Priority of Policies

University and Psychology Department policies also apply to graduate students and have precedence over graduate program policies. Anyone discovering a conflict between these various policies should notify the appropriate coordinator immediately. Students are responsible for meeting all Western Kentucky University policies and requirements including the WKU Student Handbook (https://www.wku.edu/handbook/), Academic Affairs policies (https://www.wku.edu/policies/academic-affairs/) especially if you are a Graduate Teaching Assistant, and WKU Human Resources policies (https://www.wku.edu/policies/) for those employed on campus.
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Welcome!

Congratulations on being accepted to our M.A. graduate program in psychology. We are very pleased that you are joining us to develop your professional skills and achieve your career goals. We want you to succeed and will be there to encourage, teach, and support you as you acquire new skills, ways of thinking and methods of problem solving.

The clinical faculty have created this handbook to help you through the transition from undergraduate to graduate school and then to your professional career. It is based on observing what helps students succeed and on what “goes wrong” for students in graduate school.

In addition to this MA-specific handbook there is a document with Common Policies for both the MA and PsyD programs that you will also need to read.

“Graduate school” is a misnomer. While it has features of undergraduate school, the expectations are like the working world, the risks are greater and the protections fewer. Correspondingly, however, the rewards and independence are also greater and carry more meaning. Facing the risk and learning to grow from it is critical to success as a professional.

You were chosen because you have displayed a greater than average level of understanding and we will assume you start from day one using that greater ability. It may be stressful at first but will gradually improve as you become adjusted to and even enjoy that greater trust.

You will find that study techniques and lifestyle choices engaged in as an undergraduate may not work as well in graduate school. The time demands are greater and you will be in small classes with peers at the same ability level.

You may struggle for the first time in your academic life. Your self-identity will likely shift and we hope become both deeper and broader.

We do not want perfect people (there is no such person). We want people who can reduce the odds of error and recognize, correct, and grow from their imperfections.

By the end of two years you have to be a functioning professional capable of licensure and public trust. That means intense work from now until graduation.

Your teachers are here to suggest and provide direction but as a budding professional it is up to you to implement these changes and to anticipate and solve problems before they develop.

Ways in Which Graduate School Differs from Undergraduate

- The volume of information to be learned and the rate at which you must learn it is greater, roughly equivalent to 2 to 3 undergraduate classes in 1 graduate class. Therefore, a graduate course load of 12 hours is equivalent to a 24 to 36-hour load as an undergraduate. Plan accordingly. The load can be “sneaky”—fine for a while and then it piles on. Try to work ahead. Be kind to your future self.

- Class time is not for repeating what was in the readings but for discussion of them and exploring more information in greater depth. Ask your questions before the instructor moves on or you will be left behind.

- You will be expected to hear the directions for tasks on the first recitation of them whether that is orally or in written form. Unlike undergraduates, you are not going to get repeated reminders of deadlines or other tasks. The information comes one time. Stay alert. Keep a calendar of obligations.

- Better performers do not use technology when in class. They put all their attention on what is occurring now. You cannot afford to split your attention as the information will not be re-presented.

- There is no “catching up” in graduate school as there is no “slow time” in the semester. You aren’t going to make-up that material you fell behind on as the next batch is coming along. Re-think any ineffective strategies as soon as you are caught by a deadline. What can you *do to avoid that panic on the next deadline?

- You will sink or swim to the extent you can get along with your classmates. You will often have to work collaboratively and rely on one another. Pull your weight and learn to collaborate. Be polite and helpful. Follow through on commitments to others. These persons are your first professional network. Networks talk. Your reputation will follow you.
• You are expected to bring your own thoughtfulness and ideas to many tasks. Instructions will typically not be as detailed as in undergraduate programs, as you are expected to think through the task to achieve the stated goal. The exception is learning intelligence and other test administration. That must be done precisely and without deviation from any of the directions.
• You are trusted to handle matters that have adverse legal consequences if done incorrectly. We will instruct you in proper behavior and then you need to manage it—think, act, follow-up, and recognize when you truly need to consult with faculty.
• Your final work will be judged against what is done by functioning professionals. We know you will need several “drafts” to get to that point and that is the function of your courses…to take you from beginner to professional.
• There is no Google to search when you are face-to-face with a client.
• Professionals are “self-governing,” which means we (including you now) hold ourselves responsible to a higher standard than the general population. In return for the perks of being a professional, we must recognize what in our own behavior has contributed to problem situations and generate a solution involving modifying our own behavior. If you encounter a problem, you will be asked what you will do to improve your outcomes.

We have supervised many students through this process and **we know it is not going to be perfectly smooth.** Everyone stumbles and hits walls—that is an essential part of learning, as that is a very real part of professional practice. **What you are here to learn is how to pick yourself up, learn and try again until you master that issue.** There is no such thing as a perfect performance in graduate school because the problems you will face as a student and as a professional do not come with simple directions or simple answers.

We want you to **strive for excellence, not perfection.**

We do expect that on this journey you will continuously work
• to improve next time around (but not to delay facing a problem),
• to understand (but not to rationalize),
• to seek help as needed (but not to be dependent),
• to become self-correcting and self-reflective (but not to be neurotic).
• To do all of the above as efficiently as possible. The pace of the work does not allow for too many bobbles, as correction of them takes time away from the next task.
• Plan for error and bobbles to happen by preserving time to catch and correct before a task is turned in. Use grammar and spellcheck. Plan how to respond when it happens- own it, accept your feelings, figure out what you need to do to avoid the error in the future. If you catch yourself blaming someone else, ask instead what you can change. That is much easier than changing someone else. Reflect after the situation is past. I always say you paid the tuition in stress. Get the right lesson.

Finding the balance among all of these tasks is not easy and not smooth. Do your best to keep the number of missteps small and time-limited. **The faculty can better help you if you recognize and own issues sooner rather than later.**

**Career Goals.**

We expect that you will discover career ideas that are new to you and your goals may zig and zag a bit as you develop as a professional. Change is normal.

In your first semester, talk with the different faculty members about what their perceptions of the job market are, do some reading about different areas of specialization, and get a general idea of what you think you would like to do. You want to notice which readings grab your attention. Most persons go through several
phases in their work lives, so you are just anticipating the first 5 to 10 years of your career.

Start a journal to record your thoughts, experiences, and observations about clinical work (but do not record client identifying information).

Track your hours spent on clinical work as you will need to know it when you apply for licensure.

Remember, life is a process, not a product. Be open to growth experiences. Try to enjoy the changes and to get time apart when too much is happening.

Address your own mental health as well as your intellectual life.

Talk with your faculty when the going gets tough. We have seen it before and might have an idea or two to help.

Graduate school is a process of change, shaping who you are behaviorally, emotionally, and, of course, intellectually. You will also build professional relationships that will likely last your life-time and become the seed of your professional network.

Graduate school can be a roller-coaster ride, terrifying or exhilarating depending on how you look at it, but definitely more fun if you talk with your colleagues and your faculty about the experience as it is happening. As you gain confidence and experience, I believe you will find it becoming increasingly exhilarating. By the time you graduate you will be amazed at what you can do.

