

Colin Powell School
for Civic and Global Leadership

The City College
of New York

General Psychology Master's Program Handbook

2022

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OVERVIEW

There are three pathways to complete a master's degree in General Psychology: (1) a 31-credit thesis path, (2) a course-intensive 40-credit path (no thesis), and (3) a prescribed course-intensive 40-credit path leading to the academic credentials for a state-issued Substance Abuse Certificate (CASAC). All paths require PSY V0500 (Advanced Statistics), PSY V0100 (Advanced Experimental Psychology), and at least one course from a menu of quantitative/biological offerings, including, but not limited to: Neuropsychology, Cognition, Perception, Biological Basis of Behavior, Psychopharmacology, Tests and Measures, Program Evaluation, Statistical Methods II, Language and Thought, Physiological Psychology, Sleep, and Learning. For the CASAC path the quantitative/biological course must be PSY V5700 (Biological Basis of Behavior).

PATH SELECTION

A student may select or switch to or from a path at any time; no declaration is necessary. The student just must keep track of the new path's requirements. For example, it is easy to switch from the CASAC path as its courses will just count as electives in the others, whereas switching to the CASAC path after a year may mean that students will need more than 40 credits to reach their degree.

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Each path has a required capstone project.

1. For the thesis path it is the thesis itself (more below), which registers on the transcript as PSY B9900 (Psychological Research and Seminar), for which credit is not awarded until the thesis is deposited.
2. For the 40-credit course intensive path, the capstone constitutes confirmation of completion of one of the following 3 options: a) development, write up, and oral presentation of a full case conceptualization, in which a clinical case from a field experience is viewed through a specific theoretical orientation, supports a specific diagnosis, and leads to a specific treatment plan OR b) presentation of a poster or talk at a professional or student research conference OR c) submission of a manuscript for publication. Completion of an option is established either through the Capstone Evaluation Form (see below) signed by mentor or case supervisor, a letter from journal confirming receipt of manuscript submission, a copy of conference program with presentation listed, or a poster showcased within the department. The work may be done at any time during the student's tenure in the program.
3. For the CASAC track the capstone is PSY V6600, a practicum course taken once all CASAC coursework is completed.

COURSEWORK

For all but the CASAC track most coursework is elective, which means student choice. Students can choose from among the courses offered by the General Psychology Master's program each semester. In rare cases and with special permission from the program advisor they may choose a course from the Mental Health Counseling offerings or from another department, like biology. After the first semester students in good standing may also choose courses offered by our sister colleges through the ePermit system on CUNYFirst. Up to 40% of the classes to be applied for graduation may be taken elsewhere – transferred, or through ePermit.

CASAC students must take the courses approved by OASAS in Albany to receive their academic certification. The path requires two undergraduate courses: PSY 38000 (Introduction to Clinical and Counseling) and PSY 36000 (Treatment of Substance Abuse II). These are offered every semester and most summers and will not count toward the graduate degree. They are billed at the undergraduate tuition rate.

The CASAC curriculum is, in any order:

PSY V7000 Substance Abuse Counseling

PSY V7100 Chemical Dependency

PSY V5700 Biological Basis of Behavior

PSY B9758 Prevention of Mental Health Disorders

PSY V5100 Group Counseling and Small Group Processes

PSY V6593 Family Counseling

PSY V2000 Developmental Psychology

PSY V6532 Theories and Techniques of Counseling

Once all CASAC courses have been completed, the student must submit the transcript to the CASAC coordinator (CASAC@ccny.cuny.edu) to receive a CASAC-T designation from OASAS. Then they may enroll in the practicum course, PSY V6600, in which students complete 300 hours of supervised internship at an off campus treatment site.

(N.B.: The CASAC track provides the CASAC-T designation. To be certified as an addiction counselor in NY State, students must also complete an additional 1700 supervised internship hours and pass the state certification exam. Please see details [here](#).)

