



Master of Science in Applied Psychology  
Student Handbook 2024-2025

Counseling and Psychology Department  
College of Education and Human Development

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## Handbook Purpose

This Handbook is intended to support students who are applying to and are enrolled in the Master of Science in Applied Psychology program by providing program-specific information that supplements the information provided in the Texas A&M University – Central Texas Catalog. Students are advised to review the [Catalog](#) in addition to this Handbook and meet with their faculty advisor to create or update a course sequence plan and to ask any questions they may have (<http://catalog.tamuct.edu/>).

Students are responsible for adhering to the policies stated in the program Handbooks during the semesters that students are enrolled in the program.

Students who need a general introduction to the university can access the [Online Orientation](#), <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/new-student-programs.html>

## Introduction to the Program

The Master of Science in Applied Psychology is one of four graduate degree programs within the Department of Counseling and Psychology in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University – Central Texas (A&M-Central Texas). The program is a 36-credit hour degree that provides academic preparation for the application of research skills related to a variety of teaching/training and learning contexts.

### Program Mission

The Master of Science in Applied Psychology program strives to advance psychological science through teaching, research, and service by engaging graduate students in experiences that develop psychology-specific knowledge, data analysis skills, professional writing abilities, and critical thinking abilities to serve others as citizens of a globally connected community through applications that integrate psychological theory with research in support of department, college, and university missions.

### Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Master of Science in Applied Psychology program, graduate students will be able to:

1. Compute, interpret, and present descriptive and/or inferential analysis of data.
2. Write summaries of existing research, addressing all sections of APA style manuscripts.
3. Identify, summarize, and integrate relevant theories and research in content areas of specialization.
4. Analyze the limitations of existing research and/or data, articulate gaps in knowledge, and write a logical argument to justify a position or project.
5. Write hypotheses for research or learning outcomes for applied projects that are directly supported by existing theory, research, and/or organizational data.
6. Develop and design a novel project supported by existing theory, research, and/or data to address a problem, issue, or gap in knowledge.
7. Integrate project results with existing theory, research, and/or data in an area to draw evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

## Two-Year Course Rotation

Courses in the Applied Psychology program will be offered in accordance with this Two-Year Course Rotation to the fullest extent possible. As the plan illustrates, every course in the program is not offered every semester. Students should follow this planned rotation of courses when making decisions regarding enrollment each semester. Students are advised that some courses are offered only once per year, which could delay a student's time to graduation if they choose not to follow the course sequence plan provided by their advisor upon entry into the program.

Course	Fall 1	Spring 1	Summer 1	Fall 2	Spring 2	Summer 2
PSYC 5300	O			O		
PSYC 5301*		O			O	
PSYC 5302	O			O		
PSYC 5303		O			O	
PSYC 5304	X	O	O	X	O	O
PSYC 5305	O			O		
PSYC 5306	O			O		
PSYC 5315			O			O
PSYC 5316*	O			O		
PSYC 5317		O			O	
PSYC 5320			O			O
PSYC 5381	O	O		O	O	
COUN 5351	O			O		
HEID 5312			O			O
HRM 5303	O			O		
MGMT 5301			O			O
PSYC 5198 Proposal*	X O	X O	X O (10-week)	X O	X O	X O (10-week)
PSYC 5198 Thesis*	X O	X O	X O (10-week)	X O	X O	X O (10-week)

Table 1 Two Year Course Rotation

X = On Campus Section | O = Online Section (Synchronous interaction may be required.)

\*Course with prerequisite.

## Program Curriculum Map

<b>Program &amp; Course Goals</b>	Comprehend and apply factual knowledge	Comprehend and apply fundamental principles, generalizations, theories	Express oneself in professional writing	Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view	Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view	Synthesize content to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision making	Synthesize content to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision making
<b>Program Learning Outcomes</b>	Compute, interpret, and present descriptive and/or inferential analysis of data	Identify, summarize, and integrate relevant theories and research in content areas of specialization	Write summaries of existing research, addressing all sections of APA style manuscripts	Analyze the limitations of existing research and/or data, articulate gaps in knowledge, and write a logical argument to justify position or project	Write hypotheses for research or learning outcomes for applied projects that are directly supported by existing research and/or organizational data	Develop and design a novel project supported by existing theory, research, and/or data to address problem, issue, or gap in knowledge	Integrate project results with existing theory, research, and/or data in an area to draw evidence-based conclusions and recommendations
<b>CORE</b>							
PSYC 5300	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced		Introduced		Introduced
PSYC 5301		Practiced	Introduced	Introduced	Practiced	Introduced	
PSYC 5302		Introduced	Introduced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	
PSYC 5303		Introduced	Practiced	Practiced		Practiced	
PSYC 5304		Introduced	Practiced	Practiced			
PSYC 5306		Introduced	Practiced	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	
PSYC 5320		Introduced	Introduced	Practiced		Practiced	
<b>ELECTIVES</b>							
PSYC 5305		Introduced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	
PSYC 5315		Introduced	Practiced	Practiced			
PSYC 5316	Introduced	Practiced	Practiced		Practiced		Practiced
PSYC 5317	Introduced	Introduced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	
PSYC 5381	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	Practiced			Practiced