You should re-read this handbook periodically as you pass various graduate school events. I think you will uncover tidbits not perceived in your last reading.

Remember to use all of your resources: your persistence, your intelligence, your problem-solving ability, your patience, and your social network. You will be the one in the best position to learn how to integrate all of your skills to produce success.

Welcome to graduate school!
Sally Kuhlenschmidt, Ph.D., M.A. Program Coordinator
About the Program

Introduction & Philosophy

The Clinical Psychology M.A. program at Western Kentucky University, offered since 1979,

prepares the student for practice or doctoral work. It is administratively housed in the Department of Psychology which itself is located within the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

The general theoretical orientation of the program is cognitive-behavioral, although students will be exposed to other philosophies. The program is practice oriented, offering a broad foundation at the M.A. level that prepares students to have multiple career options.

The program also values research and trains students in interpretation of evidence-based practices. Students interested in doctoral work should talk with their advisor about how best to prepare a strong portfolio of experiences.

Program Overview

Applied Work. The two-year program in clinical psychology offers a broad professional foundation for students who will function as professional psychologists at the M.A. level.

Students must complete a minimum of 48 credit hours in psychology, usually over four semesters, including 1 winter term and 1 summer term course.

Upon successful completion they will be licensable in Kentucky as a Licensed Psychological Associate (LPA). The state requires 60 hours of coursework to be a Licensed Psychological Practitioner (LPP) in Kentucky. See Appendix for other states that license at the MA level.

Graduates obtain employment in mental health centers, rehabilitation centers, college counseling centers, and various other mental health agencies. The program prepares students to be able to take the Examination for the Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP, pronounced “E triple P”), required to practice in Kentucky and many other states.

Since we started tracking in 2002-2003 until 2020-21, among graduates seeking applied work, all but three have found work in an area related to their education.

Personal growth is a natural part of any clinical training program. Students will be required to examine their beliefs, values, and experiences with regard to their ability to perform applied tasks, such as therapy and assessment. In some classes, students may be required to discuss and disclose their beliefs, values, and experiences.

Doctoral Options. Many graduates pursue training at the doctoral level. From 2002-2003 until 2020-21, 29 clinical master program students have continued on to doctoral program placements (29 of the 89 who have graduated, about a 31% rate.) For example, students have been accepted into

- Clinical Psychology Psy.D. (9 students),
- Clinical Psychology Ph.D. (4 students),
- Counseling Psychology Ph.D. (7 students),
- School Psychology Ph.D. (1 student), and
- Education Leadership Ed.D. (1 student), and
- Developmental Psychology Ph.D. (1 student) programs.

Program Mission

The Clinical Concentration of the M.A. in Psychology prepares students to be successful in both professional practice (See 201 Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KAR) 26:210 §1-2) and in research. The program prepares graduate students to succeed as master’s level clinicians or doctoral students by developing their professional skills, attitudes, and values, providing foundational coursework and practica
experiences, and training them in research-based problem-solving.

Program Values

Values impact the effectiveness of applied and research work. The MA program endorses the following values:

- diversity, and efforts to build equality and respect;
- service to the behavioral health needs of underserved populations and rural communities;
- evidence-based practice skills that serve the profession and community;
- academic integrity and the highest levels of scholarship to advance our understanding of behavioral health;
- reflective practice, where students and faculty evaluate their professional actions on a regular basis;
- collegiality and developing an engaged community of learners, connecting faculty, alumni, current and future students;
- the prior professional experiences students bring with them to the program.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the MA in Psychology, Clinical Concentration, the student will be able to:

1. Function as a competent behavioral health practitioner under supervision and implement evidence-based practices for a general mental health population.
   1.1. Describe the theories, methods, and assessment of human behavior, affect, cognition, development, individual differences, maladaptive behavior, and recognize the influences of biology and society.
   1.2. Apply principles from the science of psychology to behavioral health problems in familiar settings
   1.3. Recognize issues of diversity and multiculturalism for clients and address them appropriately.
   1.4. Recognize and apply legal, ethical and professional standards to practice issues such as those involving technology and privacy.
   1.5. Effectively communicate their assessment findings and conceptualization to consumers and other professionals.
   1.6. Profit from feedback on their behavior from clients, colleagues, or other professionals.

2. Behave in a professional manner toward clients, supervisors and colleagues and with respect for professional boundaries.

3. Review scholarly practice literature and effectively integrate it with practice considerations.
   3.1. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary advances in their field of practice.
   3.2. Engage in data-based problem-solving in their respective practice settings, including adherence to American Psychological Association (APA) standards for the conduct of research and sensitivity to cultural and individual differences in the formulation of research questions, design, and implementation.
   3.3. Accurately and thoughtfully interpret action-research that advances the needs of the practice community, and communicate the results to those affected.

Financial Assistance

This section includes general information about financial assistance at WKU. University support for students come in several flavors. Some money is provided directly to academic departments (e.g., Psychology) to support graduate students in Graduate Assistantship positions and/or for tuition.
Availability of assistance from the department varies from year to year. Also consult with the Financial Aid Office (https://www.wku.edu/financialaid/) for information on assistance.

There are additional sources of possible funding listed in the appendix of the Common Policies Handbook.

**Graduate Assistantships**

The minimum course load for a student with a graduate assistantship is 6 credit hours per semester, while the maximum course load for a student with a graduate assistantship is 12 credit hours per semester.

An assistantship both provides a paycheck and gives you an experience of mentoring with your assistantship supervisor. They often serve as letters of reference for your next stage in your career.

Tuition will be charged at an in-state rate for those receiving an assistantship. The amount the department receives is generally announced near the end of the spring semester, sometimes even mid-summer. The coordinator will ask, via email, if students want an assistantship and/or tuition dollars. Monitor your email.

Assigning assistantships is a complex task that must consider the needs of the department, the expectations of the faculty supervisor, the desires and abilities of the graduate student, the style mix of faculty and graduate student, and the limited availability of options. We do our best but cannot satisfy everyone.

Student applications for admission to the program contain the application for assistantships. After the first year, student performance in the program and matching to faculty constitutes the basis for assigning assistantships.

Once appointed, graduate assistants must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to retain the assistantship. If you are interested in a graduate assistantship, please inform the Program Coordinator.

Please see the Common Handbook for more information about Graduate Assistantships and the expectations that are associated with them.

For first year students their best path to a desired GA position is to make a positive impression on that faculty member so they request the student. Also, do well with any first-year assistantship.

**Tuition Support.**

A tuition grant may also be available in any particular year. This is money allocated by the university to support graduate students and can vary from year to year. In the past we have been able to maintain the amount received in the first year into the second year but amounts given to us to disburse can vary from year to year.

**Curriculum**

The 48 credit hours of courses required for completion of the M.A. degree in clinical psychology are dictated largely by the requirements for certification in the State of Kentucky (201 KAR 26:210) as a Licensed Psychological Associate. This sequence of courses (see Appendix), standard for the profession, will provide students who apply themselves with the basic clinical skills, attitudes, and values needed for success in the field and to function effectively with clients and other professionals.

