Psychology Outcomes Assessment Report
Of First Doctoral, Second Doctoral and Dissertation Exams

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The 13 Training Ares in Psychology have separate and different First and Second Doctoral Exams, and a largely common Dissertation Defense (Third Doctoral Exam). Using the model provided by the Outcomes Assessment Committee, the following five training areas have submitted interim reports. This is clearly a work in progress, and we look forward to working with the upper administration in standardizing Evidence-based Assessment for these exams.

Submitted Reports:
Psychology and Law Training Area
Animal Behavior and Comparative Psychology Training Area
Behavior Analysis Training Area
Health Psychology and Clinical Science Training Area
Cognition Language and Development Training Area
Psychology & Law Doctoral Training Area: Outcomes Assessment

1st Doctoral examination

The Psychology and Law Doctoral Training Area requires independent scholarly work in the form of a First Doctoral Examination. Students will design and complete the First Doctoral Examination under the supervision of their faculty advisor. The main objective of the First Doctoral Exam is for the student to demonstrate a depth of knowledge in the field of psychology and to demonstrate an ability to conduct scientific research. Therefore, an additional objective of the First Doctoral Exam is the development of scholarly written and oral presentation skills.

The First Doctoral Exam will consist of two parts: (1) a written paper and (2) an oral presentation and defense of the written work. The oral presentation will be in a “brown bag” format that is open to the entire Program faculty and student body. Each student will be evaluated on this work by a committee of three doctoral faculty members, selected by the student or recommended by his or her advisor. The three committee members will be required to read and comment on the written paper.

Requirements for the First Doctoral Examination

There are three alternatives for the successful completion of the First Doctoral Exam.

1. Completed Master’s thesis from a psychology program or from a related discipline.

To fulfill the First Doctoral Exam requirement with this alternative, students will be required to submit their thesis to the Program for review. Theses from other programs will be accepted as fulfilling the First Doctoral Exam requirement if they are research based, relevant to psychology and/or law, and are deemed to be of an appropriate level of scholarship by the Program. The goal of approving already completed Master’s theses is solely to determine if the thesis constitutes a scientific research project, not to grade the quality of the project. Once the written portion of the thesis is approved, students will give an oral presentation of this research to their fellow students and the faculty.

2. Completion of a manuscript for a research project with original data analysis.

To fulfill the First Doctoral Exam requirement with this alternative, students will be required to write a manuscript-style paper reporting on the results of an empirical research project. This research project can be either work on his or her advisor’s pre-existing research or on the student’s own research. Students writing up the results of ongoing research in their advisor’s research labs should have taken some responsibility for the completion of the research project, even if the original research question, design, hypotheses were generated by their advisor. The level of responsibility will be as deemed appropriate by the advisor but must include original data analysis by the student. The literature review, methods write-up, results, and discussion should mostly be the work of the student. Students will also be permitted to satisfy this alternative for the First Doctoral Exam by conducting an empirical research project of their own design. After the paper is read by the committee, the student will be required to complete an oral presentation of the paper.

3. Completion of a theoretical or critical thinking paper reviewing an area of psychology which ties that area into the rest of the field as a whole.

To fulfill the First Doctoral Exam requirement with this alternative, students will be required to write a theoretical or critical thinking paper. This paper should investigate the research in an area of psychology in depth, and discuss the relationship of this area of research to the broader field of psychology. The topic of the paper is to be determined by the student, the student’s advisor, and/or the committee. The goal of this paper should be to produce a publishable quality paper examining a topic area that could later be converted into a non-dissertation research project. After the paper is read by the committee, the student will be required to complete an oral presentation of the paper.

Timing
Students may begin work on the First Doctoral Examination at any time subsequent to their entry into the Program. The First Doctoral Exam must be completed by students prior to finishing 45 credits of coursework, including any transfer credits awarded. If the First Doctoral Exam is not completed by the time 45 credits are earned, the student will be placed on academic probation. CUNY rules do not permit (without special approval) such students to enroll in any more courses before this requirement is met. It is the determination of the TAC whether to permit students to take courses while on probation and completing this requirement.

Students will proceed from Level 1 to Level 2 after passing the First Doctoral Exam and earning at least 45 credits.

**Evaluation of the Exam**

The First Doctoral Examination will be graded on a pass/fail basis. In order to complete the First Doctoral Exam requirement, the student must earn a “pass” from a majority of his or her First Doctoral Examination committee on the written component of the exam. A “pass” indicates that the student has completed the requirement and no revisions to the written work or additional oral defense of the written work will be required. If a student does not receive a “pass” from a majority of his or her committee, the committee will suggest reasonable revisions to the project. The student will be required to re-submit the project with revisions to the committee for its consideration. The committee may require an additional oral defense of the revised written work if a majority of the committee members agree that an additional oral defense is required. A “fail” indicates that substantial revisions would be required in order to pass the Exam and that the student has failed to meet the minimum requirements of the Exam. The student will be required to re-submit a revised written paper and to orally defend that revised paper.

