

Social, Cognitive, and Social-Cognitive Program Requirements

There are three distinct tracks of study: Social, Cognitive, and Social-Cognitive. Each specialization offers a great deal of flexibility so that all coursework and research training experiences can be adapted to each student's interests and career goals. There are a number of graduate courses the program requires of students for the Ph.D. in Social, Cognitive, or Social-Cognitive Psychology. The course requirements for each track appear below along with an indication of when students typically take these courses (note that not all courses are offered in all years). The student may modify these in consultation with the advisor and supervisory committee as needed according to other degree requirements (e.g., law/psychology requirements) and academic interests. The ultimate responsibility for the student's final program of studies falls with the student's supervisory committee. However, a student who is in the process of obtaining their degree as a social, cognitive, or social-cognitive psychology from UNL should follow the requirements listed below.

It is important to recognize that the structure of graduate training is very different from that of undergraduate training. As an undergraduate, your most important task was to take a large number of classes and do well in them. In graduate school, you will take several courses to provide you with a foundation of knowledge; however, they will not constitute the majority of your graduate experience. Graduate students in the Social and Cognitive Program (which encompasses the three tracks mentioned above) take relatively few classes so that they have time to focus on research, teaching, and professional development activities. As time goes on, your experience as a student changes from classroom-based learning to becoming an independent scholar.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Department-Wide Requirements for Graduate Students in Psychology				
Requirement	Required Hours	Specific Required Course*	Recommended Course	Notes
Stats/Methods	6 hours	PSYC931 and PSYC932		
Basic Psychology Coursework	6 hours	3 hours from a proseminar (any course numbered PSYC901-PSYC910)	The second 3 hours can be from another proseminar or any graduate psychology course outside of the student's primary area.	
Human Diversity/Multicultural [^]	1 hour	Any class from that is primarily focused on human diversity	Include, but are not limited to, PSYC 976, PSYC 979, EDPS 868, EDPS 987, SOCI 905, SOCI 906, SOCI 907	Most classes are 3 hours so most students will take 3 hours of human diversity.

Ethics	1 hour	See program requirements for specific course recommendations		
Teaching	1 hour	PSYC974		Required for students who will be a TA or instructor. May be taken concurrently to the teaching assignment. May be waived for teaching only with permission of Associate Chair and program coordinator.
<p>Note. Specific programs have additional requirements. Courses simultaneously meet both department and program requirements.</p> <p>*Students with prior training may ask to substitute a different course to meet a requirement. This determination is made by the faculty member who typically teaches the course. They usually ask for a syllabus, including information about the textbook/readings, to insure equivalency.</p> <p>^ The course need not be in the Department of Psychology but should generally cover topics such as implicit bias, stereotyping, how societal power structures differentially impact groups of people, etc</p>				

Requirements for all Tracks

- Quantitative Methods I (Psy. 931) (3 credits)
- Quantitative Methods II (Psy. 932) (3 credits)
- Teaching Methods in Psychology (Psy. 974) (1 credit)
- Ethics for Psychologists (Psy. 925) (1 credit)
- Human Diversity/Multicultural (1 credit)
- At least two proseminars in other areas of Psychology

Note: If you are strictly on the Social track, Psy907 (Cognitive Proseminar) would count as an other area proseminar and if you are strictly on the Cognitive track, Psy906 (Social Proseminar) would count as an other area proseminar. For Law/Psychology students, Psy985 (Law and Behavioral Science) counts as an other-area Proseminar for students in any of the three tracks.

Recommended Timeline

- 1st year, 1st semester
- 1st year, 2nd semester
- 1st year, 1st semester
- 2nd or 3rd year
- 2nd or 3rd year
- 2nd or 3rd year

Additional requirements for Social Track: The Social Psychology Ph.D. is designed for students with basic and applied interests in Social Psychology

- 1) Social Psychology Proseminar (Psy. 906) (3 credits) 1st year
- 2) Two specialized seminars in Social psychology (these include Social Cognition, Intergroup Processes, Emotion and Motivation, and Applied Social Psychology) 1st or 2nd year
- 3) An additional 900 level course related to social psychology Including (but not limited to): Topics in Law and Psychology