In addition, students who do well will have the core knowledge for the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP). See 201 KAR 26: 230 §1-2 for details.

Because practica require intense interpersonal contact, the program is only available on the Bowling Green campus.

**Full Time vs. Part Time**

Many students want to be employed at a job while attending graduate school. This desire is
understandable; however, based on experience with prior students, caution is advised.

We have found that M.A. level graduate students can either go to school full-time OR work full-time if they wish to perform with excellence.

Students who try to take 12 semester hours of classes and work 40 hours per week (and try to have a family/social life) will struggle and miss out.

Study time, sleep, good attention and health really are essential to performance in graduate school.

While students will need to evaluate their own situation, it is recommended by the faculty that M.A. students commit themselves to graduate school and attend full-time. We believe that students will have a better graduate experience if they attend full-time rather than part-time.

Again, graduate school is not comparable to undergraduate school. A 12-hour graduate course load is closer to 24 hours or more of undergraduate work and requires a higher level of cognitive integration.

Full-time enrollment in the program, and accepting an assistantship (if available), allows students to become engaged in a community of colleagues. Students then have a better opportunity to practice their professional roles and learn from faculty.

And, remember, the relationship with faculty members—for good or ill—does not end at graduation. The faculty continue to interact with students through professional venues, letters of recommendation, and serve as their first mentors into a professional world in which connections matter.

Summer Courses/January Term

Students will be required to take three hours of course work in the January term between Fall Semester and Spring Semester of their first year and three hours of coursework during the summer session between their first and second years.

These two courses are PSY 541 (Introduction to Professional Psychology, Ethics, and Standards of Practice) and typically PSY 520 (Individual Differences), although PSY 550 (Personality Theory) may be occasionally substituted for PSY 520.

Students who wish to complete the 60-hour program for the LPP may opt to take 12 hours of courses in the summer session between their first and second year, or may decide to take an additional 6 hours in the summer session after their second year. These additional courses will be electives. We generally recommend finishing the 48 hours so you have a degree in hand and taking the 12 hours later.

Transfer Credit

Up to 12 semester hours of transfer credit from an accredited institution may be accepted toward meeting the course requirements for the degree. These courses must be properly identified as graduate level courses and must fall within the 6-year limit for degree completion.

Requests for transfer credit must be approved by the clinical faculty and include supporting documentation on course content and requirements, such as syllabi, reading lists and related materials. The Graduate School must also approve all requests for transfer credits.

Research Tool

The University requires that graduate students complete a research tool as part of their program. EDFN 500, Research Methods, or EDLD 722 Measurement and Survey Methods for Educational Leaders meet this requirement. Students must earn at least a B in this class.
**Practica**

Graduate students in clinical psychology take practicum courses (PSY 562 and PSY 662) both semesters of their first year.

A practicum course is one in which the student has “practical” experience with the profession being learned. In our program that means interacting with clients under supervision and engaging in professional behaviors.

Tasks in such courses are often open-ended to meet the needs of the varying client population. It is very important that you follow supervisor instruction during practica and check in with the supervisor as requested in order to avoid putting the client, yourself, or the supervisor at risk.

You are practicing on the supervisor’s license in practica courses and so the supervisor will take your actions very seriously. They do understand you are learning.

If something untoward occurs your best action is to inform the supervisor immediately. Hiding or downplaying important information suggests poor judgement and is cause for dismissal from the program.

Your goals are to avoid big mistakes (e.g., breaking confidentiality) and to learn from your small mistakes (e.g., writing the wrong gender on a draft report) and not repeat them.

PSY 562 is associated with the course in intellectual assessment (PSY 560) and involves practice in administering and interpreting intelligence tests and other cognitive instruments. Both children and adults are recruited as volunteer clients.

This practicum requires precision and attention to fine detail while retaining interaction with the client. It also requires capacity to improve over time. It gives you a structured situation for your first client contact.

PSY 662 is associated with the course in theories of psychotherapy (PSY 641). Students are required to perform a certain number of hours of psychotherapy for 662.

The type of therapeutic services ranges from individual therapy to psychoeducational groups. Students work with their practicum cases in the Psychology Training Clinic and must follow clinic procedures. This course requires empathy, flexibility while maintaining standards, and capacity to grow from feedback.

Most of the practicum work is completed in the Psychology Training Clinic within the Psychology Department (GRH 1035). It must equal 600 hours (201 KAR 26:200 § 1(11b)).

You would be wise to track your clinical hours, indicating direct client contact, various forms of preparation such as writing reports and indicating at least assessment versus therapy hours. You will receive a suggested form for tracking in one of your courses.

**Supervision**

Best practice in clinical work is to use ongoing supervision throughout your professional career. “Lone wolves” end up damaging clients and themselves. Training and practice as an MA psychologist require supervision of your clinical activities.

Your role as a trainee/supervisee is to be thoughtful, thorough and careful when dealing with anything client-related and to discuss questions and concerns with your supervisor.

The supervisor’s role is to encourage your professional development through support with appropriate challenge, to guard client welfare and to evaluate your progress and needs.

Supervision may include live, videoed and other forms of observation, such as review of testing protocols, peer observation or supervision by a doctoral student who in turn is supervised by faculty.

Supervision may be conducted one-on-one or in a group. It may involve additional readings or research on your part in order to provide appropriate service. Details will be explained at the start of each course.

Whoever your supervisor is, they have a “library” of knowledge and experience that can
profit you if you learn how to evoke it in honest, reflective conversations.

Learning from a variety of people is the best preparation for clinical work as you learn alternative approaches and deepen your “tool chest” of options for your own work.

Practicum work is often recorded on video or audio, using our state-of-the-art system, at the discretion of the supervisor. The recordings are used to provide feedback and direction to the student.

**Students are responsible for assuring the confidentiality of these recordings as well as all practicum materials.** You will be trained on the equipment. Pay attention. It usually does not go as smoothly when you are alone with a client. Practice in several rooms so you learn the general principles and quirks of each set-up.

**Internship**

A 600-hour internship/practica is **required by the Kentucky Board of Examiners of Psychology** in order to be license eligible in Kentucky. Most states (see section in Appendix) require an internship/ practicum experience, so if you are planning to be licensed in another state, you will need to check that state’s regulations to find the requirements.

Internships may be completed in a variety of settings, according to the students’ needs and professional goals, and availability of internship sites. It can be helpful for some students to complete extra internship experiences to improve their effectiveness with clients. That will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

A limited number of internships are available in the Bowling Green area, for example, at Rivendell, the University Counseling and Testing Center, the Medical Center, and local therapists. Students may apply for internships in other cities or states.

However, remember that the internship must include the practice of psychological skills in assessment, diagnosis, and therapy, and that your supervisor must be approved by our program. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an appropriate supervisor is available for the experience.

Students will complete 20 hours a week of internship experience. This will include approximately 14 hours each week spent in activities at the off-campus site, 1 hour per week of University Supervision, and 5 hours in the Psychology Training Clinic.