COUN 5351	Introduced	Introduced		Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	
HIED 5312	Introduced	Introduced	Practiced	Practiced			
HRM 5303	Introduced	Introduced		Practiced	Practiced	Practiced	
MGMT 5301	Introduced	Introduced		Practiced			
<b>THESIS</b>							
PSYC 5198 Proposal		Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	
PSYC 5198 Final	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced

Table 2 Program Curriculum Map

# Master of Science in Applied Psychology Program Requirements

## Program Admission

### Entry Requirements

Students will be considered for admission into the M.S. Applied Psychology program by the faculty after all materials are submitted to and accepted by the Graduate School. Students must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 and meet all program entry requirements. Students with a GPA between 2.50-2.99 are eligible for Conditional Admission, are limited to 12 semester credit hours, and must earn a 3.00 overall GPA to continue in the program. Students with a GPA of 3.00 or above are eligible for Full Admission.

### Admission Materials

Students should follow the instructions provided in the University Catalog for [applying](#) to the Graduate School. Graduate School staff will evaluate these materials, and our admissions staff will notify the Coordinator for the program when the materials are complete ([https://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate\\_and\\_professional\\_catalog/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/](https://catalog.tamuct.edu/graduate_and_professional_catalog/graduate-information/graduate-admissions/)).

Faculty teaching in the Applied Psychology program who serve on the Admissions Committee will review each applicant's materials. The Admissions Committee consists of a minimum of three full-time faculty members. The applicant will be notified in writing via email of the admission decision by the Program Coordinator within 30 days after admission deadlines each semester.

- **Department Application:** The "Programs of the Counseling & Psychology Department Application" must be completed online. The link to this application will be provided to you by the Graduate School after you have applied for admission to the University as a graduate student.
- **Personal Statement:** An essay describing why the applicant wants to pursue a career in psychology and how the degree will help him/her achieve professional and/or personal goals is required. The essay should include a description of how the applicant plans to use the degree to advance his or her career, the type of profession the applicant plans to enter, the applicant's strengths and weaknesses as they pertain to graduate-level study with an explanation of how the applicant plans to overcome the weaknesses described, and any other qualities which speak to the applicant's interest in and potential to succeed in the Applied Psychology Program. The essay should be no less than 400 words and no more than 600 words. The essay must be typed and double-spaced. This essay will be submitted as part of the Department Application referenced above.
- **Two Letters of Recommendation:** Two letters of recommendation explaining the applicant's academic, professional, and/or research abilities are required. These letters should address the applicant's ability to meet graduate-level academic challenges and to work in a psychology-related profession. Each letter should include an explanation of the author's relationship with the applicant, evidence of the applicant's relevant competencies, aptitudes, and experiences, and an overall recommendation (e.g., recommend most highly, strongly recommend, recommend, recommend with some reservations, or do not recommend). These letters should be sent to [admissions@tamuct.edu](mailto:admissions@tamuct.edu)



- **Resume/CV:** A résumé or curriculum vitae summarizing the applicant's education and work experiences should be submitted with the materials. This should be sent to [admissions@tamuct.edu](mailto:admissions@tamuct.edu)

### **Admission Deadlines**

All materials for admission applications should be received in the Graduate School by the following dates.

- July 1<sup>st</sup> (Fall enrollment)
- November 1<sup>st</sup> (Spring enrollment)
- April 1<sup>st</sup> (Summer enrollment)

Applications received after the established deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as space is available.

### **Admission Status**

Students will be granted Full Admission, Conditional Admission, or informed that their application for admission has been denied. Students failing to meet Conditional Admission requirements may re-apply for admission after submitting evidence of successful remediation.

Students failing to meet Full Admission requirements may be granted Conditional Admission status for one semester, not to exceed 12 semester credit hours. Conditionally admitted students must enroll in coursework approved by the Program Coordinator and receive a grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or above on the specified coursework to be eligible for Full Admission. Conditionally admitted students who are denied Full Admission after completing their first semester may re-apply for admission after submitting evidence of successful remediation.

Remediation plans are created with applicants/students in collaboration with the Admission Committee and the Program Coordinator to specifically address individual's needs. These plans may involve one-on-one consultation with faculty, additional undergraduate coursework, professional development activities, use of tutoring services, and/or other appropriate services. Students are responsible for 1) requesting a written remediation plan from the Admission Committee via the Program Coordinator and 2) providing documentation and evidence of successful completion of the remediation plan before re-applying for program admission.

Students will not be permitted to enroll in additional coursework beyond the first 12 semester hours if not fully admitted to the program.

### **Admission Appeals Procedure**

Student admission appeals are handled according to the following guidelines, which are consistent with the [University Academic Appeals Procedure](https://catalog.tamuct.edu/registration-records/academic-appeals-procedure/) (<https://catalog.tamuct.edu/registration-records/academic-appeals-procedure/>). Extenuating circumstances may cause the College to deviate from the defined time frames. Any question of interpretation or application of this procedure shall be referred to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development.

