

GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

I. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRANCE TO GRADUATE STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY

A. University Admission Requirements

1. To apply for graduate study in Psychology, all prospective students must complete the application forms from the School of Graduate Studies. Students are encouraged to apply online. Forms can be accessed at www.wiu.edu/grad. All students must submit transcripts of all prior academic work, scores on the general aptitude portion of the Graduate Record Examination, three letters of recommendation, and a brief autobiographical statement (which includes a description of the relationship between the degree program to which they are applying and their future career plans). In addition, students applying to the Clinical/Community Mental Health Program and the School Psychology Program must also complete the Personal Statement Form from the Psychology Department.
2. The School of Graduate Studies (not the Psychology Department) has set the following **minimum standards** for admission to degree student status:
 - a. An overall undergraduate GPA of 2.75 or greater (based on all hours attempted), or
 - b. GPA of 3.00 or greater for the last two years of undergraduate work. Applications screened by the School of Graduate Studies are forwarded to the Psychology Department's Graduate Committee, where they are reviewed. At the time of application, potential graduate students must indicate in which of the three areas of specialization they intend to concentrate (i.e., School Psychology, General Psychology, or Clinical/Community Mental Health).

B. Psychology Department Admission Requirements

To be eligible for consideration for admission, the applicant should meet the following minimum criteria

1. An undergraduate GPA of 2.75 or greater.
2. A score of approximately 150 or greater on each of the sections (Verbal, and Quantitative) of the Graduate Record Examination aptitude test. For the Clinical/Community Mental Health program, a score of 4.0 on the writing portion of the general exam is also desirable.
3. Each incoming graduate student is expected to have successfully completed a minimum of 15 semester hours of psychology course work from an accredited institution including work in each of the following three areas: introductory psychology, statistics/experimental, and learning/cognitive psychology. In addition, students applying to the Clinical/Community Mental Health option are expected to have successfully completed course work in abnormal psychology and personality theory.
 - a. Persons lacking one or more of the required courses or failing to meet the 15 semester hour minimum must either pass proficiency examinations or pass the appropriate undergraduate courses before being admitted to candidacy for a Master's degree in Psychology or a Specialist degree in School Psychology. Thus, students can take courses to meet any deficiencies during their graduate program.
 - b. Courses taken to make up undergraduate deficiencies **cannot** be applied toward credit requirements for the Master's or Specialist degree.
4. Western Illinois University is an institution with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, the Psychology Department is particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of qualified prospective graduate students, including minorities and persons with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, genetic information, veteran status, and any other classes protected by state or federal law.

It is recommended that completed applications be submitted by February 1 of the calendar year in which applicants plan to begin their graduate program. Admission reviews will occur beginning approximately March 1 and continuing until all the available slots in the programs are filled. At each review all completed applications compete for the slots unfilled at that time, with the admissions committee reserving the right to accept none of the completed applications on any given round of review. Applicants are classified as "degree candidate students" or "rejected." The School of Graduate Studies has two additional classifications: "Probationary Graduate Students" whose work does not count initially toward the number of hours required, and "non-degree Graduate Students" who do not plan on getting a degree. As a general rule, the Psychology Department's Graduate Committee does not admit students on a non-degree basis. In the School

Psychology and Clinical/Community Mental Health options students are admitted for entrance only in the Fall semester, and students are not admitted in the status of “Probationary Graduate Student”.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE MASTER’S DEGREE OPTIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY

A. THE GENERAL EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY OPTION

This is a 32 semester hour program of study, which can be completed in one calendar year (two regular semesters plus a summer semester), although some students spend an extra semester completing their thesis projects. The General Experimental Psychology option provides a background in advanced general psychology along with the opportunity to specialize in the academic areas of psychology. The program also provides students with the background and academic experience necessary for pursuing further graduate work at the doctoral level. The program is designed for:

1. students wishing to improve their credentials for entry into a doctoral program.
2. students wishing to advance their knowledge of general psychology for employment in state or federal agencies or in industry working in conducting research and data analyses.
3. students wishing to complete advanced study in psychology for their own interest.

