

## Individualized Master's Program

### Department of Psychology

The University of Oregon Individualized Master's Program in Psychology is designed to provide advanced training for a small number of individuals who have a clearly focused research interest and an academic plan. Unlike other master's programs, this program is not designed for general master's level training in psychology. Nor can we provide clinical training (practical and skills development) at the master's level. Rather, we expect persons entering the master's program to be highly self-motivated, with the goal of acquiring conceptual and research skills appropriate to their own work plans. Each program of master's study will be tailored to the individual student's goals within the discipline, so long as it satisfies core master's degree requirements.

### **Degree Requirements**

45 credit hours in courses approved for graduate credit  
 24 of these 45 credits must be UO graded graduate credits (B- or higher)  
 30 of these 45 credits must be Psychology graduate credits  
 9 of these 45 credits must be in 600-level courses  
 2 approved graduate-level statistics courses (grade of B- or higher)  
 Psy 607 Sem Research Ethics  
 Completion of an approved research paper or thesis\*  
 Maintain a UO Cumulative Graduate-Level GPA of 3.0 or higher

**Program of Study:** All Individualized Master's Program students and their advising committee will provide an outline of each student's program of study. These study plans are due in the graduate secretary's office not later than the fourth week of the student's first term.

**Statistics Requirement:** Together with their committee each student should identify, either in the Department of Psychology or in a different department, which graduate-level statistics courses would best meet the student's needs and level of preparation in order to meet this requirement.

**\*Research Paper vs. Formal Thesis:** Students will be expected to complete a research paper based either on literature analysis or an empirical research study. If the student submits a master's thesis to the Graduate School, 9 of the 45 graduate credits must be in Psy 503. Note that the Department of Psychology does not require the research paper be submitted to the Graduate School.

**Review Process for Paper or Thesis:** Students should discuss the review process with their advising committee the term before intended completion. The review process can be lengthy and the approval of the paper or thesis must be unanimous by the advising committee.

**Time Limit:** The Department expects that most students will complete the MA or MS in 1-2 years.

**Distinction Between the Master of Arts and Master of Science Degree:** Students pursuing an MA degree must demonstrate competence in a foreign language or have had two years in a foreign language, usually two years of undergraduate work in a foreign language with a grade of C or better. (For foreign students using English as a second language, English may be used as the foreign language.) The MS degree does not require a foreign language.

**Advising Committee:** All master's students enter the program assigned to a major advisor. An advising committee is established during the student's first term in the program. The student's advising committee must consist of two tenure-related Psychology faculty members: (1) The major advisor and (2) an additional faculty member to be added no later than the fourth week of the student's first term. A third committee member may also be added if desired: either another tenure-related faculty member in Psychology, a tenure-related faculty member in another department, or a non-tenure-related Psychology member (the latter includes individuals who have a contract with the Psychology Department or individuals with other appointments who also hold additional academic credentials such as being a research scientist at a research institute or a tenure-related position at another institution). The committee members must sign the Statement of Completion form before the student is approved for graduation.

The department strives to arrange the best possible program for each student. Therefore, a student may wish to change his/her faculty advisor when the student's interests evolve and change. The student should discuss the proposed change with the previous faculty advisor or the chair of the GEC. The student should ask the new advisor to send the graduate secretary a memo agreeing to take on the advising responsibility.

Graduate students must have a major advisor. The advisor-advisee relationship requires initial and continuing mutual consent for that relationship. When either the student or the advisor makes the decision that an advisor change is in order, the student must find a new advisor within six weeks of this decision (the six weeks does not include university break periods). Advisors and students should both notify the GEC chair and graduate secretary when a decision about changing advisors has been made (regardless of whether the student or faculty member initiates the change). If a student goes longer than six weeks without an advisor, the graduate school will be notified, an action which could result in the student's termination from the program. Faculty may agree to advise students for a trial period, and the student would be considered to have an advisor during this period.

**Student Evaluations:** During the spring of each year, master's students are to meet with their advising committee to discuss their progress in the program. These evaluations will then be discussed by the Graduate Education Committee (GEC), and final judgments about students'

standings are made by the Department faculty as a whole. These evaluations are not competitive; there is no quota.

The evaluations are based on performance data such as grades in courses, timely progress towards completion of requirements, quality of research, ability in scholarship, and teaching evaluations (if any). In addition, written evaluations are received by the GEC from the student's advising committee. Evaluations also include subjective judgments about the student's potential as a teacher, researcher, and scholar. For this reason, the exact weighting that is used cannot be specified. The GEC considers factors in deciding whether or not progress is satisfactory. Excellence in one or two aspects of the program may be considered more favorably than an otherwise satisfactory record that shows no unusual talent in any particular area.

Uniformly low, but passing performance in all aspects of the program can be grounds for a decision of unsatisfactory progress, particularly if performance also lacks timely progress. Students will generally have received a good deal of feedback concerning poor performance before a final determination is made that progress is sufficiently below standards to warrant termination from the program.

**Recommendation of Termination from Program:** When there is serious concern about a student's progress in the graduate program (either PhD or master's), the chair of the GEC may recommend to the graduate school that the student be terminated from the graduate program. Generally, before such a recommendation occurs, the GEC chair will discuss the concerns with the student's advisor and/or advising committee as well as with the GEC in order to make sure that a recommendation of termination is merited and that there are no extenuating circumstances. There should be a consensus that the student's performance is sub-par: either severely sub-par in one domain, or moderately to severely sub-par in multiple domains (e.g., research progress, course work, degree requirements, and teaching, where applicable). The GEC chair will alert the student of the concerns in writing (giving the student a chance to contest any concerns that he or she feels are in error) and describe what (if anything) can be done to allay the concerns, along with any relevant deadlines. The decision to terminate a student from the program is made by the graduate school, not by the department.