PSY B9800 (Tutorial): Up to 6 credits of independent study may be applied toward the degree. To register for PSY B9800, a student must first get support from a faculty member who will mentor the project, and complete with the faculty mentor "a syllabus" for the semester course, on the *Independent Study/Thesis Writing Permit* form (see below). The form needs to be signed by both student and faculty mentor and then approved by the program director.

THESIS PROCESS AND DEPOSIT

Generally, a thesis takes at least a year to complete and should NOT be started only when the coursework has been finished. An acceptable thesis must be empirically based and original and approved by three faculty members, one of whom is the principal mentor. The thesis can involve a secondary data analysis, either in the public domain (faster IRB approval) or from a research project with data that has already been collected for some other purpose.

The first step to doing a thesis is getting an idea or topic and finding a mentor, in either order. Being a thesis mentor is very rewarding but also very time-consuming, and faculty are more likely to agree if the proposed project is in their area of interest. Many faculty members have ongoing research or even data already collected and are amenable to a student joining their project and carving out an area.

The easiest way for a student to find a mentor is to identify one's interests, take classes in that area, determine a specific topic in a class that is especially interesting, and approach the instructor for additional reading in that topic. The student potentially may be mentored in an independent study and/or join a project of interest that faculty may have.

Once a mentor has been found, the mentor will guide the student through the thesis process. We recommend that students meet regularly with their thesis advisor through all stages of the thesis project.

The thesis must include an original empirical analysis. That will entail at the very least the student being cleared by the IRB for a thesis topic from an ongoing research project or submitting a separate proposal to the IRB if proposing a new research project as the thesis topic. In that latter case especially, a good timetable is to spend one semester doing independent study ending with a good review of the literature and proposed methods section, which can then be reformulated into an IRB proposal. If the IRB provides fast approval, the second semester can be spent collecting and analyzing data. Then, in the third semester, the student would register for PSY B9900, focusing on writing the results and polishing the final draft. If during the semester that students take B9900 they miss the deadline for depositing the thesis, they are obliged to enroll in and pay for maintenance of matriculation the following term. Hence, it is best not to enroll in PSY B9900 until the term that completion is a certainty.

At any point a student can ask for additional faculty support, best with the agreement of the mentor. By the time a good first draft thesis is ready, the student should have assembled a committee of at least 3 faculty members to read and critique the draft, pronounce it "defensible," and then arrange an oral presentation of the thesis (i.e., the defense). The thesis committee approves the thesis by signing off on the *Certification of Master's Thesis Requirement* form and the *Psychology Graduation Checklist* (Defense Portion) (see below).

Any full-time faculty member from the psychology department can serve as mentor or committee member. Faculty from other departments or other entities can also serve with permission of the program director. A faculty member outside the psychology department can be "de facto" mentor so long as there is also a "nominal" mentor from the department on the committee to oversee paperwork.

The final thesis is deposited in the Cohen Library. A student should have defended the thesis 1-2 weeks before wishing to deposit so there is time to incorporate any corrections that may arise at the defense into the draft. The final approved thesis must be deposited with all signatures 1-2 weeks before the semester ends. Deposit includes upload to the library and presentation of all signed forms to the thesis administrator in the Colin Powell School dean's office (NAC 6-141).

GRADING, STANDING, AND INCOMPLETES

If during the semester that students take PSY B9900 they miss the deadline for depositing the thesis, the faculty mentor will assign a grade of SP (satisfactory progress) to the course. The student can then complete the course the following semester (registering for maintenance of matriculation if no other course is taken in that semester) and file to graduate. SP is GPA neutral and not credit bearing. When the thesis is complete the faculty mentor will change the grade of SP to CR (for credit).

