seminar: Psychotherapy  
875 – Advanced Psychopathology  
880 – Empirically Supported Treatments  
881 – Addictive Behaviors

## Developmental Science

541 – Social Development  
544 – Developmental Neuropsychology  
545 – Language Development  
546 – Cognitive Development  
549 – Developmental Psychopathology  
550 – Childhood Adversity  
840 – Developmental Behavioral Genetics  
843 – Life Span Development  
844 – Theories of Development

### Notes:

1) 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-) and/or two Ws, 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/good-academic-standing/>.

2) 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/academics/ma-ms-academics/transfer-credits/>. Petitions will be forwarded to the department to be evaluated. Students will be required to submit a syllabus to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai, Director of Academic Affairs. A maximum of two approved transfer courses may be applied toward the MA degree.

3. Master's degrees must be completed within three years after the first registration for that degree (except for periods of authorized leave). Petitions for extensions of time to complete degree requirements must be submitted prior to the end of the above limit. Students exceeding this time limit without an approved petition for an extension of time will not be permitted to register. Students may find the MA Petition of Extension of Time form at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/files/2015/09/MA-Petition-Extension.pdf>



## M.A. DEGREE CALENDAR

	<u>Jan. 2025 Award</u>	<u>May 2025 Award</u>	<u>Aug. 2025 Award</u>
* <a href="#">Intent to Graduate Form</a>	Sept. 20, 2024	Jan. 30, 2025	May 30, 2025

\*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 May and August 2025 graduation dates are 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  
2024-2025

Students are admitted to one of the following Ph.D. programmatic areas: Brain, Behavior & Cognition; Clinical; Developmental Science to work with a specific faculty member who becomes their official mentor and advisor as soon as they are enrolled in the program. Students who would like to change advisors must send a written request to their relevant program director. Milestones for completion of requirements for each program can be found at

<http://www.bu.edu/psych/resources/student-resources/phd-resources/phd-milestones/>.

The Data Profile for the PhD program is available at <https://www.bu.edu/grad/why-bu/phd-program-profiles/>.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PH.D. PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

I. Courses: Ph.D. candidates shall complete a minimum of 16 graduate level courses, including PS 711 (Statistics in Psychology I) and PS712 (Statistics in Psychology II), or an equivalent course approved by the appropriate program director. Minimum course requirements are greater in some programs.

II. Research Activity: Requirements vary by program. Please see individual programs' sections in this handbook for additional information on the BBC and DS research requirement and in the Clinical Program Handbook for more detailed information on the Clinical Program's requirement.

III. 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.

IV. 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 RF's and are taking fewer than 12 units, 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 <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/student-forms/> (select Continuing Study and Certified Full-Time Registration).

#### Important Notes:

- 1) Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher; only courses with grades of B- or better will count toward the degree. A student may have no more than two failing grades (lower than a B-)

and/or two Ws, 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/good-academic-standing/>.

- 2) Students must obtain prior departmental approval for any course they wish to take outside the Department. Please contact Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)) for additional information.
- 3) 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/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/transfer-credits/>. Petitions will be forwarded to the department to be evaluated. Students will be required to submit a syllabus for each course they wish to transfer to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai, Director of Academic Affairs. A maximum of 8 courses (32 units) may be applied toward the PhD degree.
- 4) PhD degrees must be completed within seven years after the first registration for that degree (except for periods of authorized leave). In addition, a full-time or certified full-time PhD student who is in good academic standing and who becomes the primary caregiver of an infant or adopted child will receive a one-year extension of their approved time to degree. Petitions for extensions of time to complete degree requirements must be submitted prior to the end of the above limit. Students exceeding this time limit without an approved petition for an extension of time will not be permitted to register. The PhD Petition of Extension of Time form may be found at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/files/2015/09/PhD-Petition-Extension.pdf>
- 5) Doctoral students may apply for the MA en route to the Ph.D. To complete a master's degree while pursuing a PhD, student must complete 8 courses (32 units) including PS 711. At least 6 courses (24 units) must be completed at Boston University, which means a maximum of 2 approved transfer courses (8 units) may be transferred toward the master's degree. Students may not use units or other work used to satisfy the requirements of a master's degree earned at Boston University or another institution to fulfill the requirements of a master's degree in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. To apply for the MA, students must submit an Intent to Graduate Form. Please see the information on page 9 for deadlines and a link to the form.

