



**CAL STATE LA**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of Psychology



# Graduate Student Handbook

Revised  
6/1/2020

Dear Graduate Student,

Welcome! Thank you for deciding to continue your education at California State University, Los Angeles. The M.A. in Psychology and M.S. in Forensic Psychology are rigorous programs designed to develop research and conceptual skills for students whose primary interest is in continuing their education in a doctoral program. A key feature of each program is a close mentoring relationship with a faculty member who oversees the student's progress toward his or her individual research goals.

This handbook contains basic information on our graduate procedures helpful in guiding you to successfully realize your academic goals. We hope that your academic career at Cal State L.A. will offer you many new intellectual challenges and rewards in the pursuit of your personal goals.

In addition to a variety of formal academic experiences available in psychology classes, we encourage you to participate in the activities sponsored by CSULA Psi Chi, our chapter of the international psychology organization. You can find out about these opportunities and other department activities by inquiring at the Psychology office, King Hall, Room C3104 or visiting us at our webpage at <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/>.

The careful planning of your academic program is an important first step toward ensuring your success at California State University, Los Angeles. Be sure to meet with your mentor to help plan your academic program.

I wish for you a successful beginning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gaithri Fernando". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gaithri Fernando, Ph.D.  
Chair and Professor, Department of Psychology

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## IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND OFFICES

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**Department of Psychology · KH C3104 · (323) 343-2250**

<http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/>

**Psychology is in the College of Natural and Social Sciences (NSS)  
NSS Dean's Office · ASC, Wing B, Room 223 · (323) 343-2000**

**Office of Graduate Studies · Library North A124 · (323) 343-3820**

<http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies>

Provides leadership and service to promote graduate studies and to provide support services for research development to the university community

**Graduate Resource Center · Library North A124 · (323) 343-3820**

<http://www.calstatela.edu/graduateresourcecenter>

The Graduate Resource Center guides students through writing, editing, and formatting the thesis and dissertation, and assists in preparing their work for publication; hosts workshops and presentations to support students' academic and professional development; and acts as a general resource for graduate student needs.

**Office of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities · Golden Eagle, Room 314 ·  
(323) 343-3792**

<http://www.calstatela.edu/orad>

ORSCA provides information regarding student research scholarships and internships; and policies, procedures and forms for student's conducting research with human subjects and/or animals. Information, deadlines, and applications for the Student Symposium on Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities can also be found here.

## **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS**

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### **MISSION STATEMENT, PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

The mission of the CSULA Psychology Department is to provide students with the opportunity to excel academically and professionally by using a teacher-scholar mentoring model to teach psychology as a scientific discipline that accurately reflects the diversity of life and human experience. The department is committed to excellence in teaching, research, practice, and scholarship.

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Faculty members are equally committed to fostering service that promotes social justice in our local and global communities and to incorporating cultural issues in curriculum, research, and mentoring. In support of these goals the department seeks to provide a supportive, open, culturally sensitive, and collegial academic environment to its faculty and students.

### **MISSION STATEMENT, COLLEGE OF NATURAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

We are agents of change, promising to serve and transform Greater Los Angeles and the global society through innovative and intentional learning environments, socially conscious and equity-minded civic engagement, and impactful (inter)disciplinary research.

#### **Vision of NSS**

We strive to meet the challenges of an ever-changing and dynamic society.

### **MISSION STATEMENT, CSU LOS ANGELES**

Cal State LA transforms lives and fosters thriving communities across greater Los Angeles. We cultivate and amplify our students' unique talents, diverse life experiences and intellect, through engaged teaching, learning, scholarship, research, and public service that support their overall success, well-being, and the greater good.

# **GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: MA IN PSYCHOLOGY**

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## **GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY (31-32 UNITS)**

At least 50% of the required 31-32 units must be 5000-level. A minimum of 9 units must come from courses other than PSY 4990, PSY 5950, 5970, 5980, and 5990.

### **Core Requirements (Total 13-14 units)**

Students must complete the following with a grade of B or higher:

In the first semester (3 units):

PSY 4950 - Introduction to Graduate Study in Psychology (3)

Within the first year (7 units):

PSY 5040 - Advanced Experimental Methods (3)

PSY 4910 - Multivariate Statistics (4)

One Other 5000-level quantitative course (3-4 units):

PSY 5150 - Advanced Statistical Methods (3)

-or-

PSY 5910 - Advanced Multivariate Statistics (4)

### **Electives in Psychology (12 units)**

Select 12 units of electives coursework to complete the 31-32 units required for the degree. 4000-level courses cannot comprise more than 50% of the elective units.

### **MA Graduate Electives:**

PSY 5010 – Seminar in Sensation & Perception

PSY 5060 – Seminar in Physiological Psychology

PSY 5100 – Seminar in Psychopathology

PSY 5110 – Seminar in Developmental Psychology

PSY 5220 – Seminar in Social Psychology

PSY 5650 – Seminar in Multicultural Psychology

### **Other Required Courses (6 units)**

PSY 5970 - Graduate Research (3 units)

PSY 5990 - Thesis (3 units)

# **GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: MS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

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## **GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY (33-34 UNITS)**

All students begin the program in the fall semester and take several core courses together. Students will also engage in a 9-month practicum (PSY 5950) where they will receive hands-on training and on-site supervision.

