

## Guidelines for Advanced Study in Psychology Requirement (PSYC7P51, 7P52, 7P53)

The Advanced Study in Psychology requirement consists of three essays of no fewer than 15 and no more than 20 pages each. The main goals of these essays are to assess the student's ability to summarize the literature on a relatively limited and well-defined topic; draw conclusions based on the literature; and write at a PhD level within specific time constraints. These essays are also intended to provide breadth and depth in areas tangentially related to the student's thesis (i.e., in the student's general area of research but not directly related to the thesis). For example, the essay may be related to a specific research project on which the student is working that is not part of the thesis. Consistent with university regulations, essays that have been, or are to be, submitted for another course or program requirement are not acceptable (See Academic Integrity Policy).

NOTE that all essays must be submitted to turnitin.com with the receipt attached to the copy submitted to the reader.

Each essay has a specific deadline. Extensions will be given only in exceptional circumstances (e.g., health issues) and may require documentation.

Essay #	Submission Deadlines <sup>1</sup>		Deadline for grade and feedback to student
	Full-time students	Part-time students	
7P51	Aug. 31, Year 1	Aug. 31, Year 2	2 months after essay is submitted to Reader. Of course, earlier feedback is welcome whenever possible.
7P52	Aug. 31, Year 2	Aug. 31, Year 3	
7P53	Aug. 31, Year 3	Aug. 31, Year 4	

<sup>1</sup>The first essay will be completed by the end of August of the first year in the PhD program. Subsequent essays may be completed on a timetable that is deemed suitable for each student with the caveat that each must be completed by the deadlines shown above. For example, a student and her/his committee may agree that it would be useful for the student to complete essays 2 and/or 3 earlier than indicated in the table. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in the student being withdrawn from the program. For full-time students with a deferred start date (i.e. January), papers will be due December 31, Year 1; December 31, Year 2; December 31, Year 3. Part-time students with deferred start dates will also have a December 31 due date.

Each essay is due *two months* after the topic is assigned, as indicated by a signed Advanced Study In Psychology form (See Appendix H). The essay topics are determined jointly by the student's supervisory committee and the student. The student will receive feedback in the form of written comments and a grade for each essay within two months of submission.

A faculty member with expertise in the area is responsible for reading and evaluating a given essay. This person need not be from the supervisory committee if another individual is more appropriate and agrees to act as the reader. The *first* essay must be read by someone other than the student's thesis advisor. A reader might ask others to look over an essay for further advice. The student or the primary reader also may request a second reader.

**Grading** If an essay is deemed to be satisfactory, the student is given a numerical grade (i.e., A = 80 - 100 and B = 70 - 79). The highest grade possible for essays that are submitted after the due date is a B (i.e., 70 - 79). The single exception to this is a case in which the student has requested and been granted an extension due to exceptional circumstances. Thus, an essay may be given a B because it does not rate an "A" or because it was not submitted by the deadline.

If an essay is deemed unsatisfactory<sup>1</sup>, the student will have an additional 2-month period to complete a rewrite. The original reader and a second *new* reader (not the thesis advisor) will be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Program Director (or Department Chair/designate, if a conflict exists, such as when a student is supervised by GPD) to evaluate the re-written essay. The highest grade that can be assigned to the re-written paper is a B (see above for numerical grades). If both readers agree that the re-written paper is unsatisfactory, the student's progress/status in the program will be reviewed. Depending on the results of that review, the student may be withdrawn from the program. If the readers of the re-written paper disagree (i.e., one reader believes the paper to be satisfactory; the other does not), a third reader will be selected in consultation with the Graduate Program Director (or Department Chair/designate, if a conflict exists, such as when a student is supervised by GPD) to break the tie. The decision of the third reader will be final.

If a student wishes to appeal an unsatisfactory essay evaluation, s/he should go through the usual appeals process outlined in the current Graduate Calendar.

**Responsibilities of the Student.** The student is responsible for initiating the discussion with his/her supervisory committee on the topic and scope of each essay and for meeting the deadlines for submission/rewriting each essay (shown above).

*NOTE TO STUDENTS: When you and your committee have agreed on the topic for the paper, please complete the ADVANCED STUDY IN PSYCHOLOGY FORM (See Appendix H - link below), obtain signatures, and pass in to the Graduate Administrative Assistant. When you have written and submitted the paper to the reader, notify the Graduate Administrative Assistant that you have done so and pass in a copy of the paper to the Graduate Administrative Assistant. If there are revisions to complete, notify the Graduate Administrative Assistant when these have been completed and pass in a copy of the revised paper.*

**Responsibilities of the Reader.** A faculty member who has agreed to serve as a reader is to discuss the general scope of the topic area for the paper and provide or suggest some initial readings. The reader should be available to answer occasional questions but will not read drafts of the essay nor meet with the student regularly. The reader's task is only to read and evaluate the finished product. The reader will retrieve the Advanced Study in Psychology form from the Graduate Administrative Assistant, input the grade on the form and sign it.

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<sup>1</sup> *In graduate studies, credit is only given for grades of 70% and above: According to the Faculty Handbook, "the marks 70 - 79 are awarded to students who have a sound grasp of the most important goals of the course and whose work may be described as careful, craftsman like, competent and good without being distinguished." Thus, essays that do not meet or exceed these criteria for credit will be considered unsatisfactory.*