A student who wishes to appeal an admission decision should ask for a scoring review and written remediation plan from that committee via the Program Coordinator within 30 calendar days of the originating event. The Program Coordinator is expected to provide the student a written response from the Admission Committee within 20 business days. If the Program Coordinator is unavailable, if a response is not made within 20 business days, or if the student is unsatisfied with the response and

wishes to appeal a decision of the Admission Committee, the student should inform the Department Chair of the appeal in writing. The student has five business days to submit the appeal.

The Department Chair is expected to provide the student a written response within 10 business days of the filed appeal. A student dissatisfied with the decision of the Department Chair may submit the appeal in writing to the College's Dean. The student has five business days to submit the appeal. The College Dean will give the appeal to the College Academic Appeals Committee for review.

The Academic Appeals Committee consists of three faculty members from the college, who were not serving on the Admission Committee when the admission decision under appeal was made; the College is responsible for developing a specific and nonbiased committee structure. After considering all aspects of the decision, the committee will render a recommendation to the College Dean.

For an appeal of an admission decision, the originating event shall be considered the written notification of the admission decision to the student until the appeal process concludes. The written appeal must include the following:

- Student name, address, student's university email address, telephone number, and Warrior Identification Number.
- Date of action regarding the student and the faculty member/committee involved.
- Nature of admission action and copy of applicable materials including the written remediation plan.
- An explanation of the circumstances which merit review.

The decision of the College Dean is final and will be communicated to the student in writing within 20 business days. There is no appeal beyond the Dean.

## Degree Plan

Upon admission to the program, students sign a degree acknowledgement form, indicating they will graduate from the MS in Applied Psychology program in one of the four emphasis areas: 1) Educational Psychology/Teaching in Higher Education, 2) Experimental Psychology, 3) Industrial/Organizational Psychology, 4) Institutional Research. Students may not complete coursework for other degrees in the department concurrently with this program. The degree plan is filed on the form titled "Graduate Degree Plan Acknowledgement and Responsibility Form." As an official contractual agreement, the plan must be signed by the student, faculty advisor, and the Graduate School. Following approval, changes may be made in the degree plan by completing the same form and checking the appropriate revisions box. These documents must have all signatures and be submitted to the Graduate School.

## Emphasis Areas

### **Educational Psychology / Teaching in Higher Education Emphasis**

#### *Courses*

For students enrolled in the MS Applied Psychology program with an Educational Psychology / Teaching Emphasis, the following courses comprise the degree plan.

#### **Core (21 hours)**

PSYC 5300 Behavioral Statistics  
PSYC 5301 Research Methods  
PSYC 5302 Social Psychological Processes  
PSYC 5303 Theories of Learning  
PSYC 5304 Human Development  
PSYC 5306 Applied Psychology  
PSYC 5320 History and Systems

#### **Educational Psychology / Teaching Emphasis (15 hours)**

PSYC 5305 Research-Based Teaching & Learning  
PSYC 5317 Instructional Design and Assessment of Student Learning  
PSYC 5315 Physiological Psychology *or approved elective*  
PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Teaching in Higher Education (6 hours)

#### *Coursework Requirements for Educational Psychology / Teaching Emphasis*

- PSYC 5300 is a prerequisite for PSYC 5301.
- PSYC 5300, PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5305, PSYC 5317, and 3 additional credit hours on the degree plan are prerequisites for PSYC 5198.
- Continuous enrollment in PSYC 5198 is required once initiated until thesis is completed.
- The first semester of PSYC 5198 must be completed as a 3-credit hour course.
- PSYC 5198 is a variable credit hour course, and 6 hours are required. Credit hours for PSYC 5198 beyond 6 hours require approval. Students may exceed 6 credit hours of PSYC 5198 only with the approval of the Program Coordinator or the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The thesis project must include an assessment of student learning after an instructional intervention and quantitative data analysis.

#### *Full-Time Enrollment Course Sequence for Educational Psychology / Teaching Emphasis*

As students plan their schedules, they need to be mindful that every course is not offered every semester. Most courses are offered only once a year. Students should verify course availability on the Two-Year Rotation of Courses prior to creating a plan that differs from the semester offerings below.

##### **Fall Entry**

Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5305, PSYC 5306  
Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5317  
Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320  
Fall: PSYC 5302, PSYC 5198  
Spring: PSYC 5304, PSYC 5198

##### **Spring Entry**

Spring: PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304  
Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320  
Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5305, PSYC 5306

Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5317

Summer: PSYC 5198

Fall: PSYC 5302, PSYC 5198

**Summer Entry**

Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320

Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5305, PSYC 5306

Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5317

Summer: PSYC 5304, PSYC 5198

Fall: PSYC 5302, PSYC 5198

## **Experimental Psychology Emphasis**

### *Courses*

For students enrolled in the MS Applied Psychology program with an Experimental Psychology Emphasis, the following courses comprise the degree plan.