(e.g., Legal Decision Making, Eyewitness Memory), Race and Ethnicity, Research Methods in Social Psychology, and Survey Response

- *Note: Other 900 level courses can fulfill this requirement in consultation with the student's advisor and supervisory committee.*

4) A third psychometric course (3 credits), such as: 2nd or 3rd year

Fundamentals of Multivariate Modeling (Psy. 943)
Multilevel Models (Psy. 944)
Latent Trait and Structural Equation Models (Psy. 948)
Advanced Quantitative Modules (Psy. 930/971) (1 credit each)
Factor Analysis (Psy. 943) (often taken during the first summer)
Experimental Methods (EDPS 941)
Correlational Methods (EDPS 942)
Multivariate Analysis (EDPS 972)
Structural Equations Modeling (EDPS 971)

5) One seminar in another department (e.g., Sociology) (3 credits) 2nd or 3rd year

Additional Requirements for Cognitive Track: The Cognitive Ph.D. is designed for students who have interests in human information processing and cognition, such as perception, attention, and memory.

- 1) Proseminar in Cognitive Psychology (Psy. 907) (3 credits) 1st or 2nd year
- 2) Students who wish to pursue research in or acquire expertise in cognitive psychology are also encouraged to consider the departmental offerings listed below:

Psychology of Survey Response (Psy. 946)
Biological and Cognitive Development (Psy. 902A)
Eyewitness Memory ("Topics in Psychology and the Law", Psy. 989)
Topics in Psychology and the Law (Psy. 989)
Psychology of Decision Making (Psy 961)

Though there are limits with regard to whether 800 level classes can count towards degree requirements (see page 5 below), Cognitive students may also find the following courses useful

Attention and Performance (Psy466/866)
Human Memory (Psy460/860)
Perception (Psy463/863)

Additional Requirements for Social-Cognitive Track: The Social-Cognitive Ph.D. is designed for

students who are interested in the combined study of Social and Cognitive Psychology. Students receive training in both traditional Social and traditional Cognitive Psychology, in addition to a variety of experiences aimed at integrating these fields.

- 1) In addition to taking courses in both Social and Cognitive Psychology, Social-Cognitive students must have at least one faculty member with social psychology expertise and at least one faculty member with cognitive psychology expertise on their supervisory committee and are encouraged to broaden their skills by working on research with more than one faculty member. Students can choose experiences that range from more basic to more applied, depending on research and career interests. Students enrolled in this program are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor to plan an appropriate curriculum.
- 2) Students are expected to fulfill the core requirements of both the Social and Cognitive tracks (of which there is considerable overlap). In some cases, certain requirements may be less relevant to an individual's program of studies and the ultimate decision regarding relevant requirements will be made by the student's supervisory committee

Additional information for all tracks

It is important to note that formal program requirements do not constitute the 90 credit hours required for the doctoral programs. The rest of your program of study is for you to decide, in conjunction with your advisor and supervisory committee. Additional courses may include

Advanced courses in social or cognitive psychology
Additional proseminars in other areas within the department
Advanced courses in areas of interest in other departments (e.g., Sociology, Political Science, Women and Gender Studies, the Law School)

In addition, students fulfill many of their required credit hours with independent research and directed reading credits to ensure that they have sufficient time for their scholarship. These independent study courses are listed below:

Research Other than Thesis (Psy. 996) (1-24 credits total)
Doctoral Dissertation (Psy. 999) (1-24 credits total)
Psychological Literature I (Psy. 971) (1-6 credits)
Psychological Literature II (Psy. 972) (1-6 credits)
Student teaching experience (Psy. 990)

A standard semester course schedule totals 9-12 credit hours for most graduate students (students who are on a teaching or research assistantship must enroll for at least 9 credit hours). Usually this includes 2 or more formal courses (about 6 credit hours) and an independent research or readings course (about 3 credit hours). The advantage of a schedule of this kind is that it ensures that there is plenty of time in your schedule to work on research,

fulfill your assistantship, and read and think about what you are learning.

Graduate students typically enroll for coursework (which may include research credits) during the fall and spring semesters. They also must enroll for 1 to 6 hours credit hours during the summer session if they have financial support in the form of a teaching assistantship (this can simply be research credit and does not mean one needs to take summer classes). As a result, it is easy to complete 90 credit hours during the course of an approximately 5-year program.