At the graduate level nine credits is considered full-time and a GPA of 3.0 or better is necessary to be in good standing. A grade of INC may be requested and given by a professor, with the expectation of a specific timetable for completion. A student has one year after receiving an INC to make up the work and convert the INC to a letter grade. After a year, an INC turns to a grade of FIN, the equivalent of a grade of F. However, upon appeal to the Graduate Committee on Courses and Standing of the Powell School, an FIN can be changed if so approved. Appeals are made through dean's office of the Colin Powell School.

ADVISEMENT AND REGISTERING FOR COURSES

Advisement is available through the program director for the General Master's program or from any faculty member. Students completing a thesis receive supervision/advisement from their thesis mentor. Students are able to register for classes on an assigned enrollment found in the Student Center tab on CUNYFirst (see right panel labeled Enrollment Dates). If a course requires special permission that is granted by the Program Director.

FINANCIAL AID

The Colin Powell School offers a fellowship to support graduate students

(<https://www.ccnycunyu.edu/colinpowellschool/colin-powell-graduate-fellowship>). Depending on availability, students in the General Master's program may also be eligible to serve as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses. If you are interested in TA opportunities, please contact Ms. Hawai Kwok (kwok@ccny.cuny.edu).

GRADUATION APPLICATION

Deadlines for applying for graduation appear on the CCNY website (<https://www.ccnycunyu.edu/registrar/application-for-graduation>). We recommend saving a screen shot of the graduation application. Be sure to apply for graduation by the deadline to avoid paying for maintenance of matriculation the following semester.

INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS

HOW TO FILL IN AND PRINT FORMS IN THIS DOCUMENT

Windows Users:

Simply click inside the fields and start typing. You can use the date picker for the date fields.

Electronic signature can be added by clicking on the pen icon in the toolbar along the top (with signature having been stored, and then moved and sized into position).

To print a single form, click the printer icon in the toolbar along the top, and then choose "Current." Do this while you are viewing the form that you want to print.

MAC Users:

The document should be opened in Preview. Then the fields can be filled in by typing. Electronic signature can be added using Annotate (with signature having been stored, and then moved and sized into position).

To print within preview, you can choose: all, a selected page in the sidebar, or type in the page(s) you want in the "from" line.

LIBRARY FILING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THESIS

All CCNY Master's theses are to be submitted to CUNY Academic Works, CUNY's open-access institutional repository.

[Submission Instructions for Thesis](#)

[Submit Thesis to CUNY Academic Works](#)

More information about CUNY Academic Works can be found on the Library's

[Digital Scholarship Services-Institutional Repository guide.](#)

Students with questions about the process for submitting thesis should contact their academic advisor:

Colin Powell School Dean's Office: Ms. Charlene Darbassie

**COLIN POWELL SCHOOL FOR CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
THE CITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
GRADUATE DIVISION**

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION OF MASTER'S THESIS REQUIREMENT

The candidate for the degree is required to have this form completed upon acceptance of the final draft of the Master's Thesis by the thesis mentor (and, when required, by the second faculty reader). It is to be countersigned by the Director of the Graduate Program in the field and then presented by the candidate, together with a digital thesis in PDF format on a CD and the bursar's receipt for binding fee, to the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Candidate's Name (Print)

Field of Study

Email (Print)

Thesis Title: _____
_____ Date: _____

1. _____ Date: _____
Mentor (Print)

(Signature)

2. _____ Date: _____
2nd Reader (Print)

(Signature)

3. _____ Date: _____
3rd Reader (Print)

(Signature)

4. _____ Date: _____
Program Director (Print)

(Signature)

**COLIN POWELL SCHOOL FOR CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
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MASTER'S THESIS REGISTRATION FORM

One copy of this form is to be presented by the student to the Director of the Graduate Program in the candidate's field of study. A second copy is to be presented or mailed by the student to the Graduate Division Office.