Course Work

The following courses are required for all graduate students in the General Psychology Program:

- 3 SH Psychology 500 – Techniques in Research and Program Evaluation
- 4 SH Psychology 501 – Advanced Psychological Statistics
- 1 SH Psychology 550 --Current Research in Psychology Seminar (CRIPS)
- 1 SH Psychology 550 – Current Research in Psychology Seminar (CRIPS)
- 3 SH Psychology 600 – Seminar in General Experimental Psychology : Topic
- 3 SH Psychology 600 – Seminar in General Experimental Psychology: Topic
- 3 SH Psychology 601 – Thesis

In addition to the 18 semester hours listed above, students, in consultation with the Coordinator of the General Psychology option, must select at least 14 semester hours of coursework as electives from the 400G, 500, and 600 levels. Of the 32 semester hours required for graduation, no more than 6 hours should come from the 400G level. (Exceptions to this rule **may** be made only when scheduling difficulties preclude the Department of Psychology from offering graduate level course work when needed by students.) Elective course work can be taken in departments other than psychology to allow flexibility in tailoring a program for a student. As an example, graduate courses in personnel and management from the industrial/organizational psychology.

Incoming students are encouraged to do supervised readings (Psychology 563—for 2 hours credit) on a topic of particular interest to the student. Ideally the paper written on the topic will serve as a basis for the introduction to the students’ thesis.

In the second semester the student is encouraged to work with a faculty member (mutually agreed upon by the program supervisor, the student, and the faculty member) as a research apprentice (Psychology 560—for one hour credit). Faculty research interests are described in a handout for incoming students. Any psychology faculty member may supervise individual readings, research, or thesis. Usually the work in Psychology 560 is a direct result of the reading done in Psychology 563. Together these experiences should produce a thesis proposal early in the second semester.

Master’s Thesis

All persons in General Experimental Psychology are required to complete a master’s thesis and to pass a final oral examination based on their thesis. The topic of the thesis should be chosen from the candidate’s field of interest and should reveal a capacity to carry out independent research. Each student will select a thesis advisor and at least two other committee members from the Psychology Department. The student is encouraged to include committee members from outside the psychology Department when appropriate. Students work closely with their committee members in drawing up formal thesis proposals including a thorough review of the relevant literature. When the committee agrees that the proposal is ready, the student will present the formal thesis proposal orally to the committee members and all other interested faculty and students of the Psychology Department for the purpose of obtaining their suggestions and comments. Several typed copies of the proposal, along with a one or two page summary for all faculty members (not just those on the committee), should be available to the faculty at least three days before the presentation. After the

proposal meeting, students revise their proposals by incorporating suggestions that the student and committee see as improving the study.

After the study is completed and the thesis has been written, all committee members must read the rough draft(s) of the thesis and decide when it is ready to be defended. At least three days before the oral defense, one copy of the thesis typed in final form should be left with the department secretary for faculty members to review, and a one or two page abstract should be given to all faculty members. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (fourth edition) and the guidelines established by the School of Graduate Studies are the official style manuals for theses in the department.

The final oral presentation will be made by students to their thesis committee and all other interested students and faculty members. The thesis is graded W-U by the committee after discussion and by majority vote.

B. CLINICAL/COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH OPTION

The mission of the Clinical/Community Mental Health option is to provide students with knowledge and intellectual and professional skills that will enable them to provide quality mental health services in outpatient settings and to continue to develop professionally. The program has a strong commitment to training students as psychologists. This means that the curriculum is designed to provide students with a thorough grounding in basic psychological knowledge and methodology as well as with strong skills in the application of this knowledge. The therapeutic training offered in the program is eclectic in nature. Students are exposed to a variety of treatment theories, supervised by clinical faculty with a diversity of orientations, and encouraged to develop their own approach to clinical work.