#### **Core (21 hours)**

PSYC 5300 Behavioral Statistics

PSYC 5301 Research Methods

PSYC 5302 Social Psychological Processes

PSYC 5303 Theories of Learning

PSYC 5304 Human Development

PSYC 5306 Applied Psychology

PSYC 5320 History and Systems

#### **Experimental Psychology Emphasis (15 hours)**

PSYC 5316 Advanced Quantitative Methods

PSYC 5305 Research-Based Teaching & Learning

PSYC 5315 Physiological Psychology *or approved elective*

PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Experimental Research (6 hours)

### *Coursework Requirements for Experimental Psychology Emphasis*

- PSYC 5300 is a prerequisite for PSYC 5301.
- PSYC 5300 and PSYC 5301 are prerequisites for PSYC 5316.
- PSYC 5300 and PSYC 5301 and 12 additional credit hours on the degree plan are prerequisites for PSYC 5198.
- Continuous enrollment in PSYC 5198 is required once initiated until thesis is completed.
- The first semester of PSYC 5198 must be completed as a 3-credit hour course.
- PSYC 5198 is a variable credit hour course, and 6 hours are required. Credit hours for PSYC 5198 beyond 6 hours require approval. Students may exceed 6 credit hours of PSYC 5198 only with the approval of the Program Coordinator or the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The thesis project must include an experimental research design and quantitative data analysis.

### *Full-Time Enrollment Course Sequence for Experimental Psychology Emphasis*

As students plan their schedules, they need to be mindful that every course is not offered every semester. Most courses are offered only once a year. Students should verify course availability on the Two-Year Rotation of Courses prior to creating a plan that differs from the semester offerings below.

#### **Fall Entry**

Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304  
Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320  
Fall: PSYC 5305, PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198  
Spring: PSYC 5198

**Spring Entry**

Spring: PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304  
Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320  
Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
Spring: PSYC 5301  
Summer: PSYC 5198  
Fall: PSYC 5305, PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198

**Summer Entry**

Summer: PSYC 5315, PSYC 5320  
Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303  
Summer: PSYC 5304, PSYC 5198  
Fall: PSYC 5305, PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198

**Industrial/Organizational Emphasis**

*Courses*

For students enrolled in the MS Applied Psychology program with an Industrial/Organizational Emphasis, the following courses comprise the degree plan.

**Core (21 hours)**

PSYC 5300 Behavioral Statistics  
PSYC 5301 Research Methods  
PSYC 5302 Social Psychological Processes  
PSYC 5303 Theories of Learning  
PSYC 5304 Human Development  
PSYC 5306 Applied Psychology  
PSYC 5320 History and Systems

**Industrial/Organizational Emphasis (15 hours)**

HRM 5303 Employee Learning and Development for Competitive Advantage  
MGMT 5301 Organizational Behavior  
COUN 5351 Career Counseling and Guidance *or approved elective*  
PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Applied IR/IO Research (6 hours)

***Coursework Requirements for Industrial/Organizational Emphasis***

- PSYC 5300 is a prerequisite for PSYC 5301.
- PSYC 5300, PSYC 5301 and MGMT 5301 and 9 additional credit hours on the degree plan are prerequisites for PSYC 5198.
- Continuous enrollment in PSYC 5198 is required once initiated until thesis is completed.
- The first semester of PSYC 5198 must be completed as a 3-credit hour course.
- PSYC 5198 is a variable credit hour course, and 6 hours are required. Credit hours for PSYC 5198 beyond 6 hours require approval. Students may exceed 6 credit hours of PSYC 5198 only with the approval of the Program Coordinator or the Dean of the Graduate School.

- The thesis project must include quantitative data analysis.

### ***Full-Time Enrollment Course Sequence for Industrial/Organizational Emphasis***

As students plan their schedules, they need to be mindful that every course is not offered every semester. Most courses are offered only once a year. Students should verify course availability on the Two-Year Rotation of Courses prior to creating a plan that differs from the semester offerings below.

#### **Fall Entry**

Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306

Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304

Summer: MGMT 5301, PSYC 5320

Fall: COUN 5351, HRM 5303, PSYC 5198

Spring: PSYC 5198

#### **Spring Entry**

Spring: PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304

Summer: MGMT 5301, PSYC 5320

Fall: PSYC 5300, HRM 5303, PSYC 5306

Spring: PSYC 5301

Summer: PSYC 5198

Fall: PSYC 5302, COUN 5351, PSYC 5198

#### **Summer Entry**

Summer: MGMT 5301, PSYC 5320

Fall: PSYC 5300, HRM 5303, PSYC 5306

Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304

Summer: PSYC 5198

Fall: PSYC 5302, COUN 5351, PSYC 5198

### **Institutional Research Emphasis**

#### ***Courses***

For students enrolled in the MS Applied Psychology program with an Institutional Research Emphasis, the following courses comprise the degree plan.

#### **Core (21 hours)**

PSYC 5300 Behavioral Statistics

PSYC 5301 Research Methods

PSYC 5302 Social Psychological Processes

PSYC 5303 Theories of Learning

PSYC 5304 Human Development

PSYC 5306 Applied Psychology

PSYC 5320 History and Systems

#### **Institutional Research Emphasis (15 hours)**

HIED 5312 Organization and Administration of Higher Education

PSYC 5316 Advanced Quantitative Methods *or approved elective*

PSYC 5317 Instructional Design and Assessment of Student Learning

PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Applied IR/IO Research (6 hours)

### ***Coursework Requirements for Institutional Research Emphasis***

- PSYC 5300 is a prerequisite for PSYC 5301.