### **Required Courses (21 units)**

Students must complete the following with a grade of B or higher:

- PSY 4640 - Psychology and the Law (3)
- PSY 5100 - Seminar: Abnormal Psychology (3)
- PSY 5310 - Individual Testing and Case Study Techniques (3)
- PSY 5950 - Field Experience in Psychology (6)
- CRIM 5010 - Seminar: Administration of Justice (3)
- or- CRIM 5300 - Theories and Perspectives in Criminal Justice (3)
- CRIM 5110 - Principles of Research (3)
- or- CRIM 5620 - Courtroom and Legal Issues in Criminalistics (3)

### **One of the Following Quantitative Courses (3-4 units)**

- PSY 4110 - Advanced Research Methods in Psychology (3)
- PSY 4140 - Analysis of Variance (3)
- PSY 4310 - Statistical Methods in Psychological Assessment (4)
- PSY 4910 - Multivariate Statistics (4)
- PSY 5040 - Advanced Experimental Methods (3)
- PSY 5150 - Advanced Statistical Methods (3)
- PSY 5910 - Advanced Multivariate Statistics (4)

### **Electives in Psychology/Criminal Justice (6 units)**

Select 6 units from the following:

- PSY 4900 - Human Memory (3)
- PSY 5110 - Seminar: Developmental Psychology (3)
- PSY 5220 - Seminar: Social Psychology (3)
- PSY 5650 - Seminar in Multicultural and Cross-cultural Psychology (3)

### **Thesis (3 Units)**

- PSY 5990 - Thesis (3)

## THESIS AND GRADUATE RESEARCH

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*Students must complete the GS-10, Advancement to Candidacy form (see p.10) with the department and College before requesting to enroll in PSY 5970 and PSY 5990.*

### **PSY 5970 - Graduate Research\***

Prerequisites: Advancement to Candidacy, instructor consent to act as sponsor, departmental approval of topic prior to registration. Independent research under guidance of the faculty.

*Note:* If you are taking PSY 5970 for the first time, you must file the GS-10, "Advancement to Candidacy" form, which will ask you for the names of your thesis committee and the title of your thesis. Submit the form to the department office by the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. See the department's Graduate Advisor for the form, or find it [here](#) or [here](#) (Note: these are hyperlinks you would click on if you download this document from the department website. The characters for each link can be found at the end of this document, under "Forms & Petitions").

\*Forensic students are not required to take PSY 5970.

### **PSY 5990 - Thesis**

Upon approval of the research design by the thesis committee, the student will undertake the thesis, working under the guidance of the thesis chair. Students are given one year (2 semesters) from the point of first enrolling in PSY 5990 to complete their thesis. Note that students should not register for one unit of PSY 5990 per semester, as that would lengthen the time to complete the thesis past one year. If the thesis is not completed after registering in all of the 5990 units in the program (maximum=3), the student must register for UNIV 9000 (which carries no credit) in order to complete thesis requirements and graduate. For more info on enrolling in UNIV 9000 visit the [related website](#) or contact the department's Graduate Advisor.

**The thesis** consists of either an original empirical research project or a novel theoretical or conceptual interpretation of existing psychological thought or data based on material previously published. The thesis must deal with a problem of some importance to the field, in a manner that is scholarly, logical, objective, and systematic.

The thesis is typically completed in the second (spring) semester of the student's second year. The student will submit progressively revised drafts of the thesis periodically to the chair of the thesis committee for review and comment. The chair may, from time to time, require the student to submit copies to other members of the committee as well. The final draft must show clarity of purpose, competent critical analysis, effective organization, and originality. The presentation must be both accurate and complete. In style, it must follow the recommendations of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (latest edition).

The thesis should include a separate title page and the following sections:

-**ABSTRACT:** A brief summary of both the problem and results.

-**INTRODUCTION:** Definition of the problem, development of the background, and statement of the study's purpose and rationale.



-*METHOD*: Information about participants, apparatus, measures and procedures. (This section and the next may not apply to a non-empirical project.)

-*RESULTS*: A complete factual statement of the findings, including any tables, figures, and statistical analyses.

-*DISCUSSION*: This section should include a thoughtful and logical analysis of the implications of the findings as well as conclusions that can be drawn, and any limitations.

-*REFERENCES*: The references should reflect a thorough literature review of the salient literature dealing with the subject.

-*APPENDICES*: Copies of letters, forms, measures, or other written materials used in the study.

After the draft has been approved by the thesis committee, a date is fixed for the final oral defense of the thesis. An abstract and copy of the thesis should be submitted to committee members at least two weeks before the oral defense. The student is required to prepare and bring to the oral defense several copies of the Title Approval Page (Form GS-13). The form may be found [here](#).

The oral defense is open to any who wish to attend. After a successful oral defense, the student must return the GS-13 forms to the psychology office to obtain the Department Chair's signature. Final thesis corrections are made and a final thesis copy is prepared for electronic upload. Students are advised to consult with the thesis advisor in the Library at an early date in spring, in order to conform to the library requirements and to meet all Library deadlines.

NOTE: The University has its own format for submitting a thesis, some elements of which differ from APA style. Students should download the thesis template from the Graduate Studies website (<http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/templates-forms>). All graduate students are also required to attend at least one Thesis Formatting and Submitting workshop offered by the Office of Graduate Studies. The deadline to submit a thesis for consideration of graduating in the spring is generally May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. This means that you should prepare to defend your thesis **no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of that year**, so that you can incorporate any changes to your thesis required by your committee and chair, return it to them for final approval, and work on final edits prior to the University deadline. For students intending to graduate in the fall, please go to the Graduate Studies website to check deadlines and dates. Note that if you choose to graduate in the fall, you will need to wait until the following spring to participate in the commencement ceremony.

