

PERSONALITY, DEVELOPMENT, AND HEALTH (PD&H)

1. *Course Requirements*

Northwestern University's Graduate School requires that all Ph.D. students take a minimum of 27 courses, which translates into 3 years of course work. Many courses may be specialized topics courses, seminars, and independent studies and research. As a program, we are committed to providing students with ample time and resources to develop their research programs through hands-on training in the lab.

Within the total of 27 courses, 15 particular courses are required for the PD&H area. The two-quarter Psychology Department Pro-Seminar sequence, as well as an ethics course, all taken in the first year, are required for all Ph.D. students in the Psychology Department. PD&H students must take 5 core courses in PD&H (4 required courses, plus one of two developmental psychology courses), 3 statistics courses, 2 additional courses from a list aimed at providing more depth in areas directly related to PD&H, and 2 courses aimed to assure intellectual breadth. Below is a listing of required courses:

Psychology Department Requirements

Psych 401-1: Pro-Seminar 1: Biological and Cognitive Bases of Behavior

Psych 401-2: Pro-Seminar 2: Social and Emotional Bases of Behavior

Psych 519: Ethics – Responsible Conduct of Research

Personality, Development, and Health Core Courses (all 4 required, plus one of the two developmental courses)

Psych 405: Psychometric Theory

Psych 494: Introduction to Personality Psychology

Psych 428: Health Psychology Overview

Psych 497: Biological Basis of Health Psychology

Take one of the following two:

HDSP 413: Theories of Development

Psych 488: Theories of Social and Emotional Development

Statistics

Psych 453: Correlation and Regression

Psych 451: Statistics in Experimental Design

One other advanced statistics course (e.g., Multilevel Modeling, SEM)

PD&H Depth Courses (choose 2 from the following menu)

Psych 421-1: Psychopathology 1

Psych 421-2: Psychopathology 2

Psych 470: Social-Emotional Brain
HDSP 402: Child Development
HDSP 404: Adult Development and Aging
HDSP 413: Theories of Human Development
HDSP 415: Beyond Nature versus Nurture: The Impact of Experience on Biology
HDSP 451: Child and Adolescent Sleep: Causes and Consequences
Anthropology 490: Integrative Seminar in Society, Biology, and Health
Anthropology 490: Medical Anthropology
Sociology 476: Biology and Social Inquiry
*Other courses may be counted toward PD&H Depth Courses with approval from the area.

Breadth Courses

Two broad-based courses from outside the PD&H area.

2. Master's Degree

The qualification for the award of a Master's will be the successful completion of the first- and second-year projects.

The first-year project is to be conducted under supervision of a faculty mentor and is to be completed by the end of the summer following the first year of graduate study. Each student will present the results of the first-year project in the PD&H brownbag in the Fall quarter of their 2nd year. Final approval of the project is entirely in the hands of the faculty sponsor. The purpose of the oral presentation (Brownbag) is educational, so that the student can have the input of other faculty. No committee is necessary.

The second-year project is also to be conducted under the supervision of a faculty advisor and completed and presented by the end of the spring quarter of the second year of graduate study. Like the first-year project, final approval of the project is entirely in the hands of the faculty sponsor and no committee is required. The second-year project should be completed before June 30th of the second year, and presented at a PD&H brownbag. For the purposes of The Graduate School's (TGS) master's degree form, the faculty advisor and the PD&H area head shall provide approval signatures.

The product of each of these projects will be a manuscript suitable for submission to a journal (i.e., 20-35 pages in APA format). The research progress of each student will be evaluated at the end of every academic year.

3. Comprehensive Qualifying Examination

In the third year, each student will complete a third-year project, which serves as

the “Comprehensive Qualifying Examination.” In almost all cases, this will take the form of a grant application such as an NRSA. When it is not a grant application, the third-year project will typically be a major literature review of the kind that may be submitted to *Psychological Review* or *Perspectives in Psychological Science*. The faculty mentor is responsible for evaluating and approving the third-year project. When approved, the student is deemed to have passed the “Comprehensive Qualifying Examination,” and will be admitted to candidacy. The Graduate School (TGS) requires that admission to candidacy happen by the end of the 3rd year of graduate school (no later than August 30).

4. Dissertation Prospectus

After the student has successfully completed the second-year project and the comprehensive examination, he/she begins to work on a written research proposal (dissertation proposal). He/she must request the formation of a committee of 3 to conduct an oral dissertation proposal defense. Two members must be Northwestern faculty, and the third committee member can be any qualified faculty member, and can be from outside the department or even outside of Northwestern. This examination must be completed by the end of the fourth year of graduate school (TGS requires that this happen no later than August 31).

5. PhD Dissertation

After completing the dissertation proposal, the student then follows the plan of the proposal and completes their research project(s). Writing of the dissertation takes place during the student’s fifth year, and the written doctoral dissertation is submitted for approval to the dissertation committee. The doctoral dissertation must be defended in a final oral examination (dissertation defense), which is typically completed by the end of the fifth year.

For all milestones, students must complete a TGS form to officially register completion of the milestone. Students can do this by logging in to CAESAR and clicking on Main Menu, then TGS Forms. Print out a hard copy of the completed form (the Graduate Program Coordinator can print the qualifying exam form for you), and take it to the meeting for committee members to sign. The signed copy should be given to the Graduate Program Coordinator for submission to TGS.