Ordinarily students enroll in courses numbering 900 and above to receive graduate credit. You do have the ability to enroll in 800 level courses outside of the department and these will count towards your degree. Within Psychology, a limited number of 800-level courses have been approved to be counted on the Memorandum of Courses and Program of Studies. You can find a list of these on the Graduate Students Resources Page which is linked off of the main Psychology webpage, Graduate section. . Passing grades in graduate courses and seminars are As and Bs. The faculty regard a grade of “C” with concern. Insufficient progress in the program and/or poor performance in classes could lead to academic probation.

Important Caveats:

1. Students entering the program with a Master’s Degree: If you have come to our program with a Master’s degree, your course requirements may be somewhat different depending on the courses you took in your previous program. Consult with your advisor as soon as possible to plan an appropriate curriculum. Ultimately, your supervisory committee for your Program of Study (see below) will approve transfer credits.

2. Students in the Law-Psychology Program: Students in the Law-Psychology Program complete a J.D. or M.L.S. along with their Ph.D.; thus, they take a considerable number of additional courses. Please consult the Law-Psychology Student Handbook for information about those additional requirements. Given these additional requirements, it is not uncharacteristic for Law-Psychology students to take somewhat different courses on different timelines. Note that it is sometimes the case that a course will satisfy more than one requirement as a function of one’s program/track (e.g. students in Law/Psychology are required to take Law/Psych Seminars which may also count for the requirements of the Social, Cognitive, and Social-Cognitive tracks). Please refer to the Law-Psychology Program Requirements:

<http://psychology.unl.edu/law-psychology-program/>

Research

The most important part of your graduate training involves learning how to design, conduct, analyze and present/report research. As a result, you must be active in research throughout your graduate career.

To facilitate your entry into research, you will begin work on a *research project as soon as you enter the program*. The research that you participate in your first year can take a variety of forms. For many students, research in the first year closely relates to their faculty advisor's ongoing research program. For others, first-year research is a self-initiated study related to their particular interests. Any of these forms will allow you to develop your research skills on one or more projects under the supervision of your advisor. Some advisors may insist that a specific first year project be completed prior to beginning work on the *Masters Equivalent Research Project* (MERP). Others may use the first year research as part of the MERP. Still others may use first year research as preparation that is more general and is an introduction to psychological research. In all cases, students in the program must be involved in research from the first year of the program through graduation. The exact timetable for research projects will naturally vary with the scope and format of the projects.

Students are encouraged to take part in multiple research projects. We also encourage you to work with more than one individual as a means of developing your skills and obtaining different perspectives on the research process. We also encourage you, however, to be aware of the number of commitments you make to avoid becoming overextended.

In some cases, students' research or professional interests change over the course of graduate school. If so, you may find that another faculty member would be a more appropriate mentor for you than your current advisor. In such cases, openness with all concerned parties is generally the best policy. Some students may even decide to add programs (e.g., Law-Psychology) or even switch programs within the Department. This can only be done, however, with the permission of the corresponding program directors/coordinators who will follow program protocol for such changes. Note that a request to switch programs is not automatic. The student must apply to enter new programs in the Department of Psychology.

Professional Development

Outside of research and course work, there are a number of valuable professional development activities that are offered throughout the program, the department, and the university. These include brown bags session in which students can either present their own research or hear about the work of other students and faculty (many brown bags also offer alternative presentation opportunities, such as discussing a research idea, journal article, or

relevant real world issue. Students should consult with their advisor and brown bag organizers to explore the full extent of these opportunities), job talks and seminar series in which students can learn about the work of distinguished scholars from other universities, workshops (e.g. grant writing, computer programming) that can help you to develop and enhance your skillset in specific areas, and social events in which you can get to know fellow students and faculty in a more relaxed setting. Students are strongly encouraged to take part in these activities to the degree that they are relevant and beneficial to their development.