The program requires that students complete a minimum of 66 semester hours of coursework to earn the Master of Science. Typically students complete the program in three calendar years, including the internship. The curriculum, which meets all recommendations of the Council of Applied Masters Programs in Psychology, includes 54 semester hours of courses on campus in the first two years, including a 4-semester practicum sequence. The program's capstone experience is a minimum 9-month, full time internship in an approved mental health treatment center. Although the program is primarily an applied terminal degree program, some graduates do go on to complete doctoral degrees at other institutions.

1. The following courses are required of all graduate students in the Clinical Community Mental Health Option:

- 3 SH Psychology 523 – Social Bases of Behavior
- 3 SH Developmental Perspective (Guided Elective: Psy 422G or Psy 520)
- 3 SH Learned or acquired bases of behavior (Guided elective: Psy 442G; Psy 540; Psy 600 Seminar: Cognitive Processes or Psy 600 Seminar: Behavioral Analysis.)
- 3 SH Psychology 502 – Research Methods in Applied Settings
- 3 SH Psychology 570 – Systems of Psychotherapy
- 3 SH Psychology 571 – Group Processes and Group Psychotherapy
- 3 SH Psychology 572 – Clinical Classification and Decision Processes
- 3 SH Psychology 573 – Crisis Intervention and Community Mental Health
- 3 SH Psychology 574 -- Professional Issues in Clinical/Community Mental Health
- 1 SH Psychology 575 – Diversity Issues and Psychological Services
- 3 SH Psychology 576 -- Family Therapy Theory and Practice
- 1 SH Psychology 577 – Pre-practicum
- 2 SH Psychology 582 – Clinical Assessment I: Cognitive Assessment
- 3 SH Psychology 583 – Clinical Assessment II: Personality Assessment
- 2 SH Psychology 587 – Practicum: Basic Interviewing Skills
- 2 SH Psychology 588 – Practicum: Interpersonal Processes in therapy
- 2 SH Psychology 589 – Practicum: Cognitive and Behavioral Processes in Therapy
- 3 SH Psychology 595 -- Career Assessment in Professional Psychology
- 3 SH Psychology 596 -- Approaches to Substance Abuse Diagnosis and Treatment

- 2 SH Psychology 600 – Seminar: Psychopharmacology for Community Mental Health
- 2 SH Psychology 602 – Professional Experience
- 12 SH Psychology 604 -- Internship (6 semester hours per semester for 9-12 month internship)
- 0 SH Psychology 605 – Comprehensive Examination in Clinical/Community Mental Health

These courses, except for Psychology 604, are taken over two calendar years (five academic semesters) with certain courses being offered on an every-other-year basis.

2. The Practicum sequence (Psychology 577, 587, 588, 589)

The practicum courses involves a sequence of skill-building courses in which each semester builds upon the skills acquired in the prior semester. These courses must be taken in sequence. The practicum experience involves classroom instruction in therapeutic skills as well as direct clinical experience in observing and conducting various forms of psychological treatment under faculty supervision in the department's Psychology Clinic. Students begin this sequence immediately upon entering the program.

The practicum sequence and the internship (Psychology 604) are practical experiences emphasizing the learning of special techniques for dealing with individuals in clinical and other interpersonal situations, and include face to face contact with persons having specific needs. Students in the C/CMH graduate program should be aware that their ability to deal with people, including appraisal of their relevant personality and intellectual characteristics, is an integral part of these courses. Judgments made by the faculty in charge of these courses concerning the student's capacity to handle sensitive interpersonal situations properly are an important component of the grading in these courses. In addition, the conformity of the student's behavior to the Ethical Standards of the American Psychological Association is used as a basis for grading these courses.

3. Internship (Psychology 604)

The successful completion of an internship in an approved mental health facility is the final requirement of the program. Students must have the training plan from the agency approved by the program coordinator prior to beginning the internship. Students must also have the approval of the program faculty before beginning an internship. Nine months of full time placement is the minimum requirement. A longer time, typically one calendar year, may be required by the individual placement agency, and in such cases the academic requirement is not met until the contract period is completed. In many cases, financial support will be provided by the placement agency during the internship.