### **Thesis Timeline**

Completing a thesis can be a very satisfying experience, but can also be stressful for many students. The most common source of stress for students and faculty is when the student tries to write their thesis at the last minute. This will jeopardize a timely defense. By getting an early start by completing a fully executed literature review/Introduction and Methods section the

semester before defending, students can reduce their stress significantly. Below is the expected timeline for completing a thesis.

### *Writing your thesis*

- Allow 10 working days for faculty edits.
- Plan to spend at least one week making revisions between drafts.
- Plan to have at least 2 complete drafts reviewed prior to scheduling a defense.
- Understand that many theses may need more than two rounds of edits (Build in 3 weeks for each round—2 weeks for faculty edits and 1 week for revisions).

### *Collecting data*

- If a thesis involves independent data collection (as opposed to using pre-existing data), students should submit an application to collect data with human subjects to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at least 6 working weeks before they plan to begin data collection (not including winter or spring breaks).
- Students should keep in mind that although the IRB will review many proposals promptly, others may take much longer to review and ultimately approve. In some cases it can take months.
- Students should plan to have their data completely collected by the end of the semester prior to their planned defense. For example, if a student thinks data collection can be accomplished in one semester, and they plan to defend in the Spring, the student should apply to the IRB during the summer at the latest (submitting in the spring is much safer). This will help to assure that they can start collecting data at least mid-way through the fall semester.

### *Starting the thesis*

- Once a student has an approved topic and has submitted the GS-12 form, it is strongly recommended that each student develop and submit an acceptable draft of their Introduction (literature review and hypotheses), and Methods sections well before the data collection is completed.
- Please keep in mind that faculty will need a minimum of 10 working days (i.e., 2 weeks) to review all drafts of any part of the thesis. Thus, a draft of a student's introduction and methods sections should be submitted well before a fully executed draft of the full proposal is reviewed.
- Do not expect faculty to review drafts during the Summer or winter breaks. Although some faculty may choose to work on their own time over the breaks, these breaks should not be included in the time-line for the submission and review of drafts.

### *Completing the thesis: Minimum standards for the turnaround of drafts*

- By the start of the semester that a student plans to defend, they should already have, (1) have a completed and reviewed draft of their Introduction and Methods sections, and (2)

have data collected. NOTE: In rare cases, data collection can be completed in the same semester the student defends.

- Keep in mind that most drafts of the Introduction and Methods sections go through multiple reviews and edits. Thus, students must account for multiple rounds of reviews in their projected time lines. As noted above, faculty need a minimum of 10 working days to review and return edits/suggestions for any draft. Also, although students work at different speeds, they should plan on taking at least one week to complete the suggested edits and make the recommended changes for each review cycle.
- Students may not submit a complete draft of the final document to their chair or other committee members prior to (1) having their supervisor review the initial draft of the Introduction and Methods sections, (2) making all of the suggested changes to the Introduction and Methods, and (3) returning that second draft to the supervisor with time allotted for them to review and approve the draft.
- Students must have a complete first draft of the final document submitted to their committee chair by the 1st day of the 10th week of the semester in which they plan to defend. This is pushing the time line to the last possible minute.
- If the draft is submitted in the 10th week, remember to allow the chair two working weeks to review the draft. Thus, in this case, the student should plan to have the faculty feedback for the final draft in hand by the 1st day of the 12th week of the semester in which they plan to defend.
- If the student is able to make the suggested changes in one week (this is considered a fast turn-around), the second draft could be in the faculty's hands by the 1st day of the 13th week of the semester in which they plan to defend.
- Keep in mind that these are minimum requirements, and the deadlines listed above will push a defense into finals week (the last possible chance to defend for a given semester).
- Do attempt to complete your thesis writing within the limits set by your thesis supervisor. You should not expect your mentor to move fast because of delays caused by you, regardless of the reason for the delay.

## PATH TO THE MA IN PSYCHOLOGY

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This is an informal checklist that you can use to determine whether you are on the right track to obtaining your MA degree. Note that not every student follows this exact path, but this is a 2-year pathway to the MA degree in psychology.

### YEAR 1:

1. **Fall:** Register for classes – PSY 4950, PSY 5040, and Electives 1 and 2; 12 units. \* Meet with mentor and complete program plan. Verify that you are in classified standing rather than conditionally classified. Achieve grades of B or better in core classes, and maintain a minimum B average (a grade of “B” or better is required to receive credit for PSY 4950, a credit/no credit course). If necessary, complete WPE requirement.
2. If students register for 2 electives as recommended, they may advance to candidacy at the end of the fall semester. To advance, you must complete the GS-10 form by the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the fall semester.\*
3. Think about thesis topic and discuss with mentor.
4. **Spring:** Register for classes – PSY 4910, Elective 3\*\*, and PSY 5970\* (1 unit) – 8 units. Achieve grades of B or better in core class and maintain B average. Begin working on thesis topic with advisor. Together with mentor, write IRB proposal for thesis project.
5. Complete GS-10, Advancement to Candidacy by 12<sup>th</sup> week of spring, if not already done so (see \* below).
6. Summer: Complete IRB proposal for thesis project; gather data for project. Conduct literature review for thesis topic.

\* Note 1: If students wish to register for PSY 5970 (research units) in spring, they must have completed the WPE requirement, PSY 4950, one other core requirement, and SIX more units of coursework. This means that students who want to be advanced to candidacy in the spring should register for TWO electives in the fall, which will give them the six units they need.