**In the Case of Failure**

Withdrawal from the Program will be required if the student fails to pass the First Doctoral Examination requirement within the following time constraints. If the student does not pass the First Doctoral Examination by the time the student earns 45 credits, the student will not be permitted to enroll in any additional classes in the Program until the First Doc is completed. Students will only be permitted to continue in the Program for 1 year with 45 credits and without taking classes. If the First Doc is not completed at the end of this year, the student will be required to withdraw from the Program.

**Forms and Format**

Please refer to the Program’s First Doctoral Examination policy available in the Program Office and on the Program website for additional information and to download forms.

When the first doctoral exam manuscript is written and approved by the committee chair, students should send it to the other committee members, giving them a month to read and respond. When the whole committee has approved going forward with a defense, find two possible dates for a defense that are AT LEAST two weeks away. Contact the college assistant to reserve a room. Once the room reservation is confirmed, notify the committee – the defense date is scheduled.

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**2nd Doctoral examination**

**Rationale**

The second doctoral examination is designed to ensure that all students will gain competencies to conduct a broad literature review of a given topic, conceptually integrate theories from diverse areas of Psychology and/or of Psychology & Law that are relevant to the topic chosen, and provide evidence of their potential to develop a rigorous program of research.

**Requirements**
The second doctoral exam will be comprised of a written product that takes the form of a review paper, similar to those found in Psychological Bulletin OR a ready-to-submit grant proposal (e.g., NSF or NIH). The two options for successful completion of the second doctoral examination are described below. Students must gain approval of their topic from their second doctoral committee chair (typically the faculty advisor) prior to beginning their Second Doctoral Exam.

1. An approximately 25 page, excluding references, Psychological Bulletin-style review of research: (a) on a topic in a related area of psychology, such as social, developmental or cognitive; or (b) on a topic which bridges a related area of psychology (i.e., social, cognitive, etc.) with Psychology & Law. The paper should take the form of a systematic and integrative review that makes a theoretical argument and/or presents a new theoretical model. Students are encouraged to be familiar with the guidelines of this journal and use them as a framework for writing the review. The treatment of the related area of psychology should not be incidental but represent a significant contribution to the theorizing, review or analysis within the paper.

2. A full-scale, ready-to-submit (as judged by the second doctoral examination committee) NSF or NIMH-style grant proposal. The grant proposal should give appropriate attention to theoretical, ethical, diversity and methodological issues, as well as encompass several studies, if appropriate.

Committee Selection

A three-person committee will grade the students’ second doctoral exam. The three-person committee should have the following composition: (a) The student’s primary faculty advisor (Chair of the committee); (b) A second committee member, chosen by the student and the faculty advisor together; and (c) A third committee member from the Program chosen by the training area program head, regardless of area of expertise. The committee for the Second Doctoral Exam is likely to include members of the student’s Dissertation Committee, however the committees need not be the same.

Evaluation of the Examination

The Second Doctoral Examination will be graded on a pass, qualified pass, or fail basis. In order to successfully complete the Second Doc requirement, the student must earn a “pass” from 2 of the 3 members on the Second Doc committee, with no “fails”. A “pass” indicates that the student has successfully completed the requirement and no revisions to the written work will be required. A “qualified pass” indicates that reasonable and minor revisions are required. In the event that a student receives a “qualified pass” from the majority of the committee, the student can re-submit the revisions for final approval by the second doctoral committee chair. A “fail” indicates that significant and substantial revisions are required in order to pass the exam and that the student has failed to meet the minimum requirements of the exam.

In the Case of Failure

Students who fail to meet the requirements of their committee more than once will be subject to a written remediation plan (which includes criteria for successful versus unsuccessful completion), developed by the second doctoral committee and approved by the training area program head. If efforts to remediate the student are not successful, the student will be required to withdraw from the program.

Timing

Students are eligible to begin work on the Second Doctoral Examination once they have successfully completed the First Doctoral Examination. If the Second Doctoral Examination is not successfully completed by the beginning of the fall semester of the student’s fifth year, then the student will not be able to register for that semester.

Comprehensive Doctoral Activities Milestone / Comprehensive Examination

Rationale
The purpose of the Comprehensive Doctoral Activities are for students to engage successfully in a number of professional activities that are intimately associated with the creation, communication, and dissemination of scholarship in psychology and law, which are key scholarly competencies. Although not a requirement of the Graduate Center, all students will be required to complete the Comprehensive Doctoral Activities to complete the Psychology and Law Program.