III. THE SPECIALIST DEGREE PROGRAM IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

The School Psychology Program, founded in 1968, is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education. The primary purpose of the program is to train students who will work as school psychologists. Graduates of the program are eligible to apply for the Illinois Professional Educator License with an endorsement in School Psychology and/or National Certification for School Psychology. About 10 percent of graduates go on for advanced degrees in school psychology and related fields at other institutions. Our students are trained to meet the National Association of School Psychologists' 2010 professional standards:

STANDARD 1 – Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment and data collection methods for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to use psychological and educational assessment, data collection strategies, and technology resources and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate response to services and programs.

STANDARD 2 – Consultation and Collaboration

School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and strategies of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.

STANDARD 3 – Interventions and Instructional Support

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills.

STANDARD 4 – Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health, behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills, and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data-collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support socialization, learning and mental health.

STANDARD 5-- School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others

STANDARD 6 – Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multi-tiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental health, safety, and physical well-being through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery.

STANDARD 7 – Family–School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children’s learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children

STANDARD 8 – Diversity in Development and Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role differences; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide effective professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts, with recognition that an understanding and respect for diversity in development and learning and advocacy for social justice are foundations for all aspects of service delivery.

STANDARD 9 – Research and Program Evaluation

School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings. School psychologists demonstrate skills to evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

STANDARD 10 – Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision-making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, and technology skills.

4. The Curriculum

Western’s program provides training at the graduate level in areas relevant to the practice of school psychology. The curriculum is designed so that students complete the Specialist in School Psychology degree during a three-year period. This includes two years of academic course work including one summer session followed by a school year long (minimum of 1200 hours) paid internship during the third year in the program. Following successful completion of these requirements as well as a passing score on the relevant competency examinations, students are eligible for the Illinois Professional Educator License with School Psychology endorsement or National Certification. Students are required to complete at least 54 hours of coursework prior to their internship and 66 hours of coursework to graduate, including credit for their internship.

B. **Course Requirements** (Course Number/Name/Semester Hours)

Category 1 – Courses to be taken at graduate level:

- PSY 502 Research Methods in Applied Settings (4)
- PSY 520 Advanced Child Psychology (3)
- PSY 541 Practicum I: Orientation to School Psychology (3)
- PSY 542 Practicum II: Academic Assessment and Intervention (3)
- PSY 543 Practicum III: Assessment and Individual Counseling (3)
- PSY 544 Practicum IV: Assessment, Counseling, and Consultation (3)
- PSY 570 Systems of Psychotherapy (3)
- PSY 571 Group Processes and Group Psychotherapy (3)
- PSY 575 Diversity Issues and Psychological Services (1)
- PSY 581 Individual Psychological Evaluation: Intellectual Assessment (3)
- PSY 583 Clinical Assessment II: Personality & Behavior Assessment (3)
- PSY 585 Psychological Problems of the Child (3)
- PSY 590 Introduction to School Psychology (3)
- PSY 591 Behavioral Consultation (3)
- PSY 593 Interventions with Children and Adolescents (3)
- PSY 599 School Psychology Portfolio (0)
- PSY 600 Seminar: Psychopharmacology for Community Mental Health (2)
- PSY 601 Thesis (3) or PSY 602 Professional Experience (2)
- PSY 603 School Psychology Internship (12)
- PSY 606 Illinois State Accreditation Exam (0)
- EDL 520 Leadership for Students with Special Needs (3)
- LA 578 Language Arts for Diverse Learners (3)

Total Category 1 Hours: 66-67 semester hours

Category 2 – Courses that may be taken at either the graduate or undergraduate level:

Psychology of Exceptional Children
Behavior Modification

Students who have taken Category 2 courses as undergraduates do not have to repeat them, if approved by the program coordinator.