\*\* Note 2: Graduate elective courses are offered on a varying schedule. Students should register for the elective courses whenever they are offered, as there is no guarantee that the same course will be offered the following year.

### YEAR 2:

7. **Fall:** Register for classes – PSY 5150, Elective 4, and PSY 5970 (2-3 units) – 8 - 9 units. Conduct data analysis. Apply for graduation.
8. **Spring:** Register for classes – PSY 5990 (3 units)\*\*\*. Complete and defend thesis. Complete all paperwork, including GS-13. Submit thesis to library by the due date.

\*\*\* Note 3: If the student and mentor believe that the student will not be able to defend their thesis by the end of the spring semester of the second year, the student should register for only 1 unit of PSY 5990, reserving the other two units for the following summer and/or fall semesters.

If no 5000-level elective courses are offered in a given semester, students may take a 4000-level course in Psychology or, with permission from the student's mentor and the department chair, substitute a 5000-level course from a related field (e.g., Counseling). Note that no more than 50% of elective units (generally, 2 classes) can be 4000-level classes.

## PERMITS

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All 5000-level Psychology courses are restricted and enrollment is by permission only.

### Seminars

The program directors will email your cohort a list of the seminars recommended each semester and for which you should enroll. The department graduate advisor will then issue permits for those seminars which are next in your sequence of classes.

### PSY 5970 & PSY 5990

Students must fill out a **Permit Request** to enroll in research (PSY 5970) and thesis units (PSY 5990). All requests must have the approval of the student's mentor and Department Chair. Students can register for no more than the maximum number of 5970 or 5990 units listed on their Study Plans.

### PSY 5950 (Forensic students only)

Students must fill out a **Permit Request** available in the department office to enroll in PSY 5950. All requests must have the approval of the student's mentor and Department Chair. Students can register for no more than 6 units of PSY 5950.

*The department urges all students to register for classes as early as possible to avoid having them canceled by University administrators. Canceled classes will have an adverse impact on the quality and timely completion of your degree.*

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## ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

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In addition to the department's program requirements listed above, all candidates for master's degrees at Cal State L.A. must also fulfill requirements set by the University. For a comprehensive explanation of graduate requirements, please check the Graduate Handbook prepared by the Office of Graduate Studies at CSULA, available [here](#):

### Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement

Every graduate student who enters a degree program must satisfy the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) by passing the Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE) within the first three semesters of their enrollment or prior to the completion of 12 units, whichever comes later.

This requirement is waived for graduate students who:

- Received their bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university where English is the primary medium of instruction; OR
- Scored a 41 or better on the writing portion of the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) or scored a 4 on the analytic writing portion of the GRE or GMAT.

For more information on the GWAR/WPE, please contact the Testing Center at (323) 343 3160 or visit them in the JFK Library Palmer Wing, Room 2098.

### Conditional, Classified, and Advancement to Candidacy Status

Students are initially coded into one of the following levels depending on their admission status:

*G1 – Conditional.* Students who have not completed all program prerequisites at the time of admission are classified into this level. Students qualify for limited financial aid with this classification. Upon completion of all prerequisite courses with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, *conditional* students have their status changed to *classified* by the graduate advisor.

*G2 – Classified.* Students who are admitted unconditionally (i.e., with no prerequisites required to complete) are automatically coded into *Classified* status by Admissions.

MA students: Upon satisfactory completion of the WPE, PSY 4950, one additional core requirement and 6 additional units (12 units in total), and having maintained a GPA of 3.0 or higher, students should complete the GS-10 form and return it to the department office. They will then be advanced to candidacy. *Only students who have been advanced to candidacy may enroll in PSY 5970 (Research units) and/or PSY 5990 (thesis units).*

Forensic students: Upon satisfactory completion of the GWAR and 12 units, and having completed the GS-10 form and returned it to the department office, students will be advanced to candidacy if their GPA is 3.0 or higher.

Note: Being Advanced to Candidacy (level G3) is a graduation requirement.

### Unit Requirement

MA students: Completion of at least 31 semester units in approved courses, of which at least half (16) must be graduate (5000-level) courses.

Forensic students: Completion of at least 33-34 semester units in approved courses, of which at least half (17) must be graduate (5000-level) courses.

### Incomplete Grades

Students who do not complete the work for a particular course may be granted an Incomplete grade with the instructor's permission. Students have up to but no longer than ONE calendar year to make up the incomplete regardless of breaks in attendance, a leave of absence, etc. The official policy states that the single year may be extended prior to the expiration of the one year period by the College Graduate Dean, "...for contingencies such as, but not limited to, military service and health problems of an incapacitating nature verified by a physician's statement".

Incomplete grades that are not made up become graded IC (Incomplete Charged) and are factored into the overall GPA as a grade of F. **Try not to delay completing your coursework, as this could significantly affect the timely completion of your degree.**

### Grade Point Average Requirement

Students are required to maintain a minimum B (3.0) grade point average in all courses on the approved degree program. Grades below a B, up to and including a grade of C (B-, C+, C) are acceptable in a course as long as the overall GPA does not fall below 3.0. For students in the M.A. program, a grade of B or higher is required in all core courses.

Following is a breakdown of the grading system.

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| A  | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.7 |
| B+ | 3.3 |
| B  | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.7 |
| C+ | 2.3 |
| C  | 2.0 |

Students obtaining any grade below C (including C-), will need to repeat the course, with both grades computed in the grade point average. There is no academic renewal for graduate students.