Activity Report and Evaluation of Progress

At the end of each academic year students are expected to submit a CV and answer a few brief questions to update progress toward degree completion. You will receive an email solicitation sometime around March/April with a link to upload any required materials. Program faculty provide feedback on the progress of all students in our program at least once a year (sometimes more when needed) and students will also receive evaluation letters each year (typically during the summer). If there is cause for concern as it relates to degree progress or performance in the program, this will typically be communicated to you both in the letter and via your advisor/supervisory committee. We recognize that a student's schedule and activities can vary greatly as a function of their research lab, research program, and career goals among other things which means that there is not a concrete benchmark you need to hit each year inasmuch as remaining active and performing well in all aspects of your program of studies and associated duties (e.g. TA/RA work). Concerns could be raised if, for example, you are not making sufficient progress in your area of research, if you are performing poorly in classes, or if you are not completing your TA and/or RA assignments in a timely manner.

Supervisory Committees

Once students are established in the department (typically in the second or third year), the students and their advisor(s) will propose a supervisory committee, permission for which is granted by the Graduate Executive Committee (you need initial approval from Grad EC to officially form your committee). Specific committee members are approved by the Graduate Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Executive Committee as needed. Per Graduate College guidelines, the supervisory committee must consist of at least 4 faculty members, one of which is outside the Department of Psychology. Advisors help students identify appropriate committee members. Once approved, the supervisory committee meets and approves a plan for the comprehensive exam process and coursework that is consistent with the students training needs and program requirements. Typically, the supervisory committee serves as the dissertation committee but occasionally there are changes in membership as a student's research interests evolve. Please note that outside of regular program requirements, your

advisor or supervisory committee may also encourage/require additional courses or experiences based on your postgraduate goals and their expectations for your progress.

Comprehensive Exams

Students have a variety of options for satisfying comprehensive examination requirements for admission to candidacy. We encourage those students who intend to pursue research-oriented careers to consider writing a Career Development Award Proposal via an NIH agency, or an equivalent type of fellowship award from NSF or other federal agencies as a means of satisfying this requirement. In addition to giving themselves the opportunity to receive funding support, experience in grant-writing is a useful and often necessary skill when seeking future employment. A second option is to write an extensive review paper in an area related to the student's dissertation topic. This option can facilitate initiation of the thesis project and may lead to a publishable article. Other, more individually-tailored comprehensive exam options may also be considered by the student's supervisory committee (including Quantitative Comps, see section below). Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their comprehensive exam plans with their advisor at the time their supervisory committee is approved so that the format of the student's comprehensive exam can be considered at the initial supervisory committee meeting.

Concentration in Quantitative Methods and Quantitative Comps

The Department of Psychology offers a Concentration in Quantitative Methods as an opportunity for graduate students to document specific training in statistics and methodology. To obtain this concentration there are three main requirements: 1) Notifying your supervisory committee that you plan to complete the concentration when you committee meets to develop your program of studies, 2) Complete 18 Credit hours of Statistics and Methodology (see <https://psychology.unl.edu/quant/concentration-quantitative-methods> for course offerings in the department – there are also courses outside of the department and workshops that can count towards this credit), 3) Complete a Comprehensive Exam that demonstrates professional level acquisition of a nonstandard model and which is approved by your supervisory committee. It is possible to structure the comprehensive exam such that it satisfies both the Quantitative Methods requirements and Social and Cognitive Comprehensive and this can be done in consultation with one's supervisory committee. Additional information regarding the Quantitative Methods Concentration can be found at <https://psychology.unl.edu/quant/concentration-quantitative-methods>

Projected Degree Timeline

Students pursuing a Ph.D. in Social, Cognitive, or Social-Cognitive Psychology should follow the projected timeline below:

- Propose Masters Equivalent Research Project: 1st - 2nd year
- Defend Masters Equivalent Research Project: 2nd-3rd year
- Form supervisory committee: 2nd-3rd year
- Comprehensive exams: 3rd-4th year
- Propose dissertation: 4th year
- Defend dissertation: 5th year

**The projected timelines are generally longer for students pursuing additional degrees (e.g., J.D.).

Important Links

Master's and Doctoral Degree Forms: <https://graduate.unl.edu/academics/program-steps>