Students in the School Psychology program have the option of completing either a thesis or an applied research project (Professional Experience). Requirements for the thesis are spelled out elsewhere in this document. Requirements for the applied research project are available from the program coordinator. Most students complete this requirement during their internship year.

Practicum (PSY 541, 542, 543, 544)

Students are assigned to a local elementary school for one half day a week during their first year at Western. In the beginning of the year, they are expected to gain firsthand experience regarding the organization and workings of a school setting. Students in the School Psychology Program also learn to use various counseling methods and materials in working with elementary school age special friends over a six to eight week period during this first practicum. School psychology students meet once a week with program faculty to receive instruction and to process the practicum experience. They document the meetings in a clinical-type case note and reflect upon their special friend experiences in their weekly journals. Gradually, as students gain expertise in psychological skills, the students “try out” their newly-acquired skills in their assigned schools. During the second semester of the first year, students begin to conduct case studies of children culminating in comprehensive reports of cognitive and academic skills. Students also gain information about and experience with the problem solving model, curriculum-based measurement, and response to intervention. In addition to practical experiences with academic assessment and intervention, students are exposed to the scope and sequence of reading, math, and writing curricula.

In their second year practicum experiences, students work under close supervision with a local or area school psychologist evaluating school environments, conducting reevaluations, learning curriculum based assessments, working with newly-referred students, conducting behavioral consultations, completing small group and individual counseling

cases. During the 2nd year, students spend at least 100 hours each semester in their assigned practicum schools completing course requirements. The total number of hours across all four practicum is over 300 hours spent in schools.

Internship (Psychology 603)

In order to become certified as school psychologists in Illinois and complete all requirements for the Specialist in School Psychology degree, each student must complete a full-time nine month (at least 1200 hour) internship in a public school setting approved by training program faculty. The internship experience must follow a written plan agreed upon by the intern, the field supervisor, and the university supervisor. This plan must meet the professional standards taught during the program (listed above in this document). Field supervisors are required to evaluate the intern in writing each semester noting the intern's strengths, weaknesses, and progress in the completion of the internship plan. The intern should have the opportunity to examine these evaluations. The internship should provide a balanced look at regular and special education programs and interns are expected to receive at least two hours of direct supervision each week from a licensed or certified school psychologist. Field supervisors should be responsible for a maximum of two interns at any given time while university supervisors should be responsible for no more than 12 interns in any one year. Interns receive six semester hours of academic credit each semester of the internship. Interns receive grades of Incomplete until the entire internship is successfully completed. A university supervisor is expected to visit each intern at least once each semester and interns are expected to return to campus at least once each semester. In order to meet all certification requirements in Illinois, interns must also pass the state administered certification exam. Other information about internship sites and requirements is available from the program coordinator and the Illinois State Board of Education.

IV. ACADEMIC INFORMATION

A. Transfer of Graduate Credits to Western Illinois University

1. A student may be permitted to transfer a maximum of 9 semester hours of approved graduate credit in a 32 credit hour degree program and 12 semester hours in a 48 (or more) hour degree program.
2. Approval of transferred credits to be counted toward one's degree program must be obtained by way of petition to the Departmental Graduate Committee. If the transferred courses are intended to substitute for required courses, the petition should indicate the number and description of the course(s) taken for graduate credit and also the number and the description of the course(s) it should replace.
3. Petitions to the Graduate Committee for transfer of credit should be completed during the first semester of graduate work.

B. Maximum and Minimum Course Loads

1. Those students not on graduate assistantships may take a maximum course load of 15 semester hours during fall and spring semester and 12 semester hours during the summer.
2. Students on graduate assistantships are generally expected to carry a maximum load of 12-14 semester hours per semester.
3. Since graduate assistantships are intended to support full-time students, all graduate assistants must carry a minimum of 9 graduate semester hours per semester or face the possibility of losing their assistantships.