*Note: The Psychology MA and Forensic Psychology MS require a passing grade of B (3.0) in the Core Requirements.*

### Residence Requirement

At least 21 semester units for the master's degree must be completed in residence at Cal State L.A.

### **Culminating Experience Requirement**

All MA and MS students are required to complete a thesis. The department does not offer a comprehensive examination or a project option in lieu of a thesis.

## **UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICIES**

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For a more complete list of policies and other student services, you can refer to the University's Graduate Student Handbook available through the Graduate Studies [webpage](#):

### **University Catalog**

Graduate students are governed by University policies and regulations as stated in the *University Catalog* in effect at the time they achieve classified standing, provided that they maintain continuous attendance for registration purposes. The E-Catalog is available for purchase at the campus bookstore or can be accessed [here](#).

Listed below you will find some of the more pertinent excerpts from the Catalog.

### **Registration and Continuing Status**

Continuing students at California State University, Los Angeles receive information regarding their registration appointment dates by logging into GET (Golden Eagle Territory). Additional information about registration procedures is provided in the Schedule of Classes, available online each semester before the registration period. Web registration (GET) is available to all eligible continuing students.

Students maintain their continuing student status for registration purposes only by attending at least one of the two semesters immediately preceding the semester in which they plan to enroll (excluding the summer term). Students who were admitted and enrolled in one of the last two semesters preceding the semester in which they plan to enroll will also maintain their continuing student status for registration purposes. Absence for more than one of any two consecutive semesters without an approved leave of absence will cancel continuing registration eligibility. See Leaves of Absence (below).

Attendance in University extension courses does not constitute continuous attendance. Students who attended another college or university during an absence from Cal State L.A., except for a summer session or extension program or approved visitor enrollment at another CSU campus, are required to file an application for admission as a returning student and have official transcripts of work taken sent to the Admissions Office. A nonrefundable application fee is charged. Such students will, if eligible, receive forms to register as returning students.

### **Leave of Absence**

Once a graduate student is advanced to candidacy (see above), they must remain in continuous enrollment each semester or file a leave of absence to take a semester off. Regardless of candidacy status, all graduate students must file a leave of absence to take a semester off from classes *if they were not registered for classes in the prior semester*. Failure to file a Leave of Absence form may result in the cancellation of continuing registration eligibility, and students would be required to reapply and get re-admitted to be permitted to return to their program.



Students can avoid losing classified standing by submitting a [Leave of Absence](#) request, approved by the department chair, appropriate Associate Dean, and the University Registrar prior to the beginning of the effective semester.

Students may petition for a leave of absence for such reasons as professional or academic opportunities, like travel or study abroad; employment related to educational goals and major fields of study or participation in field study or research projects; medical reasons, including pregnancy, major surgery, and other health-related circumstances; and financial reasons, such as the necessity to work for a specified period to resume study with adequate resources.

Graduate students are granted a maximum of 4 semesters, subject to renewal. Continuing students allowed an absence of 2 semesters is included in these maximums.

### **Academic Probation for Graduate Students**

Graduate students are subject to academic probation if their grade point average falls below the levels specified (3.0) either in course work on their master's degree program or in all units completed after becoming classified, whether or not the course work is taken at Cal State L.A. The Office of the Chancellor has made provision whereby students may be placed on administrative-academic probation for any of the following reasons:

- Withdrawal from all or a substantial portion of courses for which they registered in two successive semesters or in any three semesters.
- Repeated failure to progress toward a stated degree or program objective when such failure is within their control.
- Failure to comply, after due notice, with a routine academic requirement or regulation.

Notice is given in writing of the conditions for removal from administrative-academic probation, as well as circumstances that would lead to disqualification should probation conditions not be rectified. Graduate students who are on academic probation and who do not meet the requirements of their probation are subject to disqualification in accordance with the following guidelines:

Classified and conditionally classified graduate students who are on academic probation are subject to disqualification from pursuing the master's degree program in which they were classified if after being placed on scholastic probation they do not raise their average to B (3.0) after completion of 12 units or two semesters in residence, whichever comes later.

Classified and conditionally classified graduate students whose grade point average falls more than nine grade points below B (3.0) [that is, whose GPA is 2.0 or lower], will be disqualified from pursuing the master's degree program in which they were classified.

Students who are disqualified from a master's degree program may not reenter that program. They may be admitted to another program only on the recommendation of the new major department/division concerned and with the approval of the appropriate college graduate dean.

### **Full-Time Study Load**

For full-time enrollment certification by the University, graduate students must carry a study load of 8 units of approved prerequisite, co-requisite, or graduate program courses per semester. Students may be certified as full-time students with a study load of less than 8 units in either of the following courses upon recommendation of their advisor and program director, and approval

of the Associate Dean: PSY 5970 and PSY 5990. The maximum load for graduate students is 12 units per semester.

### **Seven-Year Rule**

No subject, unit, or grade credit will be granted for any course completed more than seven years before the date of completion of the master's degree. You cannot include courses that are more than seven years old at the time you complete all degree requirements on your Program Plan.

Students must retake or validate any courses that will be more than seven years old at the time the degree is awarded and that have been taken at Cal State L.A. An expired course taken at another institution may not be validated by examination. Permission to validate is not given automatically, and granted only in very exceptional circumstances.