The number of hours spent at the off-campus site and the Psychology Training Clinic are subject to change based on the needs of the Training Clinic and the number of students in the class. Do not be tempted to skimp on supervision or you cheat yourself of some of your most effective learning experiences.

**PSY 600 Maintaining Matriculation**

If a student completes all coursework and internship hours but still does not have the capstone project completed, PSY 600 Maintaining Matriculation must be taken the semester in which the student defends his or her project and graduates.

**Not Enrolling 2 Consecutive Semesters**

Students who are not enrolled in classes for two consecutive semesters are removed from the program by university policy and must reapply to be readmitted to the program before they can take classes again.

**Electives**

Because of the state requirements, there are only 2 semesters (second year) in which an elective can be taken for 54 hours total during the basic program. Most often students opt to use that time for more internship hours or the capstone project (see next section).

However, if students opt to take the 60-hour program to meet requirements for Licensed Practicing Psychologist status, then students can
elect to take 12 hours both semesters their second year and register for another 6 hours in either the summer session between the first and second year or the summer session after the second year.

Suggested electives include courses in Group Therapy, Play Therapy or Brief Therapy. An Addictions Education Certificate is available through the Counseling and Student Affairs Department.

We recommend that you complete your degree and earn the LPA designation before returning for the credits to apply for LPP status.

**Capstone (Thesis/Nonthesis) Options**

Objectives of the Capstone Project:
Upon completion of the project the student will be able to
1. manage a significant project independently;
2. contribute to the knowledge base of the field, either through a research project or analysis of a body of literature;
3. exercise deeper critical thinking skills;
4. present themselves in writing and oral communication at a professional level.

Starting Fall 2019 students may choose either the thesis or nonthesis option. Please consult with your advisor with regard to which track will fit better with your career objectives. Throughout this handbook we use “capstone project” to refer to both the thesis and the nonthesis project.

**Nonthesis Option.**

Students will complete one elective graduate level course selected with the approval of their MA advisor and will sign up for 3 hours of Psy 590, completing the Psy 590 Approval Request for the Department (see the Appendix or ). During Psy 590 they will complete a systematic review paper using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) website.

The main PRISMA checklist or guidance is found under the Prisma Statement/Checklist tab. Students will also use the Abstracts Checklist under the Extensions/Abstracts tab.

You may find it helpful to start with the Scoping Review checklist as you assess whether there is sufficient information in your selected area.

Nonthesis option students will meet as a group with the M.A. coordinator for a semester for guidance. After a semester, the student must judge what will be helpful to them to finish the paper. No grade is provided for Psy 590 until the paper is defended and revised for submission to TopScholar at the end of the term.

The paper topic must apply to work in clinical psychology and a two-to-three-page prospectus must be reviewed by the clinical faculty member serving on the defense committee. This faculty member will judge the acceptability of the topic as well as provide advice on how to effectively sculpt a reasonable paper.

The student is advised to be in regular contact with the clinical faculty member on their defense committee to ensure success in the project and is to schedule continuing review meetings (every 2 to 3 weeks). Failure to keep this schedule tends to result in failure to complete the paper on time. It is acceptable to meet over the phone or via videoconferencing.

This capstone paper should be roughly 50 to 60 pages in length including the front material (which can be 7 to 10 pages) and reference section and must meet current APA Style criteria. The paper will be defended orally in front of at least one clinical faculty member and one other person with a doctoral degree in psychology or an area closely related to psychology. The selection of the review team will be with the approval of the clinical faculty.

If there is disagreement regarding whether the paper passed, then a third person with a
clinical doctoral degree will review the paper after corrections from the first two are made.

As appropriate the paper will be submitted to TopScholar for publication. See Appendix for Signature page. The library permission form will be provided at the proper time.

The grade for Psy 590 is pass/fail. Students must complete the selected tasks at the 80% level or above in quantity and quality. Also, to pass Psy 590, they must satisfactorily complete required corrections on their paper by two weeks before the graduate school deadline for thesis submissions.

An alternative path for completing this requirement is to work in a faculty lab for Psy 590 credit (during fall semester of the second year), completing 70 clock hours of work (recorded on a time sheet, signed by the faculty and a copy given to the MA advisor). The task will be to develop a research idea in partnership with the faculty member. In the subsequent semester the student will sign up again for Psy 590 as before. At this point the student will do 1 of 2 tasks.

a) The student will have primary responsibility for writing and presenting a collaborative research project at an event such as REACH week or a conference. (A poster presentation does not typically include a formal presentation and so is not acceptable.)

b) The student will complete a literature review, following the PRISMA standards near the beginning of the nonthesis description. The review will be related to the research lab’s focus, and then defend it.

For both a) and b) a professional level oral defense is expected. The hours accumulated preparing the paper and presentation do count toward the 70 required clock hours.

For task a) at least two faculty must be present with one being a WKU faculty member and ideally the other having some clinical expertise. Both will sign off on the paper. The WKU faculty person present will

• ensure that multiple questions are asked of, and answered by, the presenter, and
• adapt the rubric to indicate success or remediation needed.

For task b) an oral defense will be held following the general criteria for the nonthesis option but ideally with the research faculty member being present along with a clinical faculty member.

In all cases, a copy of the presentation and the completed rubric will be given to the M.A. advisor stating the student’s name, date, location and usual citation information.

**Thesis Option.**

A total of six credits of course work (3 hours of Psy 599 across two semesters) are awarded for undertaking thesis research and for the completion of the project. **See the Thesis Checklist (separate document) for details.** The thesis must be psychological in method and content as per 201 KAR 26:210 §1(3).

Students choosing this option should select a faculty research mentor and formulate an idea for research during the fall to early spring semester of the first year of their master’s program formulating the idea in concert with the research mentor. This will ease the timely completion of the thesis project.

Do not count on the summer for “catching up.” The time disappears quickly. While many plan to finish their proposal then, few do. Steady work in small bits is crucial.

Students switching from the Thesis option to Nonthesis will not be able to count any Psy 599 hours toward the electives required for the Nonthesis option. Students switching in the other direction, from Nonthesis to Thesis, may not count Psy 590 toward the required thesis hours. Those extra hours would count toward the LPP hours, however, if passed.

Students in the thesis option receive a passing grade in all enrolled sections when the thesis has been successfully defended in front of
Changing Options.

Students switching from the one option to the other will not be able to count any attempted Psy 590 or 599 hours toward the new option. However, the extra hours may count toward the LPP hours, however, if passed.

Self-Care

As a behavioral health care professional, it is part of our responsibility to monitor our own well-being and seek consultation or help if needed. The challenge in a small university town is finding someone not connected to the university.

Please see the Appendix in the Common Policies handbook for a list of referrals and keep in mind that surrounding cities and towns may offer other options for those willing and able to travel.

Student Evaluation

Evaluation of Graduate Students occurs continuously throughout the program with a summative report of the faculty assessment at the end of each semester. See Appendices for the summative evaluation form.

Maintenance of a B average is required to continue an assistantship.