C. Academic Standards

1. Passing grades in graduate courses are A, B, and C, representing 4, 3, and 2 quality points, respectively. Grades of D and F are recorded and are considered in determining the grade point average but are not accepted towards completion of the graduate program.
2. No quality points are allowed for a mark of "I" (Incomplete) that has not been converted to a passing grade. Incomplete grades are given **only** when the failure to complete the requirements of a course is due to circumstances beyond the control of the student (e.g., illness). Poor planning on the part of the student is **not** sufficient reason for expecting an instructor to give an "I" in a course. (Psychology 503 or 604). The "I"s are changed when the entire internship has been satisfactorily completed.
3. Graduate students are expected to maintain a higher level of academic performance than undergraduate students. A candidate for either the Master's or the Specialist degree **MUST MAINTAIN** at least a cumulative 3.00 (B) grade point average. Graduate degrees will **not** be awarded to students with less than an overall 3.00 (B) average with more than six (6) semester hours of "C", "D", or "F" grades in a program requiring 30 to 46 semester hours or more than nine (9) semester hours of "C" or lower work in programs requiring 47 or more hours.

D. Withdrawing from a Course

1. According to the policy of the Departmental Graduate Committee, a graduate student in psychology may withdraw from any psychology course during the first 9 weeks of a regular school term. When considering withdrawing

from a course a student should keep course load requirements in mind. Official withdrawal from the University does not ensure that a student will receive a “W” grade. A student desiring to withdraw from a graduate course should come to a decision only after consultation with his or her advisor. After the ninth week, no withdrawals will be permitted except for total withdrawal from the university.

E. Procedures for Applying for Candidacy

1. After at least 9 semester hours of graduate work at the University have been completed, and **before completion of 16 semester hours in the General program and 30 hours in the Clinical/Community Mental Health and School Psychology programs**, students must apply for candidacy for the Master’s or Specialist degree. Application forms (Graduate Degree Plan) should be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies on their web site at www.wiu.edu/grad/current.
2. The completed application must be signed by the student’s advisor, by the Psychology Graduate committee chair, as well as by three other faculty members of the Graduate Committee. The signed application must be sent to the School of Graduate Studies for action by the Graduate Council.
3. All academic deficiencies must be removed before a student graduates. This means that all undergraduate deficiencies must be made up and that the student must have at least a 3.00 (B) average before they may graduate.
4. Once a student’s Graduate Degree Plan has been approved by the Graduate Council, changes may be made only by petitioning first the Department Graduate Committee and second the School of Graduate Studies on the appropriate petition forms.

F. Advisors

1. A student’s first advisor will either be the Coordinator of the specialization or an individual assigned by the Coordinator. In the General Option, students also have thesis advisors or sponsors. The advisor of a student pursuing a thesis top will be his/her thesis sponsor.
2. Students should make appointments with their advisors in order to select courses required for graduation. In so doing, students will be prepared to complete their graduate plans in applying for degree candidacy. Students doing thesis work should consult their program coordinator and their thesis sponsor.

G. Changing from One Graduate Specialization to Another

A student is admitted to a specific area of study, i.e., General Psychology, School Psychology, or Clinical/Community Mental Health. To change areas, a student must re-apply to the Graduate Committee for admission into another specialization.

H. Maximum Time Permitted for Completion of Degree

According to the University’s Graduate Catalog, work required for a Graduate Degree must be completed within six consecutive calendar years. Any work completed by extension or transferred from another institution must have commenced not more than six years prior to graduation in order for the credits to be applied toward the Graduate Degree. It is expected however, that nearly all graduate students in psychology will obtain their degrees in one to three years.

I. Clinical/Community Mental Health Comprehensive Examination

In addition to maintaining at least a 3.00 (B) average in graduate course work, students in the C/CMH option are required to pass a comprehensive examination that is relevant to their program of studies. Comprehensive examinations are given annually prior to the beginning of the summer semester for the C/CMH option. A letter indicating success or failure will be sent to the graduate student and to the School of Graduate Studies. A copy of this letter is to be placed in the student’s cumulative folder.