Requirements

To successfully complete the comprehensive doctoral activities, students are required to complete all of the following activities while in the Program:

1. Submit a first-authored manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal and complete any necessary follow-up “revise and resubmit” procedures. The process of publishing the manuscript should allow students to develop skills of responding to an editor and peer reviews (either directly via a revise and resubmit OR via a new submission to a different journal). The manuscript could be based on the student’s first-doc research project, an alternative project with the student’s faculty advisor, or a project with another faculty member (in Psychology and Law, or from outside). The peer-reviewed journal to which the article is submitted is subject to the approval of the student’s faculty advisor.

2. Present a poster or paper at a relevant regional, national or international conference. The student should be first author on the presentation.

3. Attend two regional, national and/or international conferences, with each conference being hosted by a different organization. (This can include the conference from #2 above.)

Evaluation

Students must obtain approval from their faculty advisor prior to engaging in each of the comprehensive tasks to ensure the activity meets the standards of the Program. In addition, 30 successful completion of the Comprehensive Doctoral Activities Milestone will be subject to the approval of the student’s faculty advisor and the training area program head.

Timing

Students are required to complete all the Comprehensive Doctoral Activities prior to their dissertation oral defense. It is expected, however, that students will attempt to complete all activities by the end of their first three years in the program.

Dissertation requirement and defense.

The Doctoral Dissertation is the culmination of the student's research training in psychology. The scope of the research is more ambitious than that in the First Doctoral Exam research project, yet it should not be of such scope as to be incapable of completion in a reasonable period of time, and, in any case, within the eight-year limit set by the GC for the completion of doctoral training. Students should realistically plan for completion long before the deadline is reached. The expectation is that the idea for the research and its plan will be developed by the student, in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor. Students may, but are not required to, use the research topic from their Second Doctoral Exam as a basis for the dissertation. All dissertations must be based on original research, and must clearly demonstrate the candidate’s ability to work at the frontiers of the field.

Eligibility and Timing

Students are eligible to submit their Dissertation proposal once the First and Second Doctoral requirements are successfully completed. Students must be continuously enrolled at the GC until all degree requirements are fulfilled, including filing of an approved dissertation in the library.
Committee Selection

The Dissertation Committee consists of three faculty members, one of whom is designated as chair and who works with the student throughout the research period. The Chair must be a member of the Psychology & Law Doctoral Faculty. The two additional internal members of the Dissertation Committee are chosen by the student in consultation with, and approved by, the Dissertation Chair. The internal members of the Dissertation Committee must be members of a CUNY Psychology Doctoral Sub-Program or members another CUNY Doctoral Program, and they must hold a PhD or equivalent degree.

External Examiners

The dissertation proposal will be examined by the (3 member) Dissertation Committee. However, the completed dissertation will be evaluated by the Dissertation Committee, in addition to two external examiners. It is desirable, but not mandatory, that these two external examiners be present at the dissertation proposal defense. Ideally, the two external examiners should be from outside CUNY, and must hold one of the following degrees: PhD, MD, JD/LLB, or PsyD.

Under exceptional circumstances, where appropriate external examiners are not available from outside of CUNY, they may be selected from within CUNY according to the following guidelines:

1. They must not be members of the Psychology & Law doctoral program and
2. They must not be part-time or full-time faculty members of the Department of Psychology at John Jay College.

The external examiners can play two roles:

1. They may assess and provide feedback on the dissertation proposal during the oral examination.
2. They are part of the final examination committee for the dissertation defense.

In the event that it is necessary to find a replacement for external examiners, new external examiners should be chosen using the criteria for the selection of external examiners outlined above.

Dissertation Proposal

The process of undertaking dissertation research requires that the student follows a series of formal procedures. The first of these is registering the topic proposal. The student first satisfies the dissertation advisor that a manageable research problem has been formulated (i.e. one that is methodologically feasible and for which there are appropriate subject populations available). To register the topic proposal, the student completes two copies of the Dissertation Topic Proposal Form (available online). A one-page summary of the student's proposed research is required, as well as the nomination of at least two faculty members for the Dissertation Committee, other than the Dissertation advisor. The dissertation advisor then approves the topic proposal and signs the two forms. One copy is sent to the TAC for approval. The second is sent to the Executive Officer.

The Dissertation Defense

The final draft of the student's doctoral dissertation must be approved by the Dissertation Committee. This evaluation is recorded on the Dissertation Evaluation Form, which is submitted to the Executive Officer in Psychology and the Dissertation Advisor. The evaluation permits the following choices: (i) Approved as the Dissertation stands, (ii) Approved, except for minor revisions, (iii) Not approved at this time because the dissertation requires major revisions, and (iv) Dissertation is unacceptable to readers.