Professional (clinical psychology) courses (PSY 541, PSY 560, PSY 562, PSY 660, PSY 662, PSY 641, and PSY 640) with a grade below B do not count toward completion of the program and will need to be re-taken until such a time as the student earns a B grade or is advised that success is unlikely.

Traditional examinations over coursework are only one aspect of the total evaluation. The faculty recognizes that the practice of clinical psychology requires more than simply applying academic knowledge.

Please view the Common Policies for more details about evaluation.

Program Probation

The MA program holds expectations that students will display and maintain professional, ethical and legal behaviors within professional settings and across performance domains.

- When these expectations are not met, the program faculty will take the following steps to assist students in modifying their behaviors. When students have reviews that indicate problem behavior(s), the students will have a specified time to correct the behavior(s) on their own without extraordinary faculty intervention. However, students are encouraged to approach faculty for advice on how to correct the behaviors. They should first approach the faculty person(s) in whose course(s) the problem behavior(s) was displayed.
- If behavior(s) persist past the specified time, students will work with the MA Program Coordinator or designate to create a plan for remediation of the problematic behavior(s) and time expected to achieve success. Students are encouraged to bring suggestions or strategies for improvement to the meeting(s) as well as a timeline and examples of behavior that will signal achievement of the goal. Students are encouraged to continue to report to a designated faculty member throughout remediation to help them be successful.
- If the behavior(s) persist past the designated timeline, students will be placed on program probation. Students are encouraged to continue to report to a designated faculty member throughout remediation to help them be successful.
• Once students display that they have remediated the identified behavior(s), they are removed from program probation.

• If the behavior(s) persist while students are on program probation, students will be considered for dismissal from the program.

• Please note that faculty may become hesitant about providing recommendations to licensure boards if the change is not permanent.

There may be times when behaviors are egregious and warrant an immediate Remediation Plan and program probation without the intervening steps. Further, there may be times when prompt dismissal is the appropriate response for the displayed unprofessional behavior. The MA Program faculty reserve the right to move to either of these options if they are deemed necessary and appropriate.

Students who are on program probation will not be allowed to apply for internship and possibly advanced practica.

Students wishing to file an appeal may do so following the College Academic Appeals process (https://www.wku.edu/cebs/programs/policies/cebs_complaint_committee_procedures.pdf).
Suggested Checklist for the MA

Prior to the Term

☐ **Connecting.** At least a week before the term begins, start using your [WKU email address](mailto:your_username@wku.edu) and check it daily. The WKU systems are set up to work most effectively with that email.

☐ You will have a physical **mailbox** that you will need to check daily. Enter the Psychology Department and go past the front desks and turn to your right. The mailboxes shelves are down the hall on your right.

☐ Memorize your WKU **800 number and NetID**. You will use them to access many campus resources. Part of your professional responsibility will be keeping them private as confidential client material will be accessible through them. If you have not changed your passwords in a while, do so.

☐ Start using a secure password manager, such as LastPass, so you use sufficiently complex passwords. Experts now are saying that the old advice to use a highly secure, nonsensical phrase with numbers and punctuation has not worked as humans cannot create sufficient complexity. Do not use the password in any other setting. **Do NOT store the password on any device in a manner readable by someone else.** **Do NOT share your password with loved ones who do not have a right to view confidential material.** If you have already shared it, it is your ethical responsibility to change your password.

☐ Enhance your keyboarding and word processing skills. The better you are, the more efficiently you will produce your papers. The university supports Microsoft Word, offers online training, and has a purchasing program for students. I recommend learning [Heading Styles](https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/word/structure-and-organization/headers-and-footers). Do not trust APA style plug-ins. They are often outdated or incorrect.

☐ Purchase and study the most current edition of the [APA Publication Manual](https://apastyle.org) and the [guide to electronic references](https://www.apa.org/about/). (Join APA for a discount.) Every moment spent learning the details will pay off in time saved on papers.

☐ Learn software that enables you to organize references. [Zotero](https://zotero.org) is free and has a large community. Another option is [Mendeley](https://mendeley.com). For those planning on engaging in research, complete your [CITI human subjects research ethics training](https:// CITI. e d u) so you do not have to do that in the middle of a term. If you have done it before, CITI training “follows” you from school to school, you’ll just match it to WKU when the time comes.

☐ Create a professional credential file and vita. A professional credential file is where you keep documentation of your professional experiences, such as practicum hours, which you will need when you apply for a license. Remember this is a folder you will keep for 20 to 30 years. Don’t keep it in a single location or a single electronic device. And **do NOT keep client identifying information in it**. Keep in mind that only a few bits of information can identify an individual uniquely.

☐ A **vita is how you present those credentials to others**. A vita is always a work in progress and you may have several for different jobs (therapy, doctoral program) based on the single credential file. The sooner you begin, the easier it is to update it. At a minimum, be kind to your future self and toss a handwritten note about activities in this folder so you have some place to start. Review this [advice for presenting yourself professionally](https://www.apa.org/pubs/standards). And this for **do’s and don’ts of vitas**. Ask the faculty for help with your vita.

☐ On the other hand, we strongly discourage you from using a computer to take notes in class. We have found that those who use computers do noticeably poorer than those taking notes by hand. We suspect it has to do with attention management. Maybe someone would like to do a research project on that question. Test yourself and see how long you can go without checking a computer or mobile device. Build your
tolerance toward 3 hours without looking. That will help your attention span as well as client interactions. And above all, do not wake up to check email in the night. You will just be undercutting your sleep cycle, attentional capacity, tolerance for change, and capacity for learning which you will need in graduate school. There are very few events that require attention in the middle of the night.

- Week before classes begin (typically that Thursday/Friday) there are orientations to attend.

**First Semester**

- Complete the Program of Study form. Do this soon after Orientation when we have talked. Once you have this done, submit it to the M.A. Coordinator.

- Find the important places in Gary Ransdell Hall. These include, but are not limited to: graduate student office (3009; the lock code is handed out at orientation), clinical faculty offices and research laboratories, the Psychology Training Clinic (GRH 1035), your classrooms, and the computer laboratory (GRH 2055/56).

- Find the libraries. Helm-Cravens is up the hill. Sean Kinder is your Psychology resource librarian. Professionals use a wide variety of resources, particularly including primary (original) sources. Many important documents are NOT available online.

- When scheduling assistantship hours or other activities, students enrolled in practica are advised to retain several 3-hour segments of time for working with clients.

- Adjust studying and time/priority management to graduate-level classes. See Handbook Welcome for description.

- Join KPA and APA as a student member. This is the least it will ever cost to join so this gives you a chance to check out the organizations for less and build professional networks. There are some discounts available on resources to members. Think ahead to your first job.

- Obtain malpractice insurance. You will need to show proof of malpractice insurance before you will be allowed to see therapy clients in the second semester. Your practica supervisor will give you direction on obtaining insurance. Make sure you have malpractice insurance at the $1,000,000/ $3,000,000 level before you head home for Christmas break. You apply and then must wait awhile to see if you are accepted.

