

## **Doctoral Degree Requirements in Social Psychology** **Revised March, 2008**

In order to eliminate confusion about the doctoral degree requirements, this list attempts to clarify the requirements and goals for completing the degree. There are some very specific requirements of the Graduate School that must be fulfilled by certain deadlines. Always refer to their website at [www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool) for guidelines, forms and deadlines.

### **Overview of Requirements**

- \_\_\_ 34 hours of course work (5000-level or above).
- \_\_\_ 30 hours of dissertation work supervised by social faculty.
- \_\_\_ First-year project with social faculty, and participation in mini-convention.
- \_\_\_ Second-year project with social faculty (Master's Thesis).
- \_\_\_ Comprehensive examination (2 components: General & Specialty)
- \_\_\_ Dissertation prospectus and oral defense
- \_\_\_ Dissertation and oral defense
- \_\_\_ Teaching (at least one semester as a teaching assistant)
- \_\_\_ Completion of all requirements in 6 years.
- \_\_\_ Establish Colorado residency in 1<sup>st</sup> year (for U.S. citizens).

### **Course Work**

All courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to obtain credit. 30 of these hours must be completed before you receive your master's degree. No less than 5 credit hours (including dissertation hours, see below) is considered a full load for graduate students. A student may not enroll in more than 15 credit hours in any semester. Required courses are:

<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>
Statistics 5741/5751 (year-long)	8
Social Theory Proseminar (year-long)	6
Social Methods Proseminar (year-long)	6
Professional Development Brownbag (1 hr/semester x 3 yrs)	6
Advanced Seminars in Social Psychology (3 semesters)	6
Comprehensive, substantive psychology seminar or proseminar outside of social psychology (semester; must be approved by Program Director if course is outside the department).	2-3
<b>Total</b>	<b>34-35</b>

### **Doctoral Dissertation Hours**

You must complete 30 hours of dissertation work for the degree. No more than 10 hours may be taken in any semester. You will begin enrolling in dissertation hours in your second year. However, no more than 10 hours total may be taken before you are admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree (i.e., complete both parts of the Comprehensive Examination). Up to 10 hours may be taken in the semester in which you are admitted to candidacy. As an example: If

you take a total of 6 dissertation hours your 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and will complete both sections of Comps by the fall of your 4<sup>th</sup> year, you will enroll in 4 additional dissertation hours (and no more) through the fall of your 4<sup>th</sup> year.

### **Note on Forms**

**Detailed descriptions of the remaining degree requirements are provided next. \*\* indicates that you must meet a deadline for submitting a form to the Graduate School. These deadlines can be found at [www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/calendar.html](http://www.colorado.edu/GraduateSchool/calendar.html). All forms may be found at this website or obtained from the Social Program Secretary.**

### **First Year Project**

A **written, APA-style report** of your first-year project must be completed and approved by **June 1** of your first year. The report is read by your advisor and one additional social psychology faculty member, selected in consultation with your advisor. You should have the readers sign the **First Year Project Form**, available from the Social Program Secretary. The completed form and a final copy of your report is given to the Social Program Secretary for your file.

You will also orally present your first-year project in the department's mini-convention at the end of the spring semester.

### **Second Year Project (Master's Thesis)**

Before starting your second-year project, you will prepare a **written proposal** for your advisor and one additional faculty member in social psychology, selected in consultation with your advisor. A meeting will be scheduled early in your second year with the proposal readers to discuss the proposal. Once the readers approve the proposal, you should have both faculty members sign the **Second Year Project Proposal Form**, available from the Social Program Secretary. It is important to note that although you are required to get approval for the proposal, your completed thesis can deviate from the proposal at the discretion of your advisor. That is, you are not bound to report the proposed research in your thesis. The purpose of the written proposal and meeting is to provide experience in conceptualizing and discussing research, and the opportunity to receive formal feedback from Program faculty, but if other research you subsequently conduct is more appropriate for the project, this may be reported instead.

The second-year project is to be reported in a **written thesis** in APA Style, which must be approved by **December 31 of your third year**. You will select two readers for your thesis (your advisor and one additional social psychology faculty, usually the same person who read the proposal). After they approve the thesis and the appropriate form is filed – which includes the signature of a third faculty member (see below), the Graduate School will confer the Master's degree. Note that your thesis does not need to be typed in the Graduate School format. You will give a copy of the final thesis to the Social Program Secretary for your file, but you do not need to send a copy to the Graduate School. You will also orally present your second-year research in brown bag at the beginning of the fall semester of your third year.

In the semester in which you will submit your written thesis, you need to file a **Candidacy Application for an Advanced Degree\*\*** (check the space for M.A.) and an **Application for Diploma card\*\*** with the Graduate School, early in the semester. Students in

the social psychology program enroll for Plan II--non-thesis with final exam. DO NOT SIGN UP FOR MASTER'S THESIS HOURS.

Near the end of the semester you will file the **Master's Degree Examination or Project Report\*\***. You will need to have a third faculty member sign this form so that there are three faculty total who have approved your Master's work. Prior to receiving your master's degree, you must have completed 30 hours of coursework. *Please note that Graduate School requires that all work associated with the master's thesis, including filing of forms with the Graduate School, be completed within 4 years from the date course work is started.*

### **Comprehensive Examination (3<sup>rd</sup> Year)**

You will complete your Comprehensive Examination in your third year. You may take up to, but no more than 10 hours of dissertation work by the time you complete the entire Comprehensive Examination. There are two sections of the Examination: General and Specialty. The **General Exam** is usually taken at the **end of the spring semester of your third year**. The **Specialty Exam** is to be completed by **December 31 of your fourth year**.