- PSYC 5300 and PSYC 5301 are prerequisites for PSYC 5316.
- PSYC 5300 and PSYC 5301 and 12 additional credit hours on the degree plan are prerequisites for PSYC 5198.
- Continuous enrollment in PSYC 5198 is required once initiated until thesis is completed.
- The first semester of PSYC 5198 must be completed as a 3-credit hour course.
- PSYC 5198 is a variable credit hour course, and 6 hours are required. Credit hours for PSYC 5198 beyond 6 hours require approval. Students may exceed 6 credit hours of PSYC 5198 only with the approval of the Program Coordinator or the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The thesis project must include quantitative data analysis.

### *Full-Time Enrollment Course Sequence for Institutional Research Emphasis*

As students plan their schedules, they need to be mindful that every course is not offered every semester. Most courses are offered only once a year. Students should verify course availability on the Two-Year Rotation of Courses prior to creating a plan that differs from the semester offerings below.

#### **Fall Entry**

Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
 Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5317  
 Summer: HIED 5312, PSYC 5320  
 Fall: PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198  
 Spring: PSYC 5304, PSYC 5198

#### **Spring Entry**

Spring: PSYC 5303, PSYC 5304  
 Summer: HIED 5312, PSYC 5320  
 Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
 Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5317  
 Summer: PSYC 5198  
 Fall: PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198

#### **Summer Entry**

Summer: HIED 5312, PSYC 5320  
 Fall: PSYC 5300, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5306  
 Spring: PSYC 5301, PSYC 5303, PSYC 5317  
 Summer: PSYC 5304, PSYC 5198  
 Fall: PSYC 5316, PSYC 5198

## **Program Standards**

Students must maintain high academic standards and exhibit professional behavior that is respectful of others. Students are expected to demonstrate maturity, exercise professional judgement, and apply conceptual learning to decision making. A student's acceptance into the program does not guarantee professional fitness that is required to remain in the program. Students must maintain ethical, academic, and professional standards as described below.

### **Ethical Standards**

Students are expected to understand and practice the ethical codes and standards of conduct of related professional organizations including the American Psychological Association (APA) and recommendations provided by the Association for Psychological Science (APS). Students are also

expected to understand and adhere to the standards of conduct for students at A&M University – Central Texas.

Violations of professional ethical standards or University rules could indicate a student is unfit to continue in the program. Students are expected to periodically review the ethical standards to ensure continued understanding and practice. Advisors and faculty members at A&M-Central Texas have an obligation to respond when students are in violation of professional ethical standards or University rules of conduct. Additionally, the Office of Student Affairs may take action when a student violates the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Academic Standards**

### *Faculty Advisement*

Students are required to seek advising by faculty advisors in the program regarding coursework, program policies and procedures, requests to change degree plans, and assistance with other educational or career needs.

A faculty advisor is assigned to each student enrolled in the program. The advisor will work collaboratively with each student to create a course sequence plan outlining the dates to complete all courses for the degree. Though students may consult with any faculty member, they are urged to work with their assigned advisor as much as possible due to their expertise and knowledge in the student's area of emphasis. Advising is a continuous process, and faculty advisors are assigned many students to advise in addition to their other workload requirements, such as teaching, service, and research. Students should demonstrate respect for the faculty advisor's time by setting appointments, being punctual, and being prepared for their appointments.

### *Transfer of Coursework to Degree Plan*

If a student has successfully completed previous graduate coursework in an accredited program that would be appropriate to transfer to the MS Applied Psychology degree plan, the student must provide the faculty advisor with the A&M-Central Texas course title for which the substitution should be considered in addition to the course title, course description, and course syllabus from the course completed at the previous institution. The faculty advisor will review the documentation for alignment with the A&M-Central Texas course description and content regarding scope and depth and will initiate a recommendation for transfer credit if appropriate.

Upon approval of the request by the Dean of the Graduate School, the University may accept up to 12 hours of graduate coursework completed at a regionally accredited institution. Graduate degree credit is allowed only for A and B grades in graduate level coursework. Coursework that is older than six years at the time of graduation will not be counted towards degree requirements. For additional information see the University Catalog.

### *Thesis Research Experience*

All students completing the Master of Science in Applied Psychology program are required to complete a quantitative thesis research project as part of their degree. A thesis is an independent, original research project completed by graduate students seeking the Master of Science in Applied Psychology degree. The research project must be quantitative in nature and will be completed in collaboration with three faculty members who serve on the thesis committee.



Students will complete the project while enrolled in the thesis course associated with their emphasis area. Six hours of thesis credit are required. Credit is awarded for the thesis course work when 1) the thesis proposal is successfully defended with the committee, and the student has earned 3 credit hours of PSYC 5198 and 2) the final thesis is successfully defended with the committee, and the student has earned 3 additional credit hours of PSYC 5198. Once a student enrolls in thesis hours, the student must remain continuously enrolled in a PSYC 5198 course during data collection. A student may begin the thesis after meeting the coursework requirements corresponding to the student's emphasis area.