**Winter**

- You will need to take PSY 541 (Introduction to Professional Psychology). Do not skip this class as it is only offered in the winter. If you skip it, you will be behind as it will not be offered until the next Winter term.

**Second Semester**

- Coordinate your internship. Work with the Internship Supervisor during this semester to identify your internship site. Your goal is a place that will accept you for two semesters. You will get more details around spring break.

- Update your vita. Be sure to keep current so that you do not forget anything.

- Thesis students identify potential chairs and topics. Nonthesis students work on selecting a topic of interest to a clinician audience.

**Summer**

- Thesis students need to have filed their Committee Selection form before they can register. Nonthesis students must complete the Psy 590 Approval Request form before fall (see Appendix or use the link).

- Take appropriate summer courses. You will need to take: PSY 520 (Individual Differences). Do not skip this class as it is only offered in the summer. If you skip it, you will be behind.

- Seriously work on your capstone project. Research shows that people are more
productive when they do a tiny bit (e.g., 15 minutes) every day rather than when they try to binge write. Do NOT plan on writing during large blocks of time. That does not happen in the second year. Learn to write in “short” chunks.

☐ Apply for graduation. Do this in the summer or a hold will be placed on registration. (See TopNet/Student Services/Student Records/Application for Graduation). You must apply even if you are not planning on participating in commencement.

☐ Celebrate! You’re over halfway through.

**Third Semester**

☐ Begin your internship. You will do approximately 20 hours (14 hours on site and 6 hours at WKU) of internship work a week in this semester.

☐ Do substantial work toward your capstone project.

☐ Update your vita. Be sure to keep current so that you do not forget anything.

☐ Be aware of upcoming deadlines to graduate on time. (Dates announced in email)
  - Date to Apply for Graduation
  - Thesis Option: Thesis due to Graduate School at least three and as much as four weeks before next item
  - Nonthesis Option: Project is due at the same time as the thesis.
  - Completion of all degree requirements by the last day of the semester.

**Fourth Semester**

☐ Complete your internship. Again, self-explanatory, but necessary.

☐ Update your vita and credential file. Be sure to keep it current so that you do not forget anything.

☐ Thesis: Take care when making a Thesis Signature page. They get sent back if sizes aren’t as directed (see Grad School).

☐ Thesis: Send your thesis project as a pdf to graduate.records@wku.edu and carry a hard copy of your signature page to WAB 207.

☐ Nonthesis: The MA Coordinator will sign off on the Signature page (see Appendix) when the committee and coordinator judge the document at a professional level. The page is bound with the document following the Graduate School’s formatting for the thesis. It will then be submitted to the library. See next step.

☐ Everyone: Submit the Copyright permission form to the university library.

☐ Graduate if you have kept up on your capstone project. At the commencement ceremony, please find the clinical faculty afterwards, so we can take a group picture together. We are proud of your accomplishments and want to celebrate with you.

☐ If you are still working on your capstone project, you need to register for 1 hour of Psy 600 Maintaining Matriculation in the term you will graduate. Notify the MA Coordinator that you need to be cleared for the class.

☐ Seeking employment? Apply to the State Board of Examiners of Psychology. Do the paperwork shortly after graduation so that you can take the Written Exam (the EPPP) as soon as possible. Locate a job and, at least in Kentucky, a doctoral level clinical supervisor (a particular credential is required to supervise). Be aware that the employer will have to pay your supervisor and you should negotiate that during the hiring process.

☐ The EPPP format is in transition. See http://www.apapracticecentral.org/update/2018/07-12/examination-professional-practice.aspx

☐ Attending a doctoral program? Finish your work here, get some quality rest in, and start orienting yourself to the new program.

☐ Consider options for capstone project publication.

☐ Write to us periodically and let us know how you are doing.

☐ Congratulations!
Appendices

Before the gates of excellence, the high gods have placed sweat.

Long is the road thereto, and rough and steep at the first.

But when the height is achieved,

Then there is ease,

Though grievously hard in the winning.

--Hesiod
Receipt for MA and Common Policies Handbook

By signing below, you indicate that you have received the Student Handbook for the MA program in Psychology, Concentration in Clinical, and the combined policies for the MA and PsyD programs. APA requires us to collect signatures indicating you have received this document. Your signature only indicates receipt of the documents.

______________________________________    _________________
Signature         Date

______________________________________
Printed Name
## Clinical Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td>Winter Term</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Semester</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDLD 712 Research Methods and Design...OR EDFN 501 Statistics.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 541 Professional Issues and Ethics in Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EDLD 722 Survey Methods... OR EDFN 500 Research Methods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 560 Assessment of Individual Intellectual Functioning: Theories and Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 641 Theories of Psychotherapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 562 Practicum in Psychological Assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 660 Assessment of Personality and Socio-emotional Functioning</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 640 Psychopathology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>PSY 662 Practicum in Psychology</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Hrs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Term</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Semester</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 520 Individual Differences and Human Diversity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 511 Psychology of Learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 599 Thesis Research OR Nonthesis: one elective</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSY 592 Psychology Internship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSYS 552 Advanced Social Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 599 Thesis Research OR Nonthesis: Psy 590</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 651 Clinical Neuropsychology for the Applied Psychologist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 optional elective</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>1 optional elective</td>
<td>(3)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| | Hrs | | |
| | 3 | 9 | 9 |

Total Hours: 48 (54)
## Behaviors Leading to Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful Graduate Students</th>
<th>Unsuccessful Graduate Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep electronic devices off in class.</td>
<td>Attend to the device, rather than the instructor and miss directions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete projects early.</td>
<td>Wait until the last minute to do things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do more than is necessary to complete projects and assignments.</td>
<td>Do the minimum amount of work necessary to “get it done.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to determine the expectations of professors/ supervisors and modify their behaviors accordingly.</td>
<td>Expect to be told what to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands that tasks will prepare students to be professional psychologists.</td>
<td>Assume that tasks are meaningless or arbitrary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine their challenges to determine what worked and what did not. They continue with what worked and modify what did not.</td>
<td>Blame others for their challenges and want others to adjust to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and accept criticism (even unfair criticism) with equanimity and sometimes ask for more feedback.</td>
<td>Feel threatened by criticism and become angry when given feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a desire to learn and become better students and people, regardless of the grade attached to the project.</td>
<td>Want only to get through graduate school the least effortful way possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put in as much time as is necessary to do a complete and thorough job on a project.</td>
<td>Try to complete projects as quickly as possible without regard to quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persevere through setbacks.</td>
<td>Give up when things get tough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are courteous to all colleagues—peers, faculty, staff, clients.</td>
<td>Behave as if some persons are not worth time or attention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“How to Get Seriously Good at Reading” Video


Which gives me an opening for a brief discussion—in graduate school reading is not about the speed of covering the words and comprehending them. Your reading has to be a lot more “active” (which fortuitously can also mean it is more fun and easier to remember).

If the last class you had on how to read was in elementary school, see the 4 levels or types of reading here https://fs.blog/how-to-read-a-book/. Your ultimate goal is syntopical reading but you likely need to go through inspectional and analytical reading to get there.