Early in the spring semester of your third year, it is wise to submit to the Graduate School a **Candidacy Application for Advanced Degree\*\*** (Check the PhD space this time). You will also need to submit the **Doctoral Examination Report\*\*** to the Graduate School for approval of your exam committee. **Both forms are due at least two weeks prior to the completion of both sections of your Comprehensive Examination.**

**General Exam.** Students wishing to take the General Exam during a specific year need to notify the Social Program Director by April 1 of that year, with the exam administered during May. The General Exam is take-home and consists of four questions to be answered from the following 3 areas:

- General breadth, addressing comprehensive issues across social psychology (1 question)
- Methodological issues (1 question)
- Content-specific, focusing more in-depth on a specific theoretical content area in social psychology (2 questions)

A faculty member in the program will take responsibility for organizing, administering, and grading the exam. Grading may be done by all program faculty.

**Specialty Exam.** The second section of the Comprehensive Examination is focused on your specific interests within the field. A **Specialty Exam Committee** will be formed for this part of the Exam. The Committee will be comprised of **five members**: the Chair is your advisor, two additional faculty will be your readers (at least one from the Social Program), and the other two members will be Social Program faculty who will sign the graduate school form. All committee members may be Social Program faculty. If greater breadth is deemed desirable, one of the readers may be from outside the Program/Department as long as the committee chair agrees to this arrangement.

Your Chair and the two readers of your Specialty Exam shall have responsibility for designing and grading this exam. Working with your Chair, you will define a subfield of social psychology for your Specialty Exam and develop a reading list in that subfield. By mutual agreement of yourself and your Committee, the Exam may be of two forms: (1) a set of Committee-approved questions within the subfield which you will answer; or (2) a general theoretical or review paper covering the literature in the subfield, using a *Psychological Bulletin* or *Psychological Review* article as a model. You need to meet with the Chair and readers of

your Specialty Exam Committee to define precisely the form of this part of the exam and to set up a mutually agreeable schedule for its completion. Once you have passed both parts of the Comprehensive Exam, all five members of your Specialty Exam Committee will sign the **Doctoral Examination Report\*\***, given to the Social Program Secretary for proper routing.

### **Dissertation Prospectus (4<sup>th</sup> Year)**

A **written prospectus** consisting of an introduction, methods, and an outline of analyses will be submitted to your committee at the beginning of the year and defended orally to the committee (the Specialty Comprehensive Exam will often serve as your prospectus introduction). The **dissertation committee will consist of 5 members** and must include: the advisor, one psychology faculty member from outside social psychology, and one faculty member from outside the psychology department. The remaining 2 members can be from any program. Once approval of the prospectus has been obtained, the student should have the members sign the **Approval of Dissertation Proposal Form**, available from the Social Program Secretary.

### **Dissertation (4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Years)**

A **Doctoral Examination Report\*\* Form** absolutely must be turned into the Graduate School. **The form must be submitted to the Graduate School once a date for your oral defense has been set and no later than two weeks prior to the defense—so your committee can be approved.** This form should be given to the Social Program secretary for proper routing. (You should also pick up the **Ph.D. graduation packet** from the Graduate School which provides a checklist of their requirements.)

At the **oral defense**, your committee will sign the Doctoral Examination Report, a **Final Grade Card\*\*** and the **Signature Page\*\*** to be included in the final submission of your dissertation to the Graduate School. (There is currently an option to submit your dissertation electronically. Please contact Jenny Petersen at the Graduate School for details. Her phone number is (303) 492-6143; her email is Jenny.Peterson@colorado.edu.) The two forms are to be given to the Social Program secretary for proper routing.

At the time of your oral defense, you must be registered for at least 5 dissertation hours. The dissertation must be typed in the graduate school format, and one copy will be kept on file at the library.

*Please note that Doctoral students are expected to complete all degree requirements within six years from the date they start course work in the program.* In addition to this being a Graduate School requirement, keep in mind that departmental teaching and research assistantships may not be offered after the fourth year and are generally not offered after the fifth year.

### **Colorado Residency Guidelines (1<sup>st</sup> year)**

At the beginning of your first year, you need to start keeping copies of documents that will prove you have established residency in Colorado. Beginning your second year, the department will pay for your tuition only at the in-state rate and this can be done only if you can prove that you have started living here in **August, beginning of your first year**. You should keep the earliest dated paperwork and continuous paperwork throughout the year as evidence of the start of your residence here. The following are ways to establish residency:

- Colorado driver's license
- Colorado vehicle registration
- Colorado voter registration
- Colorado income tax returns (copy)
- Rent receipts (or ownership and permanent occupancy of residential real estate)

Keep these items in a safe place and be ready to show them to a university official one year from the beginning of your graduate study. **If you do not establish residency, you will have to pay the difference in the out-of-state vs. in-state tuition yourself -- which is thousands of dollars.**

For further information about residency status, you can call 303-492-6868, or get printed tuition classification guidelines from the Tuition Classification Office, located at Regent 1B 54. Look on the Web at [registrar.colorado.edu/support/residency.htm](http://registrar.colorado.edu/support/residency.htm) for further details.

*Ralphie's Guide to Student Life* and the *Registration Handbook* both have a wealth of information for new students.