When all three members of the Dissertation Committee have approved the dissertation on the Dissertation Evaluation Form (either as it stands or with minor revisions) the Dissertation Advisor contacts the Executive Officer and suggests several people to serve as outside readers. The Executive Officer invites two from the suggested list to participate. All faculty outside CUNY must submit a resume unless one is already on file. Upon their agreement, copies of the dissertation are sent to the readers for their evaluation. That evaluation is made on the same
Dissertation Evaluation Form. The Dissertation Committee plus the two outside readers constitute the five-member Oral Defense Committee. The two outside readers also must approve the dissertation on the Dissertation Evaluation Form and send it to the Executive Officer and the Dissertation Sponsor at least SIX WEEKS before the oral defense. The defense is scheduled only if all the evaluations are in the acceptable categories.

**Oral Defense of Dissertation**

The Dissertation Advisor and other members of the Oral Defense Committee arrange the time and date for the final examination in consultation with the Program's Administrative Assistant.

At least ONE MONTH must be allowed for the Provost, at the request of the Executive Officer, to formally invite all members of the Oral Defense to participate in the final Examination. Thus, at least one month prior to the defense date, an Intent to Defend form must be submitted. It is the responsibility of the student to see that all arrangements for the Oral Defense have been made. Because of demands on faculty and student time at the end of each semester, students are advised not to schedule a defense at the end of a semester. The Dissertation Advisor chairs the oral defense.

**Evaluation Procedures**

The Executive Officer provides the appropriate forms to evaluate the candidate's performance at the oral defense. The options open to the committee are: (i) Candidate passes, Dissertation is accepted as presented, (ii) Candidate passes, Dissertation is accepted with minor revisions, (iii) Dissertation must be resubmitted for approval by sponsor and two members of the oral defense committee, and (iv) Candidate fails the final examination with stated recommendations. The results and recommendations of the Oral Defense are decided by a majority vote of the five members. When revisions are required, the student will receive written notice from his or her advisor describing the changes to be made.

After the oral defense, the Dissertation advisor submits the signed evaluation forms to the Executive Officer who informs the Provost and the Registrar of the results. If "minor" revisions are necessary, only the advisor need approve the revised dissertation and sign the form. If "major" revisions are necessary, all members of the dissertation committee must approve the revised dissertation and sign the form. Upon completion of the revisions, the Approval of Revised Dissertation Form is sent to the Executive Officer by the advisor for his or her signature who then informs the Provost and the Registrar. Students must complete the required revisions of their dissertations in a timely manner in consultation with their advisor. When the final version of the dissertation has been accepted and when all other requirements have been met, the candidate may then arrange with the Dissertation Secretary in the Library to submit the dissertation to the Graduate Center Library. The Dissertation Cover Sheet must be signed by the Executive Officer. The PhD degree is considered completed on the date that the dissertation is accepted for deposit in the Library. The actual awarding of the degree takes place on: February 1, June commencement, or September 1.
ABCP Learning Goals and Outcomes Assessment

On successful completion of the program students are expected:

To have broad knowledge of animal behavior and comparative psychology, including knowledge about function, mechanisms, and developmental and evolutionary determinants of behavior, learning, and cognition. Students are also expected to gain familiarity with research methods used to investigate these questions.

Assessment: Successful completion of both core courses on animal behavior and elective courses, which requires a distribution of courses across areas of animal behavior and comparative psychology. Partial completion is expected by the First Examination, full completion by the Second Examination.

To have in-depth knowledge in selected areas of animal behavior and comparative psychology.

Assessment: Passing the First Examination, Second Examination, and Dissertation Examination, all of which require the student to demonstrate in-depth knowledge in some areas of the field by being able to, respectively, review research findings, lay out a research plan, and conduct research.

To be able to formulate relevant research hypotheses and appropriate plans for their evaluation, and to be able to carry out such plans.

Assessment: Passing the Second Examination, which requires the formulation of research hypotheses and plans, and the Dissertation Examination, which requires research to have been carried out to a professional standard.

To be able to write, at a professional level, research papers in animal behavior and comparative psychology, and grant proposals directed to funding agencies.

Assessment: Passing the First Examination, which requires a publishable quality review of a topic in animal behavior and comparative psychology; Passing the Dissertation Examination, which requires manuscripts ready to be submitted, or submitted, or published as first-author in relevant peer-reviewed academic journals; Having written, or contributed to writing in significant part, grant proposals that have been submitted to funding agencies.

To be able to conduct research on topics relevant to animal behavior and comparative psychology

Assessment: Passing the Second Examination, which requires laying out a research plan; passing the Dissertation Examinations, which requires having successfully completed original research.

To be able to communicate effectively in professional settings such as conferences, lectures, and seminars.