In the event that a student fails the comprehensive examination, he or she must retake and pass the examination to remain a degree candidate in the program. The examination is offered only once a year for C/CMH students. Failure to pass the comprehensive examination a second time will result in a student being dismissed from the graduate program for academic reasons.

The C/CMH comprehensive examination is intended to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the field, their ability to integrate and apply concepts, and their preparation to assume internship duties. The examination will draw upon material from all course areas, emphasizing integration and application to clinical work. Passing the comprehensive examination is a prerequisite for approval to begin the internship.

J. School Psychology Portfolios

Each student in the School Psychology Program will be required to compile a professional portfolio that includes four comprehensive case studies. The comprehensive case studies are a means by which the Program documents that students have mastered the knowledge and application aspects of the NASP domains of training. Through various course and practicum experiences along with the internship, students should have developed the practice skills to be successful school psychologists. The case studies and their accompanying narratives allow the program faculty to

evaluate students abilities to integrate the practice skills they have developed through the Program. Comprehensive case studies evaluations occur during the third year in the Program, while students are on internship. Students will receive additional information about Portfolio preparation.

K. Application for Graduation

Clearance and application forms for graduation are available in the School of Graduate Studies or on their web site at www.wiu.edu/grad. These forms must be completed and returned to that office. All students must file a formal application for graduation. Deadlines for submitting the application for graduation are as follows: Spring Semester, March 10; Summer Session, June 10; and Fall Semester, October 10. Applications received after these dates will be automatically moved to the next semester. Application forms can be found at wiu.edu/grad. In order to graduate, the student must have attained at least an overall grade point average of 3.00, obtained candidacy status, and completed successfully the departmental comprehensive examination.

V. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A. Procedures for Applying for Financial Assistance

1. Students wishing to apply for assistantships should obtain application forms and materials from the School of Graduate Studies.
2. Students are encouraged to apply for such assistantships by February 1 of the calendar year in which they plan to enter graduate school. Awards are made by the departmental Graduate Committee on the basis of the student's undergraduate record and Graduate Record Examination scores. All students will be notified of such decisions as soon as possible. Students seeking other forms of financial assistance such as Work Study, etc., should direct their inquiries to the Director of Financial Aid, Western Illinois University.
3. Students receiving assistantships are required to sign a contract with the University.

B. Responsibilities Associated with Financial Assistance

1. Graduate Assistants within the Psychology Department are expected to provide at least 13 hours per week of service. Nine of these hours are spent in activities determined by the faculty members to whom the student is assigned. All graduate assistants must also participate in the proctoring of examinations in introductory psychology courses as part of their total of 13 hours. During the last three weeks of each semester, some of the 13 hours may be used for administering the course evaluation forms and for proctoring final examinations.
2. Students involved in proctoring should ascertain the faculty member's policy on cheating before the proctoring duty is begun.
3. Graduate assistants, teaching support assistant and research assistants are expected to maintain weekly contacts with the faculty members to whom they are assigned. The Graduate Committee reviews graduate assistants' academic work and performance each semester. A letter is sent to the student with a copy placed in his/her file. Failure to fulfill the responsibilities of such a contract will result in termination of the assistantship. In addition, assistantships may be terminated for reason of low-quality academic work.
4. First year graduate assistants are not required to grade essay examinations or papers.
5. Tuition waivers for summer classes are available to students receiving assistantships. These tuition waivers may be used either the summer preceding or the summer following the academic year for which the student has an assistantship.
6. Students not awarded graduate assistantships within the Psychology Department are encouraged to ask their program coordinator and/or the department chair for information on additional assistantship opportunities.