Prior to enrolling in thesis coursework, the student is expected to identify his or her topic, draft a concept paper, and select the faculty chair of the thesis committee. During the first semester of thesis, the student is expected to write a research proposal and defend the research protocol. Prior to collecting data, the student must obtain approval of the protocol from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). During the second semester, the student will collect and analyze data, interpret their findings, and defend the final thesis report. Students should consult the *Procedures for Preparing a Thesis* provided by the Applied Psychology program and the *Thesis Manual* provided by the Graduate School, which outline required thesis elements and procedures.

Due to the shortened calendar during the summer semester, students may need to plan for an additional semester to complete the project and utilize the variable credit option for the final semesters of thesis coursework. There is no guarantee that the thesis can be completed in two semesters though students should work diligently to achieve this goal.

Thesis projects associated with program emphasis areas include the following.

***PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Applied IR/IO Research.*** Students enrolled in the Institutional Research or Industrial/Organizational emphasis area will perform research with an institution or organization during their thesis research experience. Thesis projects will include collaboration on an institutional/organizational need, development of an intervention or plan to address the need, quantitative analysis of associated data, and recommendations for continuous improvement. The first semester of thesis research will include academic content to guide students through project completion during enrollment in a 3-credit hour course. Subsequent semesters of enrollment in thesis hours can utilize the variable credit hour option to allow students sufficient time to complete the project with faculty mentorship.

***PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Experimental Research.*** Students enrolled in the Experimental emphasis area will perform experimental research during their thesis research experience. Thesis projects will include a research design utilizing experimental methods (e.g., random assignment to condition, procedural controls), manipulation of an independent variable with measurement of an aligned dependent variable, quantitative analysis of associated data, and recommendations for application and future research. The first semester of thesis research will include academic content to guide students through project completion during enrollment in a 3-credit hour course. Subsequent semesters of enrollment in thesis hours can utilize the variable credit hour option to allow students sufficient time to complete the project with faculty mentorship.

***PSYC 5198 Psychology Thesis: Teaching in Higher Education.*** Students enrolled in the Educational Psychology/Teaching emphasis will perform research on an instructional intervention in an undergraduate psychology course during their thesis research experience. Thesis projects will include collaboration with a faculty member who is the Instructor of Record for an undergraduate course in the Psychology degree plan, development of instructional content to meet the course learning outcomes with aligned assessment of student learning, quantitative analysis of associated data, and

recommendations for continuous improvement of course instruction and student learning. The first semester of thesis research will include academic content to guide students through project completion during enrollment in a 3-credit hour course. Subsequent semesters of enrollment in thesis hours can utilize the variable credit hour option to allow students sufficient time to complete the project with faculty mentorship.

### *Graduate Student Performance*

Every student enrolled in the Graduate School is required to maintain a high level of performance and comply fully with the policies of the institution. Students who have achieved admission are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA on work completed at A&M-Central Texas. The Graduate School reserves the right to suspend any graduate student who does not maintain satisfactory academic standing or fails to conform to university regulations.

**Probation** – At the end of any grading period, if a student’s semester or overall GPA falls below the required minimum as set by the department (at least a minimum 3.0 GPA), they will be given notice of unsatisfactory academic performance and will be put on probation. The student must attain a 3.0 cumulative GPA during their next period of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in suspension.

**Suspension** – At the end of any grading period, if a student’s semester or overall GPA falls below a 2.0 they will be automatically suspended and may not attend classes for one long semester or the summer term. Upon return from suspension, a student must sign a contract with the Graduate School stipulating the conditions that must be met for the following term. At a minimum, the graduate student must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA for every semester thereafter. Additional stipulations may be created on a case-by-case basis. A graduate student is allowed one suspension. If poor academic performance results in a second suspension, the student will be dismissed from the current program and may be permanently dismissed from the university. Dismissal from a second program will result in permanent dismissal from the university.

**Appeal for Bar from Attendance due to Suspension** – Under exceptional conditions, a student may write a letter of appeal to the manager of Graduate Services asking to be allowed to continue for the semester, rather than sitting out for the term. Reinstatement will be considered on a case-by-case basis and approved only **one** time by the Graduate School. There is no appeal beyond the Dean of the Graduate School.

### *Academic Appeal Policy*

The University Academic Appeals Procedure was designed to protect students from biased or inaccurate evaluation procedures without unfairly impinging on the academic freedoms of the faculty. The Master of Science in Applied Psychology program adheres to the [University Academic Appeals Procedure](https://catalog.tamuct.edu/registration-records/academic-appeals-procedure/) (<https://catalog.tamuct.edu/registration-records/academic-appeals-procedure/>). Students should refer to the policy on the University webpage.

### **Professional Standards**

Students enrolled in the Applied Psychology Program are expected to maintain high academic standards and to develop appropriate skills and dispositions needed to serve as professionals in the field. Students are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism, demonstrate competence in their area of

specialization, exhibit social and emotional maturity, and conform to ethical standards for conducting research. A student's acceptance into the program does not guarantee continued fitness in the program. As such, program faculty, using their professional judgment, continually evaluate each student's performance.