Assessment: Having attended professional conferences and having presented posters or talks at conferences.
Outcomes Assessment Plan

Behavior Analysis training area

On successful completion of the program, students are expected to

1. Have a breadth of knowledge of psychology and behavior analysis.

   Assessment: Successful completion of the first doctoral examination which will be met by:
   
   - Satisfactory completion of a course titled "Scientific Inference in Writing," (Psych 831) during which students will analyze published written work, as well as the writing of their peers, and will produce a major written work.
   - Completion (with a grade of “B” or better) of three courses from those required for New York State licensure (Licensure Requirement section of BATA curriculum), with the exception of Psych. 7031, 72004, 73100, and 73703.
   - Deadline: The First Doctoral Exam Requirement must be satisfied before advancing to Level II (following completion of 45 credits).

2. Have a depth of knowledge in an area of behavior analysis.

   Assessment: completion and passing of a defense of the predissertation paper.

3. Be able to orally discuss behavior analysis

   Assessment: successful passing of the second doctoral exam which is an oral exam by the student's faculty committee focusing on the relation between the student's review paper and other topics in behavior processes and presentation of the dissertation research at a colloquium attended by students and faculty.

   Deadlines: The Second Doctoral Exam Requirement must be satisfactorily completed (passed) before or immediately after 60 credits are completed, and before advancing to Level III.

4. Be able to write, at a professional level, publishable research papers

   Assessment: successful completion of a predissertation, major area paper, and dissertation (described below).

5. Be able to conduct research in behavior analysis

   Assessment: successful completion of predissertation, major area paper, and dissertation research (described below).

**Pre-Dissertation Research Requirement**

Conduct of a complete research study, presented in written form (APA style) with appropriate literature review, methodology, data analysis, and conclusion.

The three-member evaluation committee, comprised of the student's advisor and two program faculty members, must be established at the inception of the project. Prior to commencing data collection, a written research proposal must be approved by the committee. Final approval of the completed research project will be determined by the committee. Research that merely fulfills requirements of other courses may not qualify as pre-dissertation research.
The pre-dissertation research proposal must be approved by the third semester in residence. A Pre-dissertation Signoff form must be completed and signed when the proposal is accepted. This form will be placed in the student's folder. After the student and his/her advisor are satisfied that the written research report is acceptable, the report is submitted to the student's committee. A committee meeting will be held in which the acceptability of the pre-dissertation project will be determined. When the final draft is approved it is to be submitted to the Administrative assistant along with a completed Pre-dissertation Sign-off Form. Advancement to Level III requires the submission of an approved pre-dissertation project along with other requirements.

**MAJOR AREA PAPER**

The student will propose, develop, and complete a major literature review, suitable for publication, on a topic in behavior processes. The paper should be written under the supervision of the student's three-faculty committee, who will approve an outline for the paper and the final version. A sign-off form is required for both approvals. An oral presentation of the literature review to the student's committee is also required. This may be combined with the Second Doctoral Oral Exam.

**DISSERTATION**

1. **SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION TOPIC PROPOSAL AND DISSERTATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM**

   The Topic Proposal and Committee Approval Form is a form on which the student provides a paragraph-long description of the proposed dissertation project. The student and advisor also list on this form recommended members of the Dissertation Advisory Committee who have agreed to serve on the committee. After approval by the dissertation advisor (who will serve as chair of the Advisory Committee), the form is submitted to the student's Training area coordinator. If the Training area coordinator approves the committee, the form is then sent to the Executive Officer for authorization.

   The three-member Dissertation Advisory Committee consists of the dissertation advisor and two other members. The advisor, who serves as chair, is normally a member of the student's training area; however, with the approval of the Training area coordinator and Executive Officer, other doctoral faculty members in Psychology or other disciplines or faculty from other institutions may serve as co-chair, but not as sole chair, of the committee with the student's advisor.

   Committee members must be full time faculty members at Queens College. If a committee member is not a member of the CUNY doctoral faculty, evidence of his or her competence to serve as a committee member must be provided to the Training area coordinator and Executive Officer.
The Training area coordinator and Executive Officer must approve any changes in the Advisory Committee after it is appointed.

2. SUBMIT DISSERTATION PROPOSAL CLEARANCE: HUMAN PARTICIPANTS FORM

Obtain approval from appropriate Institutional Research Review Boards. Regardless of whether or not human subjects are to be used, the Graduate School’s Dissertation Proposal Clearance: Human Participants form must be filled out prior to conducting any research.

In addition, approval must be obtained from the appropriate Queens College committee prior to conducting any research with human or animal subjects. This is true even if the work is to be done off campus. Animal research is overseen by the Queens College Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC); and human research by the CUNY Committee for Protection of Human Subjects, also known as the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Information and forms may be obtained from the Queens College Web site. From the home page go to Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. For research with human subjects, the Graduate School requires proof that the research was approved by the CUNY IRB. A copy of the approval letter should be submitted with the dissertation proposal. When the dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School it must be accompanied by another Graduate School form - the Human Participants Certification form.

3. ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

On receipt of the Topic Proposal, the Executive Officer's office reviews the student's record. If (and only if) all requirements have been met, the student is advanced to candidacy and sent a form for requesting that the M. Phil. degree be awarded. Advancement to candidacy occurs when:

a. all course work for the training area has been completed with an average grade of B or better and any special requirements, such as the major area paper, have been met;

b. the First Doctoral Exam and the Second Doctoral Examinations have been passed;

c. the Topic Proposal has been approved and submitted to the Executive Officer.

After a student is advanced to candidacy, he/she should receive a memorandum from the Registrar entitled "Instructions for Preparation of the Ph.D. Dissertation." This document specifies the Graduate School's requirements for the preparation of the final document, including such things as margins, type of paper, number of copies, binding, etc.

4. PREPARATION OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL AND MEETING OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The next step is the preparation of the dissertation proposal. This is a detailed account of the research to be undertaken, including background, statement of research questions and their rationale, methods (including design, research instruments, sampling, etc.) and data analyses to be performed. Usually, the background, statement of research questions, and methods sections can be incorporated into the thesis with relatively minor changes.
The proposal is written in close consultation with the advisor and other members of the Advisory Committee. At some point after all committee members have had a chance to read a draft of the proposal, the committee meets to discuss all aspects of the proposal. The meeting offers an important opportunity to clarify conceptual and methodological problems that may have been previously overlooked, and ensures that the candidate and the committee have a clear understanding of the requirements that have been set for an acceptable research project.

5. APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL BY DISSERTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The proposal is approved when all three committee members sign the dissertation proposal cover sheet. This can occur at the meeting of the committee or subsequent to it. The approved cover sheet is then submitted along with a complete copy of the proposal to the Executive Officer.

6.

7. PROVISIONAL APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION BY DISSERTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
After the research is completed, a draft of the dissertation is written and submitted to the student's advisor. When the advisor feels that the dissertation is in reasonably good shape, copies are given to the other two members of the committee. These members may request additional changes. If these changes are minor, the member may agree to approve the dissertation "except for minor revisions." If the changes are major, the member may refuse to approve the dissertation until the changes are carried out. Each committee member is given a dissertation evaluation form in which he/she indicates whether or not he/she approves the dissertation and provides comments. These forms are sent directly to the Executive Officer by the committee member with a copy to the advisor.

8. PROVISIONAL APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION BY "OUTSIDE READERS"
When the three members of the Advisory Committee have approved the dissertation, the advisor recommends to the Executive Officer two additional individuals to constitute the five-member Dissertation Examination Committee. The additional committee members (sometimes referred to as "outside readers") may be doctoral faculty members, other CUNY faculty, or persons outside of CUNY, subject to the approval of the Executive Officer. If the individuals are approved as members of the Examination Committee, the student provides each with a copy of the dissertation and Dissertation Evaluation Form.

9. DISSERTATION DEFENSE (FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION)
The oral defense cannot take place until two weeks after all members of the Examination Committee have returned the Dissertation Evaluation Forms to the Executive Officer, and only if four of the evaluations are approvals. The student takes primary responsibility for contacting the committee members to arrange a time for the defense, and for scheduling a room for the defense. The Executive Officer must be informed of the time and the room at least two weeks before the defense, so that the Graduate Center Provost's office can be notified. The official invitation to the members of the examination committee is then sent from the Provost's office. The oral defense is an open examination; that is, individuals other than the student and the committee are free to attend.

10. APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION BY FIVE-MEMBER EXAMINATION COMMITTEE
The advisor serves as chair of the Examining Committee. The Executive Officer will provide the advisor with the appropriate forms to evaluate the candidate's performance. After conducting the examination, the student and all observers leave the room and the committee records one of four recommendations on the Report of Final Examination form:

- a. We certify that the candidate has passed the Final Examination. We accept the dissertation as presented.
- b. We certify that the candidate has passed the Final Examination. We will consider the dissertation acceptable after minor revisions are approved by the Chairperson.
- c. In our judgment, the candidate's dissertation requires major revisions. It must be resubmitted for approval by the Chairperson and two members of the examining committee.
- d. We certify that the candidate has failed the Final Examination, and make the following recommendations.

The results and recommendations of the committee will be decided by a majority vote of the five members. The five members sign the Report of Final Examination form and the original is submitted to the Executive Officer.

11. APPROVAL OF REVISIONS

Minor revisions approved by dissertation advisor; Major revisions approved by dissertation advisor and two other committee members.