## 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)  
Neurobiology of Animal Cognition (PS 720)  
Psychopharmacology (PS 734)  
Visual Perception (PS 822)  
Cognitive Psychology (PS 824)  
Principles of Neuropsychology (PS 829)  
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 (Barbas) (SAR HS 550)  
Readings in Neuroscience (Barbas) (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 composed 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 member 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. Students can request a sample progress report form by sending an email to [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. 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

In addition to PS 711 and PS 712, PS 844 (Theories of Development), PS 716 (Psychological Research 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. In addition, students are highly encouraged to take advanced quantitative coursework beyond the required PS 711/ PS 712 coursework. Suggested quantitative methods courses from across the university are available upon request.

### 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 DS 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). Students can request a sample progress report form by sending an email to [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 need 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 all three readers must sign 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) 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. Chantal Stern, Chair. After approval has been obtained, the candidate will be notified, and the Prospectus Approval Form will be submitted to GRS.

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 10, 2025, 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>.

## Scheduling the Dissertation Oral Defense

When scheduling the dissertation defense, students need to follow the instructions below, and also refer to the Checklists and PhD Graduation Information on the GRS website at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/graduation-information/>.

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 form from the PhD Student Resources page on the department website (<https://www.bu.edu/psych/resources/student-resources/phd-resources/>) and submit the form and the abstract to the major professor for approval. After the major professor approves the abstract and signs 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)). The abstract will then be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the department Chair. If revisions are required, the student will be contacted and will need to resubmit the revised abstract to Dr. Palfai. Once the abstract is approved, the student will be notified, and the dissertation defense (oral exam) will be officially scheduled. 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).

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

\_\_ 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) 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) to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)).

\_\_ submit the final signed copy of the dissertation to Dr. Joanne Hebden Palfai ([jpalfai@bu.edu](mailto:jpalfai@bu.edu)), as well as the PDF of the signature page, signed by the three readers. To obtain signatures for the signature page, please follow the instructions at <https://www.bu.edu/library/grs-dissertations-docusign/>.

\_\_ 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).

2024/2025 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. 2025 Award</u>	<u>May 2025 Award</u>	<u>Aug. 2025 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. 20, 2024	Jan. 30, 2025	May 30, 2025
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
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. 6, 2024	April 11, 2025	July 3, 2025
**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. 13, 2024	April 18, 2025	July 11, 2025
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. 10, 2025	May 5, 2025	Aug. 1, 2025

\*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 May and August 2025 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.

## VIII. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. All current Graduate School academic policies and procedures can be found at <https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/>.

### II. Academic Misconduct & Grievance Procedures

The Graduate School academic misconduct policies are available online at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/files/2017/02/GRS-Academic-Conduct-Code-Final.pdf>. Complaint procedures in cases of alleged unlawful discrimination or harassment are described in the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/complaint-procedures-in-cases-of-alleged-unlawful-discrimination-or-harassment/>) and student grievance procedures in cases of alleged disability discrimination are also available in the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/student-grievance-procedure-in-cases-of-alleged-disability-discrimination/>).

For other instances in which a student believes that he/she has been treated inappropriately or unfairly by another student or a faculty or staff member on an academic or interpersonal matter, the student may address the issue via the following procedures:

1. The first action, in most cases, would be to address the problem with the other person(s) involved and attempt to reach an informal resolution of the issue.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of the problem, then he/she should contact his/her advisor for assistance.
3. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the student should contact the following persons, in order, as needed: the director of their respective program, the Chair of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Even if a satisfactory resolution is reached through informal conversation with the other person involved, the director of the student's respective program should be informed of any serious incident or infractions that have occurred (e.g., sexual or other forms of harassment). In the case of a situation in which the student feels that he/she cannot discuss the issue with any one of the parties described above (e.g., fear of retribution from the other person; one of the persons in the chain above is the basis of concern, etc.), at any time during the process, the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with the next person in the chain outlined above. We hope that you will not experience any incidents requiring the filing of a grievance during your time at Boston University but, should such an issue arise, we want you to have the freedom to address it with the support of the Program and without fear of retaliation.

### IX. 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>.