If a faculty member believes that a student is not making satisfactory progress towards developing the skills and dispositions needed for professional practice, that faculty member will discuss the situation with the student. If the faculty member believes the student's performance did not (or is unlikely to) improve to acceptable standards after such a discussion, the faculty member may initiate the process of a formal Performance Fitness Evaluation (see Appendix A).

#### *Initiating a Performance Fitness Evaluation*

The concerned faculty member should complete the Performance Fitness Evaluation Form, share a copy of the Form with the student, and place a copy in the student's file. The faculty will contact the student to schedule a Performance Fitness Evaluation Meeting. The student has 5 working days to respond to the request to schedule a meeting. If the student does not respond by the close of business on the 5th business day, the faculty will notify the student of the day/time when a Performance Fitness Evaluation Meeting will take place.

#### *Performance Fitness Evaluation Meeting*

An ad hoc faculty review committee will be formed to review the concerns raised by the issuing faculty; it will be comprised of the Program Coordinator for the program in which the student is enrolled and two other graduate faculty appointed by the Department Chair. This meeting should take place within 10 working days of the student's response to the request to schedule a meeting (or within 15 working days of the time the issuing faculty member requested the meeting, whichever comes first).

At the meeting, the student will be provided with the reasons for non-satisfactory progress in writing. At minimum, this will include the Performance Fitness Evaluation Form completed by the issuing faculty member. The student will be given an opportunity to discuss the concerns with the faculty. In addition to soliciting input from the student, the Committee may consult with any of the department faculty regarding the evaluation of the student's fitness and/or development of remediation strategies.

Within 10 working days of this meeting, the student's Program Coordinator will report the recommendation of the committee to the student and to the Department Chair. Possible recommendations include the following:

- Student allowed to remain in program;
- Student allowed to remain in program with conditions; or
- Student dismissed from the program.

If the student is recommended to stay in the program with conditions, the faculty review committee will develop a remediation plan and submit a written copy of this plan to the student within 10 working days of the meeting.

Appeals of the committee's recommendation regarding remediation should be made to the Department Chair within 10 working days of the receipt of the committee's recommendation. If at any time the student is not making satisfactory progress in remediation, the faculty review committee may either modify the remediation plan or recommend the student be dismissed from the program.

If the student is recommended to be dismissed from the program, this will be reported to the student, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Appeals of the committee's recommendation regarding dismissal should be made to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development within 10 working days of the receipt of the committee's recommendation. A student's failure to respond within 10 days of notification of the committee's recommendation indicates the student's acceptance of the committee's recommendation.

### *Appealing the Committee's Recommendation*

A student wishing to appeal the committee's recommendation should submit their appeal in writing to the Department Chair (if appealing a remediation plan) or to the Dean (if appealing dismissal from the program) within 10 working days of the receipt of the committee's recommendation.

The Department Chair may amend the remediation plan if it is determined that the remediation plan does not clearly address the concerns identified in the Performance Fitness Evaluation Form submitted to the student and/or the remediation plan is overly broad or vague in its requirements.

The Dean will consider the appeal of dismissal based on results compiled by the Department Chair and notify the student of the decision within 10 working days of the appeal. The Dean may negate the committee's recommendation for dismissal if it is determined that the committee's decision was influenced by an unfair bias or prejudice against the student; the committee neglected to consider valid evidence that could have impacted the decision; the procedure employed by the committee to reach the decision departed substantially from accepted academic norms in a manner that indicated a failure to exercise professional judgement. The Dean's decision is final. There is no appeal beyond the Dean.

## Student's Responsibilities

### Understanding Program Requirements

Students are responsible for gaining a thorough understanding of program requirements by reading the A&M-Central Texas Catalog each year to determine if changes impact them, reading and adhering to professional ethical standards, meeting registration and payment deadlines, following the degree plan outline as closely as possible and being aware of all course prerequisites, preparing for courses by making arrangements to attend synchronous and asynchronous classes, allowing for adequate study time, completing assignments on a timely basis, taking exams as scheduled, and meeting graduation requirements and deadlines.

Students should clarify any questions with their faculty advisor and/or the Program Coordinator.

### Seeking Financial Assistance

Students are responsible for seeking financial assistance when needed. Multiple forms of financial assistance may be available to graduate students such as student loans, work study, scholarships, and research assistantships. Students interested in obtaining financial aid assistance should contact the [Financial Aid Office](https://www.tamuct.edu/financial-aid/index.html), <https://www.tamuct.edu/financial-aid/index.html>.

## Seeking Academic Assistance

Students are responsible for their own learning, and students should seek opportunities to enhance their learning. To do so, students should identify skill strengths and work toward developing skills that need improvement. Students should also ask questions to obtain information regarding topics they do not understand.