If revisions are necessary, an Approval of Revised Dissertation form will be sent to the advisor. Only the advisor need sign the form certifying that minor revisions have been made. All three original members of the Dissertation Advisory Committee must sign the form if major revisions are necessary.
Health Psychology & Clinical Science

The Health Psychology and Clinical Science (HPCS) doctoral program trains students to conduct research in the biopsychosocial determinants of physical and mental health disorders and how to design and evaluate interventions to improve the physical and mental health of individuals, families, and communities. Training in the HPCS program is centered on development of competency in four learning goals. Students in HPCS will:

1. Describe, synthesize, apply, and translate knowledge of psychological science in health psychology and clinical psychology.
2. Employ empirical research skills, including laboratory, field, and intervention research.
3. Identify, interpret, and apply professional skills including proficiency in teaching, basic and translational research, and empirically-based clinical intervention.
4. Demonstrate competence in professional activities with culturally diverse groups of people and in the conduct of ethical research.

1. Knowledge of psychological science in health psychology and clinical psychology. Graduates of the program will be expected to have an in-depth knowledge of health psychology and clinical science. Students will develop expertise in the psychological bases of physical and mental health and illness, including such topics as the biopsychosocial determinants of health and illness, stress and coping processes, and how social, cultural and temporal contexts alter health-behavior processes. They also will gain a broad knowledge of the basic areas of psychology (e.g., social psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, neuroscience), as these areas interface with health psychology and clinical science. In addition to the mechanics of research design, students will develop the ability to conceptualize research problems in terms of broader theoretical descriptions and explanations as a means to understand physical and mental health-relevant phenomena in more meaningful ways.

2. Empirical research skills. Studies will develop advanced research skills, including the ability to understand, integrate, and critically evaluate the literature in the breadth of scientific psychology, and the ability to design, conduct, and analyze empirical research. The program emphasizes the development of laboratory, field and translational research skills, including the conduct of randomized clinical trials. Students are expected to maintain an active research program in collaboration with faculty members throughout their doctoral training so as to enhance the breadth and sophistication of their research skills and to produce new knowledge in one or more specialized areas through directed research experiences and the successful completion of a dissertation.

3. Professional skills. Students will develop proficiencies in teaching, writing research grants, presenting their work at research conferences, and publishing in professional journals. Students will also develop publication and presentation skills through the foundational courses, professional development seminars, and their individual research experiences. Students will be expected to develop a professional identity as a health psychologist and/or clinical scientist through research experiences, attendance at specialized research conferences, and membership in one or more professional associations of health or clinical psychologists.
4. Appreciation for cultural diversity and the conduct of ethical research. Students will develop the competence to study and interact with individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds, to conduct research that is culturally sensitive, and to develop skills to work collaboratively. Regardless of setting, clinical and health psychological science researchers need a solid grounding in ethics as they pertain to research and to vulnerable and underserved populations. In addition to a required course in ethics, the ethical conduct of research will be integrated into every course, and will be modeled by faculty.
Cognition Learning and Development

A student in Cognition, Language, and Development (CLD) who has successfully achieved a doctorate in Psychology will show competencies in the domains of understanding, contributing to, and communicating scientific knowledge. In particular, a student will:

1. Demonstrate broad and specialized knowledge in the student's chosen area within Cognition, Language, and Development, including the ability to
   a. Read and critically evaluate the research literature
   b. Describe current and classic theories and findings within a specific sub-field, and explain how theories accommodate available findings
   c. Design a study to address a major unresolved research problem
2. Demonstrate appropriate quantitative and computational skills for data--generation (conducting experiments) and data--analysis.
3. Make a substantial and original contribution to the field.
4. Demonstrate clear communication abilities to explain theory and data in written and oral forms, including:
   a. Writing a journal--quality manuscript and submitting it for publication to a peer--reviewed journal
   b. Delivering a conference presentation
   c. Giving an undergraduate lecture
   d. Writing a grant application for external funding
   e. Completing a doctoral dissertation
5. Interact effectively and collegially with others in the field and conform to the fundamentals of ethical research conduct.

Assessment of Learning Goals

Each of the five principal learning goals are assessed across three major examinations taking place throughout a student's doctoral career. The following sections describe how each examination measures each of the learning goals. Each examination is assessed by a committee of faculty members assembled by the student.

First Examination

The First Exam is a written exam taken by the end of the student's third semester (and no later than the accrual of 45 credits). The student writes a publication--quality empirical paper, preferably in APA style. Since some projects require more preparation than others, students may submit an examination that involves analysis of existing data sets. In that event, the student must separately write up a methods section detailing the methods they have been learning, discuss how their data analysis dovetails with their planned research, and present the implications of the findings. Every portion of the writing of the exam must be original, even if
existing data sets are used. Students may also write up experiments with null results. A rubric is provided for the First Exam to guide the student and the advisory committee that will grade the exam and determine whether the student has passed or failed.