***Graduate students are responsible for knowing which forms they need at various stages of the program (e.g. Supervisory Committee Forms, Thesis Forms) and it is good to familiarize yourself with the various forms and when they are required. It is also a good idea to make two additional copies of any form that you are filing with the Office of Graduate Studies: one for your own records and one to be filed in the Psychology office (give to Jamie Longwell) on the off chance anything ever goes missing or gets filed incorrectly

Doctoral degree milestones/timeline (UNL Graduate Studies – Not program specific)
<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/doctoral>

Concentration in Quantitative Methods:
<https://psychology.unl.edu/quant/concentration-quantitative-methods>

Psychology Department Handbook: <https://psychology.unl.edu/graduate-student-handbook>

Student and Faculty Resources:
<http://psychology.unl.edu/resources>

Student Code of Conduct:
<http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code>

Academic Integrity, University Anti-Discrimination and Harassment, and Student Privacy, and Policies

The following information is also in the UNL Graduate Bulletin but is copied here for your convenience. It is important to be aware of both expectations for personal conduct and one's own personal rights. Additional information is provided via the Student Code of Conduct link provided above.

Academic Integrity

All graduate students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, respectful manner in all aspects of their graduate education and in all interactions with peers, faculty, staff, and other members of the academic community. Academic integrity is a universal principle in the scholarly community, and it is fundamental to the work you'll do on this campus, as a researcher, a teacher, and as a student. Graduate students are expected to know, understand, and comply with the Student Code of Conduct and the university's policies on academic integrity. The university expects all graduate students to act at all times with unwavering integrity. At UNL, you will be held to the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic integrity at the graduate level is taken very seriously and academic misconduct, when discovered, has serious consequences. The Student Code of Conduct outlines the University's expectations regarding academic integrity. In accordance with the established procedures as described in the Code, students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action, and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision. Questions regarding the procedures for handling incidents of academic dishonesty may be directed to the Dean of Students, 106 Canfield Administration Building (0418), 402-472-2021, who is primarily responsible for administering the Student Code of Conduct.

University Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies

The Institutional Equity and Compliance Office (IEC) can investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment that are prohibited under civil rights laws (e.g., Title IX, Title VII, Title VI, and the ADA). The university non-discrimination statement is available here:

<https://www.unl.edu/equity/notice-nondiscrimination>. It prohibits discrimination based upon "race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment" but the policy and procedures are less comprehensive than the university sexual misconduct/harassment policy.

The sexual misconduct/harassment policy is available here: <https://www.unl.edu/equity/university-sexual-misconduct-policy>. This policy includes requirements for addressing sexual misconduct/harassment under both Title IX and Title VII. As stated in the policy, under Title IX, sexual harassment is currently defined as (a) An employee of the University conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (b) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University's education program or activity; or (c) Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as defined by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). As stated in the policy, under Title VII (applies to employees only), sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the individual's employment and create an abusive working environment. Under current University policy, employees at the University are "expected to promptly report conduct that may violate the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy to the University."

Under the current policy, there are some instances where interpersonal behaviors align with the behavioral definitions of harassment/misconduct (e.g., unwanted touching, inappropriate or offensive comments) but are deemed unactionable by the IEC. For example, the IEC will judge whether unwelcome conduct was "severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive" (following current Title IX regulations) or "severe or pervasive" (following Title VII), and if they decide that it was not, IEC will not take action to resolve the problem using their procedures. Additionally, the scope of the policy for complaints related to Title IX currently only covers incidents that occurred in "locations, events, or circumstances over which the University exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs, and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution" (which means that behaviors that are unrelated to campus events/programs or happened in a non-university building may not be actionable under IEC policies and procedures).

If a faculty member or student has questions about sexual harassment/misconduct and/or has questions about reporting options and resources, there are confidential resources on campus

and in the community that specialize in these issues who can help:

- Voices of Hope: <https://www.voicesofhopelincn.org/> (office line: 402-476-2110 and 24-hour crisis line 402-475-7273)
- UNL Center for Advocacy, Response & Education: <https://care.unl.edu/> (402-472-3553)

Protection of Privacy of Student Information/Access to Personal Files

Information related to privacy of student information and access to personal files is located at <http://www.unl.edu/regrec/student-information> and <http://ferpa.unl.edu/>.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Department of Nutrition and Health Sciences are committed to upholding the Family Education Rights to Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).