### **Transfer Courses**

To receive credit toward a master's degree for acceptable post-baccalaureate work taken at other colleges and universities, students must have official transcripts forwarded to the Admissions Office (SA-101) and must file a "Request for Records" (Form GS-1A) with the department. This form is only available on GET and must be submitted by the department's graduate advisor. Cal State LA will allow credit for work taken at another college or university only when it appears on the student's official transcript from that institution, is acceptable for master's degree credit at the offering institution, and is deemed appropriate to the student's master's degree program by the psychology department. The following limitations and exclusions apply:

- For master's degrees that require 30 total semester units, no more than 9 semester units of acceptable transfer, extension and/or special session courses may be included on a master's degree study plan. For master's degrees that require more than 30 semester units, up to 30% of the total required units may consist of acceptable transfer, extension, and/or special session courses, if approved by the appropriate graduate/departmental adviser.
- No master's degree credit is allowed for directed teaching, courses numbered below 4000, and courses taken at another accredited institution that would not be accepted toward a master's degree at that institution.
- Six semester units of 5000-level or other graduate courses taken through extension are eligible for master's degree credit.

### **Work Taken before Approval of Program**

No more than 9 semester units of acceptable course work completed before approval by the principal graduate adviser, major department/division, and college graduate dean may be included on a master's degree program. This includes acceptable transfer work.

Credit for thesis (i.e., 5990) or research (i.e., 5970) is not transferable. All other course work included on the master's degree program must be completed after approval by the principal graduate adviser, major department/division, and college graduate dean.

### **Credit for Extension Courses**

Do not enroll for courses through Continuing Education (also called Extension or Open University) if you have been accepted as a student at Cal State L.A., with the exception of the self-support summer session. Matriculated students at Cal State L.A. may not enroll in courses through Continuing Education and you will not be able to use these courses on your Program.

Also, no graduate credit will be allowed for extension courses that would not be accepted toward a master's degree at the offering institution (e.g., University of California extension courses in the X3000 or X4000 series) unless specifically approved in advance by the psychology department.

### **Course Substitutions**

It may be necessary to change an Academic Study Plan based upon special circumstances. *Course substitutions are processed once your faculty mentor notifies the graduate assistant, via email, with the approved course(s) to be substituted. In some instances, approval must also be granted by the department chair and the college graduate dean.*

A course may not be added to or deleted from a master's degree Study Plan after it has been taken. When such a change has been approved and processed, it becomes part of the Study Plan. Students are able to view any changes made to their Study Plan by logging on to GET and generating an Campus Academic Advising Report (CAAR)t.

### **Student Use of Human Subjects or Animals**

Students, like all others in the University community, must follow established University and federal guidelines when using human subjects or animals either in research or as part of a course activity.

Prior approval by the relevant campus committee must be obtained when necessary. For further information, contact the Office of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities by visiting their website at <http://www.calstatela.edu/orad>.

### **Maintaining Enrollment for Thesis/Project**

Students must be advanced to candidacy before registering for research and thesis/project units. When all units for 5970 and 5990 classes have been completed, a student must maintain continuous enrollment by registering for thesis or research units using the UNIV 9000 course number each semester until completion of the thesis/project. Furthermore, students must be officially enrolled during the semester they expect to graduate and defend their thesis.

For more information on enrolling in UNIV 9000 contact the department office or go [here](#).

### **Incomplete Grades**

Students who do not complete the work for a particular course may be granted an Incomplete grade with the instructor's permission. Students have up to but no longer than ONE calendar year to make up the incomplete regardless of breaks in attendance, a leave of absence, etc. The official policy states that the single year may be extended prior to the expiration of the one year period by the College Graduate Dean, "...for contingencies such as, but not limited to, military service and health problems of an incapacitating nature verified by a physician's statement".

Incomplete grades that are not made up become graded IC (Incomplete Charged) and are factored into the overall GPA as a grade of F.

### **Graduation**

A Graduation Application must be completed, submitted and paid for at the Cashier's Office (ADM 128) by the published deadline available on the website of the Office of Graduate Studies. Please submit a copy of the completed application to the department's Graduate Advisor.

Students who do not complete their degree requirements by the term indicated on their submitted graduation application must pay a late fee and submit a Graduation Term Update form to the Cashier's Office.

Both the Graduation Application and Graduation Term Update form are available via the Graduation Office webpage: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduation>.

### **Commencement Exercises**

Commencement exercises are held annually at the end of the spring semester. Students who have completed their degree requirements the previous fall or winter terms are eligible to participate in the ceremony along with those who complete their work in the spring or summer semester.

During the Commencement exercises, the President of the University confers degrees on the candidates. This is a very special time, and students are encouraged to attend. Often, a student's mentor is permitted to 'hood' their M.A. student mentee. Each candidate receives a diploma cover during the program, and the actual diploma is mailed several months later. Within a few weeks after graduation, eligible candidates receive a letter of congratulations in the mail, and degrees are posted to their permanent academic record on GET.

## **FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION**

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### **Graduate Equity Fellowship Program**

These grants are designed to increase the number of master's degrees awarded to economically disadvantaged CSU students, especially those graduate students that are underrepresented among graduate degree recipients in their discipline and to those who are disabled. For more information, please visit: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/funding-opportunities>.

### **Minority Opportunities in Research Programs: MBRS-RISE**

The MBRS-RISE M.S. to Ph.D. is part of the Minority Biomedical Research Support Program sponsored by a generous grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A salary of up to \$17,000 per year and full time tuition is provided for students in the M.S. component. Additional funds are available for research supplies and for travel to present research results at professional meetings. The Program is a rigorous research-based two-year preparation for graduate work at the doctoral level. Each year the program trains a group of approximately 20 students pursuing the master's degree at Cal State LA. The program is designed to enhance Fellows' academic achievement; expose them to a broad range of biomedical sciences and scientists; enhance their transfer rate to Ph.D. programs; and establish the foundation for their successful research careers in the biomedical sciences. For more information, call the MORE office at (323) 343-2395.

