Chapter 6. Continuous Enrollment and Deadlines

Every graduate student is required to maintain continuous enrollment from the date of first registration until a degree program is completed. A student who fails to maintain continuous enrollment is considered to have withdrawn from the University. If the student wishes to resume graduate work, a petition for readmission must be made. An applicant for readmission must pay the application fee and must, after review of the student's record of progress toward the degree, be recommended by the Department Chair. The recommendation must then be approved by the Dean.

The university "residence" requirement for full-time doctoral students is 3 years (six semesters) of full-time registration. The university considers each of the following to be full-time (but see below regarding delay of payment of federal loans):

- Enrollment in a minimum of eight semester credit hours.
- Enrollment in a minimum of six semester credit hours and a position as a teaching/research (teaching 10 or more hours per week)
- Enrollment for the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (limit two semesters), if all required course work is completed

Following admission to candidacy (i.e., the semester after passing the Comprehensive Exam), each of the following also qualifies for full-time status:

- Dissertation-doctoral (PSY 996)
- The year-long clinical internship

Comprehensive Examination

Students must register for the comprehensive examination in the semester they take it. Students registering for any course work during the semester they take the Comprehensive Examination are assessed no additional fee for the exam (register for PSY 998A). However, graduate students who have finished their course work and residency requirement (3 years of full-time enrollment; see above) and who want to take only the Comprehensive Examination in a particular semester can register for the comprehensive examination only (one credit hour of tuition, zero course credit) during the semester that they take the examination (register for PSY 998B).

The Most Frequent Registration Scenarios Beyond the Third Year

Note: The discussion below is about university requirements and does not take criteria for delay in repayment of federal loans into account. Students must be “full-time” in order not to repay loans, but the definition of “full-time” for federal loan purposes may not be the same as the registration requirements of the university. Students in the first 3 years of the program should be taking enough credits to be considered full-time for the purposes of
Continuous enrollment and deadlines

Delay of federal loans, although second semester of the third year could present a problem if you are not enrolled in dissertation-doctoral. For students who are more advanced, at the present time, registration for dissertation-doctoral or internship is sufficient for a student to delay federal loan repayment. It appears that registration for 6 credits is also sufficient for delay of federal loan repayment. However, the requirements for demonstrating that a student is full-time for federal purposes could change, and students with federal loans should verify with Graduate Financial Aid (202-319-5307) that they are meeting the criteria.

Students must register for Advanced Clinical Training (PSY 970) any semester in which they are doing clinical work that is not part of practica, externship (registered for as PSY 895, Externship), or internship. See Chapter 4 on additional training. Registration for ACT involves not only online registration, but also completing the Clinical Training Plan form (available online on the program Blackboard Site) with the clinical supervisor, and returning the form to the Director of Clinical Training for written approval by 3 weeks after beginning the placement.

Students must register for Dissertation - Doctoral (PSY 996) in the semester they propose their dissertations (as well as the semester they defend their dissertations). So in the fall of the fourth year, if the student is applying for internship and plans to propose the dissertation, the student must register for PSY 996, Dissertation - Doctoral. This course does not have credits attached but is charged as if it is one credit. If the student is doing ACT (e.g., a second externship or other training), the student must also register for PSY 970, Advanced Clinical Training, which is 0 credits (and fill out the Clinical Training Plan and get it approved by the Director of Clinical Training).

In the spring of the fourth year or beyond, if the student is working on the dissertation and doing an externship, the student should register for PSY 996 and PSY 970, which will be billed for a total of 1 credit. The situation in which a student might register for 971 (Advanced Clinical Training for 1 credit) is when a student finishes dissertation and orals but has not yet done internship and thus has nothing else for which to register. Note that the rule is that if a student is registering only for ACT and nothing else, then the student must register for the 1-credit version, PSY 971. If the student is registering for anything else along with ACT (dissertation-doctoral, practicum in assessment, whatever), then register for the 0-credit ACT, PSY 970. Students may take PSY 971 (the 1-credit version of ACT) as their sole registration for up to a maximum of two semesters.

When the student does internship, he or she must register for Internship each semester. Register for PSY 996, Dissertation, which costs 1 credit of tuition, and PSY 995A, Internship "with classes," which does not cost any tuition, if you have not yet defended your dissertation or in the semester you intend to defend it. Register for just PSY 995B, Internship "without classes" if you have already defended your dissertation; this costs 1 credit of tuition.
Further details on various aspects of advanced-student registration are below.