Student's Name (Print)

Field of Study

Signature

Email (Print)

Thesis Title: _____

Faculty Mentor's Signature

Date

CAPSTONE EVALUATION FORM

Topic: _____

Student: _____

Project developed directly from (list relevant course or courses):

If applicable, Work was presented at: _____

Date: _____

Name of at least one attending or supervising person: _____

Signature: _____

If applicable, Work appeared in: _____

_____ (provide full bibliographic reference)

For each category, supervising person should score the work on a scale of 0 (not applicable) or 1 (weakly supports) to 5 (strongly supports).

- A. Literature review reflects mastery of the subfield topic _____
(e.g., topic is positive emotion and attention; topic is alcohol use in college students)
- B. Literature review reflects mastery of a general field in psychology _____
(e.g., general fields are motivation and emotion, cognition)
- C. Project reflects professionalism in dealing with patients, clients, or human subjects _____
- D. Project reflects command of ethics in scholarship (citations) _____
Treatment of human subjects and IRB interface _____
Treatment of patients/clients _____
- E. Project reflects good writing _____
- F. Project includes one or more hypotheses that follow from a psychological theory
and/or the literature reviewed _____
- G. Project reflects mathematical competency, statistics mastery _____
- H. Project reflects good graphics communication skills _____
- I. Project reflects mastery of research design, critical thinking _____

PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATION CHECKLIST

1. PSY V0500 (Statistics) Date Completed: _____
2. PSY V0100 (Experimental) Date Completed: _____
3. Distribution requirement: Course from Cognitive, Neuro, Physio or Testing area:

Course Name: _____ Course #: _____

4. Check One:

THESIS

NON-THESIS

PSY B9900 _____

Check one:

Capstone completion form attached _____
OR Practicum Seminar PSY V6600 _____

Elective Credits
(at least 18 additional, totaling 31 altogether)

Elective Credits
(at least 30 additional, totaling 40 altogether)

For Thesis Only:

Oral examination date _____

Attending Faculty (Print)

Signature

Date

Attending Faculty (Print)

Signature

Date

Attending Faculty (Print)

Signature

Date

INDEPENDENT STUDY/THESIS WRITING PERMIT

INDEPENDENT STUDY/ THESIS WRITING PERMIT IN: _____
Department/Program

of Credits: _____ Mentor Name/ID #: _____

Student Name: _____ Student EMPLID #: _____

Date: _____ Semester: _____

Telephone #: _____ Major: _____

Undergraduate	Graduate	Honors
31001 = 1 credit	B9800 = 3 credits	30100 = First Year
31002 = 2 credits	B9801 = 1 credit	30200 = Second Year
31003 = 3 credits	B9802 = 2 credits	30300 = Third Year
31004 = 4 credits	B9804 = 4 credits	30400 = Fourth Year
	B9900 = 3 credits (Thesis Writing)	

What written work will you be submitting to meet the requirements for this study?

Please attach a detailed description of what you are researching and what will be the result of your research.

Course number (e.g., PSY 31001): _____

The mentor and his/her Program Director/Department Chair MUST sign this form in order for you to register for this course.

Mentor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Program Director/

Department Chairperson Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guidelines for Independent Study (Office of Academic Standing)

1. Independent Study is NOT to be used to satisfy general education or core requirements; it is to be used to meet special student needs that are not covered in regular course offerings.
2. The student must have completed 9 credits in the discipline with a GPA of 2.5 or better to be eligible for independent study.
3. No more than (4) credits of Independent Study may be awarded per semester.
4. No more than (9) credits of Independent Study may be used to fulfill degree requirements.
5. A record of the specific topic approved for study for each student must be kept in the departmental file.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY/THESIS WRITING PERMIT

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS PAGE IF YOU WISH TO ENROLL IN AN INDEPENDENT STUDY/THESIS WRITING COURSE.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY INDEPENDENT STUDY/THESIS WRITING PERMIT:

1. Semester & Year: _____

2. Professor's Name: _____

3. Student Name & Contact: _____

4. Title of the Course/Study: _____

5. Topics to be Covered: _____

6. Reading List: _____

7. Meetings: _____

8. Grading Method: _____