VI. GRADUATE PROGRAM COORDINATORS AND GRADUATE COMMITTEE

A. Responsibilities of Program Coordinators

These responsibilities are as follows:

1. Attempting to maintain adequate enrollment in the program.
2. Screening all applications and preparing them for presentation to the Graduate Committee with recommendations.
3. Annually revising and distributing the program description brochures, and annually revising relevant sections of "Guidelines for Graduate Students" subject to approval by the Graduate Committee.
4. Annually reviewing the program requirements and recommending changes to the Graduate Committee in order to maintain high quality standards and consistency and relevance to occupational needs of program graduates.
 5. Advising students currently enrolled in the program.
6. Maintaining a record of the first jobs taken by recent program graduates, and attempting to assess typical duties and skills required by those jobs in order to recommend revisions of the program if necessary.
7. Assisting students in seeking and selecting suitable internship sites, advanced graduate programs, professional experience sites, or jobs.

8. Assisting students in situations requiring petitions to either the departmental Graduate Committee or the University Graduate Office or the filing of degree plans and applications for assistantships.
9. Representing the program to the Graduate Committee.
10. Maintaining the necessary administrative records of the program including past and current practicum case studies, theses, and project reports.

B. Composition of the Graduate Committee

1. The committee consists of five faculty members and three graduate students.
2. The five faculty members on the Graduate Committee include the Coordinators of the three options/programs and two members elected at large by the department. One of the latter faculty members will also be elected as chair of the Graduate Committee.
3. The three graduate students on the committee are full voting members but do not participate in admission decisions. Student members are elected or appointed from each of the options/programs by fellow students in that area.
4. Except for grade appeals and admission decisions, the meetings of the Committee are open to all faculty and graduate students.

C. Functions of the Graduate Committee

The following are the functions of the Departmental Graduate Committee:

1. The Committee serves as the liaison agency between the Psychology Department and the School of Graduate Studies.
2. The Committee or its delegate will assume the responsibility of determining the admissibility of applicants to the graduate programs of the Psychology Department.
3. The Committee or its designee will maintain current records for each graduate student and these records may be examined by faculty members upon request.
4. The Committee must approve each candidate's Degree Plan before it is forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Committee must also approve petitions for changes before being forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies.
5. The Committee shall specify the style and form of theses and share the responsibility with the advisor for having theses meet standards established by the Psychology Department and the School of Graduate Studies.
6. The Committee will review applications for departmental graduate assistantships and make selections.
 7. The Committee will facilitate communication regarding such matters as the following:
 - a. Procedures and dates involved in the completion of requirements for a graduate degree.
 - b. Procedures and dates involved in the completion of the requirements for the Master's thesis.
 - c. Composition and responsibilities of members of a thesis committee.
- d. Reviewing each student's academic progress at the end of each term and making recommendations.

D. Grade Appeals and Procedures for Dealing with Problems

1. In the case of a student who feels she or he has been graded unfairly,
 - a. The student must discuss the matter with the instructor of the course.
 - b. If, after discussion with the course instructor, the student wished to pursue the appeal, he or she should make a written appeal to the Graduate Committee. The case will be heard as soon as possible. The student can also make an oral appeal at that time, and can present any other relevant evidence. If the instructor of the course in question is on the graduate committee, a temporary substitute committee member will be chosen by the department chair in consultation with the student. The Department Grade Appeals Committee operates under the procedures defined in the Graduate Student handbook, which details the instructor's role in the proceedings.
 - c. If the student is not satisfied with the Graduate Committee's recommendation, the student should then contact the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for a hearing.
2. Students with complaints about any aspect of the graduate program, other than grades, should consult first with the program coordinator. They may also want to speak with the graduate student representative. If they are unable to achieve satisfaction in this manner, they should contact the department chair who can then further advise the student.

The Psychology Department vigorously supports an ongoing process of critically evaluating the quality and conduct of its graduate programs. Instructors are required to have all courses evaluated by students through an anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire contains a section for written comments as well as multiple-choice questions. It is hoped that through free and open intradepartmental discussion of present or possible problems, the department can continue to produce highly competent professional psychologists.