Email: [morepro@calstatela.edu](mailto:morepro@calstatela.edu), or visit the [website](#):

### **Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholars Program**

The California Pre-Doctoral Program is designed to increase the pool of potential faculty by supporting the doctoral aspirations of California State University (CSU) students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages. Junior, senior, and graduate students in the CSU, especially those from environments where university teaching is not a common career goal, have unique opportunities to explore and prepare to succeed in doctoral programs. Working one-on-one with faculty members from both CSU and doctoral-granting

institutions, students receive funding for activities such as: participation in a summer research internship program at a doctoral-granting institution to receive exposure to the world of research in their chosen field; visits to doctoral-granting institutions to explore opportunities for doctoral study; travel to a national symposium or professional meeting in their chosen field; other related activities such as membership in professional organizations and journal subscriptions; graduate school application and test fees. Visit the [website](#) for more information on this program.

### **Graduate Student Non-Resident Tuition Waiver Program Application**

A limited number of non-resident tuition fee waivers or tuition fee reductions may be granted to non-resident graduate students who are either domestic non-resident students or citizens of a foreign country. For more info, please visit the [website](#).

### **Graduate Assistants / Teaching Associates / Research Assistantships**

The Department of Psychology typically makes available a few Graduate Assistant positions each semester. In general, graduate assistants work from five to ten hours a week, assisting professors in laboratory classes or as graders in large-lecture classes. Research assistantships as well as graduate traineeships may also be available to graduate students, and information of their availability can be obtained by consulting the Department Coordinator or professors who are currently conducting on-going research. At the moment, the department does not offer any Teaching Associate positions.

### **Federal/State Financial Aid Programs, Fellowships and Scholarships**

The Financial Aid Office maintains listings of scholarships and fellowships sponsored by off-campus agencies, organizations, and associations. Cal State L.A. has over 250 different scholarships that are awarded to more than 650 students per year. A small number of these scholarships are open to graduate students. The average scholarship award is \$600.

Graduate students may apply for federal and state financial aid programs but most of the grant programs (Pell Grant, Cal Grant, etc.) that might have been available to you as an undergraduate are no longer available to graduate students.

The financial aid application, called the FAFSA, becomes available every January 1 for aid in the subsequent Summer Semester or beyond. The earlier you apply, the better. Approximately four to six weeks after your financial aid file is complete you will receive a letter from the Center for Student Financial Aid indicating your eligibility or ineligibility. In addition to being financially eligible, you must be making "satisfactory academic progress" in your graduate program in order to continue to receive assistance (that is, carry a GPA of 3.0 or higher). Please visit the Center for Student Financial Aid in Student Affairs 124, call them at (323) 343 6260 or visit their [webpage](#).

## DEPARTMENT FACULTY AND THEIR AREAS OF INTEREST

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Daisy Camacho-Thompson (daisy.camacho-thompson@calstatela.edu) teaches courses on methodology, community psychology, and introduction to psychology. Research interests focus on addressing educational disparities and academic resilience, particularly in Latinx families.

Jessica Dennis (jdennis@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses on methodology, multicultural psychology, and developmental psychology. Research interests focus on cultural issues in family, educational, and personal development during adolescence and early adulthood.

Ramani Durvasula (rdurvas@calstatela.edu) Teaching interests include abnormal, clinical and health psychology. Research interests have focused on psychopathology, substance use and sexual risk in persons living with HIV and AIDS.

Mitchell Eisen (meisen@calstatela.edu) Teaching interests include introductory psychology, personality psychology, psychopathology, learning and memory, personality assessment and family therapy. Research focuses on impact of trauma and stress on abused children, memory and suggestibility and coping strategies of maltreated children.

Joel Ellwanger (jellwan@calstatela.edu) Teaching interests include undergraduate and graduate level courses in physiological psychology and statistics. Research interests include cognitive neuroscience, including the study of attention and memory through the use of physiological indices of cognition.

Gaithri Fernando (gfernan2@calstatela.edu) Teaching interests include abnormal psychology and clinical psychology, personality, and developmental psychopathology, as well as clinical and neuropsychological assessment. Primary interests are in posttraumatic stress in the context of war and extreme traumas such as torture, bomb blasts, and assassination attempts.

Steven Frenda (sfrenda@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses on social psychology, cognitive psychology, and research methods. Research interests include memory and suggestibility in legal contexts.

Senqi Hu (shu6@calstatela.edu) Teaching interests include introductory psychology, biological psychology, and health psychology. Research has centered on the physiological index of motion sickness and psychophysiological responses of emotion.

Mathew Jackson (mjacks40@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses in research methods and social psychology. Research interests includes STEM education, social identity and intergroup processes, masculinity, stereotypes, psychology in criminal justice.

Robert Kennison (rkennis@exchange.calstatela.edu) Teaches multivariate statistics and stages in maturity and aging. Research interests include human memory performance across the lifespan and experimental studies of age effects in theory-based memory and learning models.

Eric Kohatsu (ekohats@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses in research methods, clinical/counseling, human sexuality, cross-cultural psychology, Asian American psychology and cultural issues in mental health. Research focuses on racial identity issues, race relations, and the psychosocial effects of racism.