**Dissertation-Doctoral**

After course requirements are completed and the written Doctoral Comprehensive Examination has been passed, doctoral students are expected to register for PSY 996 Dissertation - Doctoral (no credits, but with a fee equal to one credit hour per semester) each semester until the final dissertation has been approved and the Doctoral Oral Examination has been passed.

Students are expected to be enrolled in Dissertation - Doctoral for all semesters they are working on their dissertation and using committee member resources. **It is important to note the University rule that a student MUST be enrolled in Dissertation - Doctoral during the semester in which he or she submits a dissertation proposal for University approval and the semester in which the student sits for the final doctoral oral examination.** A minimum of two semesters of Dissertation - Doctoral is required.

**Dissertation Deadlines**

Doctoral candidates are admitted to candidacy the first day of the semester after they pass the doctoral comprehensive examination. The program expects students to propose their dissertations within 1 year of admission to candidacy, and **students are required by the School of Arts and Sciences to have a dissertation proposal approved 2 years after passing comps/admission to candidacy.** Thus, for students who pass comps in the fall, the deadline for the proposal is December, 2 years later. For students who pass comps in the spring, the deadline for the proposal is May, 2 years later.

**Students may not apply for internship (or expect the Director of Clinical Training to complete the required electronic form attesting to the student’s readiness for internship) until the dissertation proposal has been submitted to the department faculty.** Specifically, the 2-page summary of the proposal must be submitted to the department faculty by Oct. 1 of the year in which the student wishes to apply for internship. Only if the proposal has been submitted by Oct. 1 will the Director of Clinical Training complete the form for internship eligibility required for application to all internships.

**The department deadline for completion of dissertation and the oral examination is 4 years from the end of the semester of admission to candidacy.** In other words, the deadline for students who pass comps in the Fall semester is May, 4.5 years after comps; the deadline for students who pass comps in the Spring semester is December, 4.5 years after comps.

If a doctoral candidate does not complete the dissertation and take the final oral examination by
his or her deadline, the candidate will be subject to dismissal from the degree program. An extension may be requested prior to the deadline by writing a letter of explanation to the Department Chair and submitting it and a Student Request Form (available from the department office) to the faculty advisor. The student should begin the process of requesting an extension at least 2 months before his or her deadline. If the faculty advisor, the Director of Clinical Training, and the Chair approve the extension, the Chair will then recommend approval to the Dean. An extension must be approved by the Dean and will normally not exceed 1 year.

**Oral Examination**

Students must register for Dissertation (PSY 996) in the semester in which they take their oral exam. See further information on orals in the Dissertation chapter.

**Internship**

While on internship, students must register for Internship in both Fall and Spring semester. Register for PSY 996, Dissertation, which costs 1 credit of tuition, and PSY 995A, Internship "with classes," which does not cost any tuition, if you have not yet defended your dissertation or in the semester you intend to defend it. Register for just PSY 995B, Internship "without classes" if you have already defended your dissertation; this costs 1 credit of tuition.

**Leave of Absence (LOA)**

Approval for a LOA requires documentation of sustained ill health, required military service, or other circumstances resulting in involuntary interruption of graduate studies. The cumulative total period may not normally exceed 1 year. Academic pressures, employment conflicts, and geographical moves are usually insufficient reasons.

LOA must be requested by letter addressed to the Chair and submitted with a Student Request Form (available from the department office) to the student's faculty advisor before the beginning of the registration period for that semester. If the leave is approved by the student's faculty advisor, the Director of Clinical Training, and the Chair, then the university paperwork can be completed. Department approvals are first needed.

During LOA the student pays no fees, receives no credit, and the period is not counted as part of the time allowed for the completion of residence or other degree requirements (i.e., the deadline date gets extended by the period of time the student is on LOA). It must be noted that the student on LOA does not have access to University facilities nor to faculty consultation.
In Absentia

As of Fall, 2010, In Absentia status has been eliminated by the administration. In Absentia was formerly used by a student at the dissertation level who was to be away from campus for a semester (for example, for data collection) and not actively receiving faculty assistance, because it saved the student money (it was billed at one credit whereas dissertation-doctoral was billed at three credits). Since dissertation-doctoral is now billed at just one credit, a student who plans to work long-distance is still expected to register for it.