If a graduate student is suspected of plagiarism or misconduct (criminal, academic, or professional), the case shall be referred to the appropriate university committee for investigation. If a student confesses to, or is discovered to have committed an offense that seriously violates the APA code of ethical behavior (e.g., falsifying data - see <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>), the GEC may recommend termination from the program. It will generally be useful to discuss any concerns about a graduate student's behavior with the department head and/or GEC chair, who may in turn talk with the student's advisor.

**Grievance Procedures:** Most problems that arise are handled readily in discussions between the involved parties. Occasionally, however, this may not be the best vehicle for handling a

grievance. When more serious problems arise, students should not hesitate to pursue more structured appeal procedures (as outlined below).

In terms of handling more minor matters, the grievance should first be addressed within the Department. The student should consult with the faculty member most closely involved, the Graduate Education Committee Chair, or the department head. If the student remains unsatisfied, he or she may contact the Graduate School for further information on official University grievance procedures. If the matter pertains to teaching assistantships, grievance steps are stipulated in the Graduate Teaching Fellowship Federation (GTFF) union contract with the University. Other information can be obtained from the Office of Student Advocacy.

## **UO GRADUATE SCHOOL REGULATIONS**

**General Information:** The Graduate School is located in Susan Campbell Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor. The office hours are 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number is (541) 346-5129. The Graduate School web site is <http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/>

**Residency and Enrollment Requirements:** For a master's degree, the Graduate School requires that a minimum of 30 credits (applicable to degree requirements) be taken on the Eugene campus during at least two terms of study. A second master's degree also requires a minimum of two terms of full-time study on the Eugene campus. Individual schools or departments may have additional residence requirements.

In addition, students enrolled in an advanced degree program must attend the university continuously, except for summers, until program requirements have been completed, unless on-leave status (maximum of three academic terms) has been approved. In the term the degree is received, the graduate student must register for at least three graduate credits.

**Incomplete Policy:** Graduate students must convert an incomplete (I) received for a graduate course to a passing grade within one calendar year of the assignment of the incomplete.

**Research Compliance:** University policy requires that students who intend to engage in research that involves human or animal subjects receive approval of their research procedures before beginning to collect data. The Research Compliance form and further instructions are available from the Psychology graduate secretary.

**Continuous Enrollment:** Unless on-leave status has been approved, graduate students enrolled in an advanced degree or graduate certificate program are required to be continuously enrolled, excluding summer session, until all requirements have been completed. "On-leave" status is granted to master's students by petition.

To remain in compliance with the Continuous Enrollment Policy, graduate students must be registered for a minimum of three graduate credits each term. This includes students who are taking only comprehensive exams, final examinations or presenting terminal projects. Also, students not in residence while writing a thesis, dissertation or project, but using faculty assistance, university services or facilities such as sending chapters to an advisor by mail or email for criticism must register for a minimum of three graduate credits per term. Registration should be for Thesis or Dissertation or Project credits.

For the term in which a degree is granted, graduate students must register for at least three graduate credits. If submitting a master's degree thesis in this final term, registration must include at least one of the three credits as Thesis (503) (see Research Paper vs. Formal Thesis section).

Various on-and off-campus agencies and offices have their own course-load requirements. For example, some agencies offering student loans set registration requirements. Because the minimum registration requirements for the Graduate School may not satisfy some agency requirements, it is the student's responsibility to register for the required number of credits. The Office of the Registrar can certify a student's registration.

**On-Leave Status:** A graduate student (at the master's level) interrupting a study program for one or more terms, excluding summer session, must register for on-leave status to ensure a place upon return. Only graduate students in good standing are eligible.

The Graduate School must receive the application by the last registration day in that term, as noted in the schedule of classes. On-leave status is granted for a specific time period that may not exceed three academic terms, excluding summer session. Students with on-leave status are not required to pay fees. However, students must register and pay fees if they will be using university facilities or faculty or staff services during that term. The on-leave form is available from the Graduate School website <http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/current-students/academic-forms>. Master's degree candidates may apply for a maximum of three academic terms of on-leave status during the course of study for the degree.

**Permission to Re-register:** A graduate student who fails to maintain continuous enrollment or obtain on-leave status is required to file a Permission to Re-register petition in the Graduate School. The student's home department and the Graduate School review the petition. This procedure is equivalent to a new admission, and the petitioner may be required to meet departmental admission policies and degree completion requirements that are in effect on the date of re-enrollment. The Permission to Reregister form is available on the Graduate School website at <http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/current-students/academic-forms>.

Review of the re-registration form may result in a change of residency status from resident to non-resident.

When re-registration is approved, a master's candidate must register for three credits for each term he or she has stopped out. If the accumulated credits total more than 16, the student may be required to enroll in more than one term of increased registration.

**Application for a Degree:** *The application for a degree must be filed online with the Graduate School by the second week of classes in the term of graduation.* Please see <http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/deadlines>. All grade changes, removal of incompletes, and transfer work necessary to complete degree requirements must be filed with the Graduate School the term prior to the term of graduation. Corrections to an academic record can be made only during the 30 days following the granting of a degree. Deadline for degree completion is available on the Graduate School website <http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/deadlines>.