Brigitte Matthies (bmatthi@calstatela.edu) Teaches individual therapy, family therapy and abnormal psychology. Research interests include phobias, acceptance of models of psychotherapy, diversity in interpersonal relationships, child and adolescent fitness, and assessment of personality and mood disorders.

Pamela Regan (pregan@calstatela.edu) Teaches social psychology and univariate and multivariate statistics. Research focuses on interpersonal attraction, gender, and sexuality.

Heidi R. Riggio (hriggio@exchange.calstatela.edu) Teaches social psychology, statistics and Theories of personality. Research focuses on social psychology topics such as gender issues.

Henry Schlinger (hschlin@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses related to the M. S. degree in Psychology, Applied Behavior Analysis option, as well as Introductory Psychology and History and Systems of Psychology. His research interests include basic learning processes, schedules of reinforcement, conceptual issues in behavior analysis and psychology, rule-governed behavior, and verbal behavior.

Ji Son (json2@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses in development psychology, cognitive development, and research methods. Research focuses on the development of abstract, intelligent, and flexible thinking, and how children learn through the process of generalization.

Douglas Stenstrom (dstenst@exchange.calstatela.edu) Teaches courses related to social psychology, psychology and the law, violence and aggression, forensic psychology and statistics and research methods.

Kaveri Subrahmanyam (ksubrah@calstatela.edu) Teaches courses in introductory psychology, life span development, developmental psychology, cognitive development, adolescent development, and intro statistics. Research focuses on youth and digital media such as the Internet (e.g., MySpace, Facebook), and Spanish-speakers' learning of English.

Karen Wu (kwu25@calstatela.edu) Teaches research methods, social psychology, psychology of gender, and multicultural psychology. Research focuses on culture and interpersonal relationships, including topics such as human mate selection, intergroup romantic relationships and partner preferences across cultures.

## WHERE OUR STUDENTS GO FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES

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The MA and MS programs in psychology are designed specifically to help students be competitive in applying to doctoral programs and be successful in completing them. Here are some doctoral programs to which CSULA students have been admitted. These institutions may be more open to admitting our students in the future, having been exposed to their skills!

Arizona State (Counseling Psychology)

Claremont Graduate University (Cognitive Neuroscience; Social Psychology)

Iowa State University (Counseling Psychology)

John Jay College of Criminal Justice (Forensic Science)

Montclair State University (Clinical Psychology)

New Mexico State University (Clinical Psychology; Counseling Psychology)

Purdue University (Clinical Psychology)

University of Arizona (Cognitive Neuroscience; Family Studies & Human Development)

University of California, Los Angeles (Cognitive Psychology; Human Development; Neuroscience)

University of California, Irvine (Cognitive Psychology; Education)

University of California, Riverside (Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience; Social Psychology)

University of California, San Diego (Clinical Psychology)

University of California, Santa Cruz (Cognitive Psychology; Developmental Psychology; Social Psychology)

University of Florida (Clinical Psychology)

University of Kansas (Clinical Psychology, Pediatric)

University of Maryland, Baltimore County (Applied Developmental Psychology)

University of Michigan (Educational Psychology)

University of Nebraska, Lincoln (School Psychology)

University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Clinical Psychology)

University of Nevada, Reno (Neuroscience)

University of New Mexico (Clinical Psychology; Cognitive Neuroscience)

University of North Carolina (Organizational Behavior)

University of Vermont (Clinical Psychology)

University of Wyoming (Clinical Psychology)

Western Michigan University (Clinical Psychology)



# FORMS AND PETITIONS

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## General Information

Psychology Department: <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/>

Graduate Resource Center: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduateresourcecenter>

Graduate Studies Handbook: [http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50135/graduate student handbook 2019-2020.pdf](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50135/graduate%20student%20handbook%202019-2020.pdf)

Office of Research and Development: <http://www.calstatela.edu/orad>

Course catalog: <http://ecatalog.calstatela.edu/>

Funding opportunities: <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/funding-opportunities>

Financial aid: <http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/>

MORE: <http://www.calstatela.edu/centers/moreprograms/>

California Pre-Doctoral Program: <http://www.calstate.edu/PreDoc/>

## Graduate Studies Forms & Petitions

- These forms can be found online through the Office of Graduate Studies (<http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/forms-and-petitions>) or are available in the department office.
- Application – Travel Support for Students attending Conferences
- Request to Validate Expired Course(s) on a Graduate Program
- Petition to Substitute Alternate Criteria for the WPE
- Recommended Timeline and Checklist for MA Thesis
- Leave of Absence Petition
- Course Overload
- General Academic Petition for GRADUATE Requirements
- Request for Graduate Credit for Undergraduate Work
- Graduation Application

## Specific Forms:

- Graduate student funding opportunities
  - <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/funding-opportunities>.
- GS-10 Advancement to Candidacy
  - [www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/gs-10\\_application\\_for\\_advancement\\_to\\_candidacy - aug2019.pdf](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/users/u50136/gs-10_application_for_advancement_to_candidacy_-_aug2019.pdf)
- GS-13 Approval Page for Graduate Thesis
  - <http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatethesis/gs-13-form>
- Leave of Absence Form
  - [http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/University%20Registrar/Docs/leave\\_of\\_absence.pdf](http://www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/University%20Registrar/Docs/leave_of_absence.pdf)
- University 9000: <http://www.calstatela.edu/page/university-9000-univ-9000>