Your first step is to strive for active reading: you are asking questions about the material/author as you go along and making connections between various readings or finding out why you don’t see a connection. For example,

- Use the outliner sparingly—when you prioritize what to highlight then you are actively engaged with the material and more likely to remember and understand it—choosing to underline this and not that is higher level thinking.
- If you like the big picture, do an outline of the reading—the learning takes place while you are doing the outline, not from reading it later. Think about why that might be.
- Here is a nice blog post with more tips: https://drdoane.com/read-like-a-graduate-student/
**Semester Summative Evaluation**

Student Name: ___________________________ Date: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal &amp; Professional Qualities</th>
<th>Satisfactory Progress</th>
<th>Some Concerns</th>
<th>Significant Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work ethic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management/prioritizing program work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic coursework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem-solving skills including capacity to effectively define problems to be addressed.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress on thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Applied skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy for and ability to work with diverse individuals including colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes responsibility for personal and professional actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds appropriately to feedback/supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitudes/values appropriate for clinical work</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal stability</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adherence to ethical standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accomplishments this term: __________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Comments: _____________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Remediation Plan: ___Not needed      ____Needed (Meet with Program Coordinator)
PSY 590 Approval Request Department of Psychology

Student Name: _______________________________________

WKU ID: _________________________________

Email Address: ________________________________________

Course Requested for Independent Study

PSY 590 Readings/Research Psychology. 1-6 hours (repeatable maximum of 9 hours). Individual readings or research. Arrangements must be made before enrollment. Prerequisite(s): Departmental permission only. Equivalent(s): PSYS 590. Grade Mode: Pass/Fail.

Semester of planned independent study: _____________
Credit hours for planned independent study: ___________
CRN: __________________
Name of faculty supervisor for independent study project (if approved): ____________________

Briefly explain your reason(s) for choosing to do this independent study project and what you hope to accomplish:

Describe your planned independent study project (attach additional pages if needed):

Describe the intended final product of your project (e.g., student-authored research paper, conference presentation, data set, etc.):

Signatures:
Student: __________________________ Date: __________________
Faculty Supervisor: __________________________ Date: __________________
Department Head: __________________________ Date: __________________

Updated 7/8/2020
Nonthesis Signature Page. (Thesis Signature Page is available from the Graduate School)

TITLE, ALL CAPS, CENTERED, Not Bold

By

Your Name

Date Recommended: ____________________

______________________________________
Xiao Smith, Ph.D. Director of Capstone Project
______________________________________
Delancey Jones, Psy.D.

Revisions are approved

______________________________________
Sally Kuhlenschmidt, Ph.D.
M.A. Coordinator
Opportunities for Licensure/Work at the Master’s Level All States

Last updated: June 17, 2019.

The following states have some sort of licensure recognition for individuals with a master’s degree in psychology. Please check on specific requirements for a state as they do vary and the degree may just be an entry requirement. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Some of our students find employment by qualifying for an addiction counseling certification or professional counselor or similar term, depending on the location. The titles are not standardized. While Psychological Associate often means a MA level degree, in Nevada it is a postdoc/pre-licensure. Most states appear to have exceptions for government employees although use of terms may be restricted. This website links to boards for the states. I included a few in the list below so you would be aware of the possibility of licensure under a different title.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama (inkblot)</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Technician</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Doc: Licensed Clinical Psychologist 225 ILCS 15/3 (d) under supervision as long as doesn’t say/imply clinical psychologist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska (language)</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist IC 25-33-1-5.1 (Titles Psych Assoc and Assoc in Psy for pre EPPP) MA: employee of nonprofit organization IC25-33-1-1.1 (8). See also IC 25-33-1-14 (b) MA: Licensed Mental Health Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist MA + BACB Behavior Analyst; Neuropsychology Technician</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>MA: Master’s Level Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas (neurons)</td>
<td>BA to MA: Neuropsychology Technician history</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>MA: Licensed Practicing Psychologist MA: Licensed Psychological Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Assistant</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist (RS 37:2356 Law; 203A4 Regulations); Clinical Neuropsychologist (307 Regulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist</td>
<td>Maine (ick)</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Examiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>MA: Chemical Dependency Professional Licensure</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Doc: Licensed Psychologist [couldn’t find law]; + HSP MA+2 years: Mental Health Counselor (Section 165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>MA: Psychology Associate</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>MA: Masters Limited License in Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>MA: Licensed Mental Health Counselor</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>MA: Licensed Professional Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist MA: could work unlicensed for a doctoral person who is (43-39-7 (3) or a religious supervising them as a Psychometrist organization as long as doesn’t use title or imply psychologist 43-39-7 (4)).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist MA: unlicensed Psychological Assistant 465-(3) (2). Or as government employee as psychological examiner. 465-(4) as long as doesn’t use title or imply licensed psychologist 450-02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>No info</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>MA: Licensed Professional Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Doc: Licensed Psychologist [couldn’t find law]; + HSP MA+2 years: Mental Health Counselor (Section 165)</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist (NRS 641.170) MA: Board Certified Behavior Analyst (NRS 641.170)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Doc: Licensed practicing psychologist (45:14B-2) MA: work for govt., etc. (45:14B-6 a)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>MA: Working under Doc 7605(13) or Licensed Mental Health Counselor BA or higher: Testing Technician 7605(11) (neither licensed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist (NDCC Chapter 43-32; NDAC Title 66) MA: Board Certified Behavior Analyst (NDCC 43-32-01 etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Mariana Islands</td>
<td>MA: Clinical Psychology Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>MA: Psychology Assistant (not licensed but supervised)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Technician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist (136-52-63 sctn 6) MA: clerical or administrative employee (136-52-63 sctn 9); Corrections under supervision (sctn 4);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>MA: Psicologo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist MA: work for licensed hospital, authorized CMHC, govt agency (5-44-23.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist A person: under direct supervision of licensed psych Section 40-55-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist MA dropped in 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>MA: Certified Psychological Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>MA: Licensed Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>US Virgin Islands</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist-Master * Treatment Provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>MA: Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Doc: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist -Master’s Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>MA: Private Practice School Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>MA: Certified Psychological Practitioner</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Canada</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>MA: Psychological Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>MA: Registered Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Other Countries</td>
<td>MA: Clinical psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>MA: Psychologist</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) governs the state licensing boards and can provide you with more details on each state. This board can be reached at:

400 S. Union St.
Montgomery, AL 36104
(334) 832-4580
# Draft: Thesis Capstone Project Rubric

**Project Title:** _____________________________

**Candidate:** ______________________________

**Committee Member and credential/title:** ______________________________________________

**Date of review:** ______________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introductory Section.</strong></td>
<td>o Argument or logic for the study is unclear or ambiguous.</td>
<td>o General argument and logic for the study is present.</td>
<td>o Argument and logic for the study is clear and connected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Literature review does is difficult to follow and fails to link ideas together.</td>
<td>o Brief literature review provides context for the study.</td>
<td>o Cited literature provides supports the reasoning behind the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature Review.</strong></td>
<td>o Scope of review is missing multiple key elements and parts do not connect.</td>
<td>o Literature reviewed is generally relevant to the study.</td>
<td>o Scope of review is relevance and focused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Critical and foundational citations are missing.</td>
<td>o Critical citations are present and discussed.</td>
<td>o Citations are from an appropriate and relevant literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Review contains elements that are not related to the argument of the study.</td>
<td>o Articles develop a clear argument for the study.</td>
<td>o All elements of the review are connected to the reason for the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Demonstrates cursory or no understanding of topic area.</td>
<td>o May overlook one or two supplemental areas.</td>
<td>o Demonstrates emerging area of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypotheses.</strong></td>
<td>o The need for the study is not based on any previous work.</td>
<td>o The need for the study is presented based on previous work.</td>
<td>o The need for the study is based upon appropriate literature without unnecessary side-trips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Hypotheses are incorrectly stated or phrased differently in different parts of the work. Multiple hypotheses may be implied or are not connected to the literature review.</td>
<td>o Hypotheses are stated consistently and are reasonable results of the literature review.</td>
<td>o Hypotheses are clearly shown to be a result of the review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Research questions are weakly implied or not present at all.</td>
<td>o Research questions are implied in the statement of purpose.</td>
<td>o Research questions are presented clearly (does not have to be explicitly stated) and are consistent with the hypotheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Key concepts or terms are not explained and definitions are not operational.</td>
<td>o Most key concepts or terms have sufficient operational definitions.</td>
<td>o Key concepts or terms have strong operational definitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Instruments [e.g., measures, materials, etc.]</td>
<td>Procedure</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Participant selection is inappropriate for the goals of the study.</td>
<td>○ Instruments used have no evidence source (e.g., previous study) and no recognition of pitfalls.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain little or no information on obtaining consent. ○ Several steps or phases of the study are missing or lacking discussion. ○ The author is unsure how the study will actually unfold for the participants. ○ There is little to no connection from Introduction through Proposed Data analysis. ○ Regulatory compliance is not mentioned or the author cannot describe it verbally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Recruitment is lacking rationale or is unethical.</td>
<td>○ Chosen instruments have questionable or ambiguous connections with the goals of the study.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain information regarding consent. ○ All of the steps or phases of the study are presented. ○ The steps remind the author of what is intended but verbal explanation is required for others. ○ Design of project will answer one of the research questions. ○ Discusses regulatory compliance (e.g., IRB, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Little or no demographic data on the participants are present.</td>
<td>○ The name of the measure is accepted as proof of what is being measured.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Chosen participants are acceptable for the goals of the study.</td>
<td>○ Instruments used are evidence-based or a clear rationale is provided.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Recruitment reflects ethical practice.</td>
<td>○ Chosen instruments align with the goals of the study.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Some demographic information of the participants is present but little relation to study purpose.</td>
<td>○ Some reflection on psychometrics in a manner indicating awareness of the meaning.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Participants in the study are appropriate and reasoning is explained.</td>
<td>○ Instruments used are documented as effective tools in previous studies or psychometric data is provided/discussed.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Recruitment information is discussed thoroughly and reflects ethical practice.</td>
<td>○ Instrument decisions are the logical results of the study arguments and align with the goals of the study.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Demographic data is relevant to the purpose of the study and is presented in a manner relevant to this particular study.</td>
<td>○ Ordering of instruments has been reflected on.</td>
<td>○ Procedures contain detailed steps for obtaining consent. ○ All steps and phases of the study are detailed and comprehensive. ○ The study Could be replicated by a competent member of the scientific community using only the thesis. ○ Design of the project will answer the research questions. ○ One significant design issue for the study is addressed by the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposed Data Analysis or Actual Analysis</strong></td>
<td>- Data analysis proposal is garbled/incoherent.</td>
<td>- Data analysis proposal is a strategy learned in basic statistics.</td>
<td>- Data analysis proposal is supported by citations and somewhat customized to the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Analysis procedures do not match the hypotheses or design.</td>
<td>- Analysis procedures are appropriate in for the hypotheses or research questions.</td>
<td>- Analysis procedures are appropriate for the project and citations support the use in the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Many errors occur in the analysis.</td>
<td>- Analysis procedures would provide some information to address the hypotheses.</td>
<td>- Analysis procedures answer the research questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Analysis unfolds predictably.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Data analysis proposal is supported by citations and somewhat customized to the project.</td>
<td>o Analysis procedures are appropriate in for the hypotheses or research questions.</td>
<td>o Analysis procedures answer the research questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o There is a plan for the non-primary data, such as demographic information.</td>
<td>o Analysis procedures are appropriate for the project and citations support the use in the study.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Analysis procedures would provide some information to address the hypotheses.</td>
<td>o Analysis procedures are appropriate for the project and citations support the use in the study.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Analysis unfolds predictably.</td>
<td>o Analysis unfolds predictably.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion (not in proposal)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary of Results</strong></td>
<td>o No summary, inaccurate or major elements missing.</td>
<td>o Accurate summary of findings.</td>
<td>o Accurate, complete and orderly summary of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o No or minimal implications without reflection.</td>
<td>o Most obvious implications of results</td>
<td>o Accurate and thoughtful, even theory-building implications discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implications of Results</strong></td>
<td>o No or minimal application without reflection.</td>
<td>o Most obvious application of results</td>
<td>o Thoughtful and insightful application of results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application of Results</strong></td>
<td>o No or only the most obvious limitations of the study.</td>
<td>o A mostly complete listing of limitations with recognition of strengths.</td>
<td>o A complete listing of limitations and strengths, accompanied by recommendations for future research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limitations of Study</strong></td>
<td>o Abrupt ending.</td>
<td>o Ending that summarizes the work.</td>
<td>o Ending that summarized the work and the most significant outcome along with a call for action.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
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<td>Exemplary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Grammar** | o The proposal contains many significant errors that detract from the content.  
 o The proposal is difficult to understand due to a lack of overview and summary paragraphs and lack of transition sentences.  
 o Clearly no spell or grammar check was applied. | o The proposal contains few errors that may fall into any of the following:  
 • Spelling  
 • Grammar  
 o The proposal can generally be understood and each section follows from the former.  
 o Sentence or paragraph structure is repetitive and formulaic but clear. | o The proposal contains no or minor errors.  
 o Overviews, summaries and transition sentences were used to create clarity and easy flow from section to section and within the sections. |
| **Formatting** | o APA formatting conventions are either not used or the proposal contains multiple or significant errors including references without citations. | o APA formatting conventions are used with a few errors. | o APA formatting conventions are used with no or minor errors. |
| **Plagiarism** | o Content of proposal is plagiarized.  
 o The proposal has a lack of proper citations (e.g., incorrect or missing citations). | o The proposal is not plagiarized.  
 o Citations are reasonably placed throughout the proposal. | o The proposal is not plagiarized.  
 o Citations are in the best location throughout the proposal. |

**Comments:**