**Learning goals assessed (1,3,4,5)**

**Learning goals #1 and #3.** To complete the First Examination, students spend at least one year reading and critically evaluating the literature (1.a), determining a specific research question that addresses a debate in the field (1.b), and then designing and conducting an experiment to test the research question (1.c).

**Learning goal #2.** The successful completion of a first doctoral exam entails appropriate statistical analysis of collected or existing data.

**Learning goal #4.** Students are required to produce a journal quality manuscript (4.a), and to give an oral presentation to communicate their findings (4.b).

**Learning goal #5.** Students will form their committee in consultation with their primary advisor and have their proposed research approved by the Institutional Review Board in order to conduct the planned research. Students will meet periodically with their advisor and committee to assess their progress.

**Second Examination**

The Second Exam is written between the student’s fifth and sixth semester. The Second Exam is in three parts. 1) The student writes an integrative literature review (which in the ideal case will serve as basis for the introduction to the student’s thesis). The review is approximately 30–50 double-spaced pages using 12–point type and 1–inch margins. 2) The student writes an NIH NRSA grant proposal that is 6 single-spaced pages in length and follows NIH guidelines; the student proposes at least two feasible new experiments. A 6-page proposal to another funding institution may be substituted for an NRSA proposal with the agreement of the student’s advisor and committee. 3) The student orally presents and defends the material written for the Second Exam.

**Learning goals assessed (1,3,4,5)**

**Learning goals #1 and #3.** The review portion of the second exam establishes the student’s ability to summarize and critically evaluate a specific topic in depth (1.a, 1.b), and integrate their view of the topic within the broader scope of the literature. The grant proposal and experiment proposal sections establish the student’s ability to identify an area in the
literature where a contribution to new knowledge would be valuable, and to motivate an appropriate study that will fill the gap in knowledge.

**Learning goal #2.** In performing the tasks of grant writing and proposing new experiments, students will demonstrate their ability to plan a strategy for data-handling and statistical analysis before conducting the experiments.

**Learning goal #4.** Students are required to produce a journal quality review paper (4.a), and to give an oral presentation to communicate their findings (4.b), and to produce a grant proposal for external funding (4.d).

**Learning goal #5.** The grant-writing requirements assess the student’s ability to motivate their research to their peers.

**Dissertation Proposal**
A dissertation proposal must be defended in the semester following the passing of the Second Exam. The student must select a dissertation committee of at least 3 Graduate Center faculty. One of these will be the dissertation supervisor. The proposal lays out the basic plan of the thesis in enough detail for the committee members to determine the feasibility of the project, the appropriateness of the proposed methods and scope, and the suitability of the research questions. The committee may recommend changes to improve the progress of the thesis work. Students are expected to continue to work closely with their supervisor and dissertation committee.

**Dissertation**
The dissertation, or thesis, is expected to be completed no later than the end of the student’s fifth year in the Psychology Program. The thesis may take one of two forms: a) 2–3 individual publishable papers on a theme (the number to be determined by the complexity and number of experiments in each paper); b) a conventional thesis.

a. Under the 2–3-paper model, the thesis reflects the student’s body of work over the course of their doctoral studies. Although 3 is the typical number of expected papers, 2 may be sufficient in the cases of multi-study papers, longitudinal studies, studies with very complex designs, and so on. Students are expected to write a general introduction and discussion that links the papers.

b. Under the conventional model, the thesis asks a coherent set of questions and follows a traditional format consisting of a series of studies investigating those questions and the overall conclusions.
**Dissertation Defense**

Dissertation defenses are arranged once the dissertation committee has determined that the student is ready to defend their thesis. Defenses are open to the public. In addition to the 3-member committee, the student may have an internal reader and an external reader. Readers are arranged in consultation with the dissertation supervisor. The defense typically takes the form of a 30-minute presentation by the student, followed by questions from anyone attending the defense. The committee may ask some questions in public and others with only the student in the room.

**Learning goals assessed (1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)**

In successfully completing the dissertation the student will have accomplished the following:

1. Designed an experimental or theoretical approach to a significant, unresolved research problem in cognition, language, or development (1.a, b, c, & 3).
2. Identified and initiated a research design appropriate to that approach, including critical controls. (1.c & 2)
3. Mastered the methodologies required for data collection. (1.c & 2)
4. Organized and presented the research data effectively in both oral and written forms. (4.a, b, e)
5. Published one or more first-author papers in peer-reviewed journals. (4.a)
6. Effectively defended the thesis and displayed an understanding of the current state of research in areas cognate to the thesis topic. (1.a, b, 4.e, & 5)