Curricular and cocurricular support services available to students include:

[Academic Support](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html): GRE Preparation, Study Abroad Programs, Tutoring, Workshops  
(<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html>)

[Campus Recreation](https://campusrec.tamuct.edu/): Fitness programs including online activities (<https://campusrec.tamuct.edu/>)

[Student and Civic Engagement](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/cse.html): Student organizations, democratic engagement  
(<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/cse.html>)

[University Writing Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/coas/coas-special-topics/uwc.html) : Writing assistance (<https://www.tamuct.edu/coas/coas-special-topics/uwc.html>)

[University Library](https://tamuct.libguides.com/index): Online and on campus research support (<https://tamuct.libguides.com/index>)

## Upholding Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for upholding the integrity of the academic enterprise and must strive for the highest standards of academic conduct. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct - [information regarding the Student Conduct process](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

## Developing a Professional Identity

Students should seek out and participate in activities and projects, internal or external to the University, that will enhance their learning experience.

Students are also encouraged to identify with and participate in the professional community by joining a professional organization, staying up to date with their communications, and participating in activities such as conferences. Such experiences give opportunities to share research, network, and enhance professional development. While it is not a requirement, graduate faculty are often interested in collaborating with students to develop conference presentations. A variety of professional associations have student members. These associations provide many benefits, products, and services to counselors, psychologists, and therapists. They promote public recognition of the profession, advocate for the profession, and represent the profession's interests before federal, state, and local governments. Professional associations related to the program include national organizations such as the American

Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science and regional organizations such as the Southwestern Psychological Association.

## Seeking Accommodations

Students are responsible for seeking accommodations so that every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Access and Accommodations Office is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. Students who have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations should contact the Access and Accommodations Office, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. For more information visit the [Access & Accommodation](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html) page [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html]

## Seeking Mental Health and/or Behavioral Support

Students are responsible for seeking support services for mental health and/or behavioral concerns. Mental health counseling support is available for students free of charge at the [Student Counseling and Wellness Center](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html), https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-counseling.html. Services range from assistance with anxiety, depression, relationship concerns, and crisis intervention. Behavioral support services are available for students free of charge. If students are aware of individuals who need support, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team, [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout\_id=2]. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html].

## Dropping Courses

Students are responsible for completing a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) if they believe then need to drop a course [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop\_Request\_Form.pdf]. Program faculty cannot drop students from their courses. The deadline for dropping a course is stated on the Academic [Calendar](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html), https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html. Should a student miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, the student will receive an F in the course, which may affect financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

## Withdrawing from the University

Students are responsible for withdrawing from the university if they find their circumstances warrant it. Students must contact both the Registrar's Office and the Graduate School to formally process withdrawal requests. Failure to formally withdraw from classes will result in a failing grade in all classes.

## Graduating with a Master of Science in Applied Psychology

Students are responsible for registering to graduate by the deadline listed in the current University [Calendar](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html), https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html. Students may also elect to

participate in the graduation ceremony, indicated at the time of graduation application. All university requirements regarding the final procedures related to the degree must be followed. If courses have been substituted for those printed on the degree plan (i.e., transferred in from another institution), a substitution approval form must be completed, signed by the student, faculty advisor, and the Department Chair and placed on file in the Graduate School prior to application for graduation. Students are encouraged to complete the student graduation survey when contacted because this survey provides helpful information for program improvement. If students have suggestions for program improvement, they may contact the Program Coordinator at any time during their graduate studies. Students are also encouraged to utilize services provided by the [Career and Professional Development](https://www.tamuct.edu/cpd/index.html) office, including career search services and career fairs, <https://www.tamuct.edu/cpd/index.html>.

## Contact Information for Program Faculty

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Chair, Counseling & Psychology Department  
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# Appendix A: Student Performance Fitness Evaluation Form

## Department of Counseling and Psychology Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Student's Name:

Semester/Year:

Faculty Member's Name:

Course Number:

This evaluation is to be completed by instructors when they believe that there is a poor match between the student and the graduate program. The evaluation covers four areas: Professionalism, Competency, Social and Emotional Maturity, and Integrity. Given that good fit in all of these areas is essential for positive training outcomes, a poor fit between student and program may be indicated by global concerns in all the areas prescribed or by concerns that are focused in only one area.

This form should be completed in triplicate. The faculty member completing it should retain the original, give one copy to the student, and place one copy in the student's file. The faculty member **MUST** complete follow-up documentation to be placed in the student's file.

Directions: Based on your observations of the student, select the relevant items, then circle the number that corresponds to the level of concern:

0= Not Concerned

1= Concerned

2 = Highly Concerned

### Professionalism

1. The student conducts self in an ethical manner so as to promote confidence in the educational program.	0	1	2
2. The student relates to peers, professors, and others in a manner consistent with stated professional standards.	0	1	2
3. The student demonstrates sensitivity to real and ascribed differences in power between themselves and others.	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates an understanding of the ethical requirements relevant to research and practice.	0	1	2
5. The student regularly attends class, submits assignments on time for class, and participates effectively in class.	0	1	2
6. The student willingly increases knowledge (and implementation) of effective theoretical and research strategies.	0	1	2
7. The student projects a professional image and positive attitude.	0	1	2

*Table 3 Performance Fitness Professionalism*

### Competency

1. The student recognizes the boundaries of his/her particular competencies and limitations of his/her expertise.	0	1	2
2. The student takes responsibility for compensating for his/her deficiencies in a timely manner.	0	1	2

3. The student takes responsibility for assuring others' welfare when faced with the boundaries of his/her expertise.	0	1	2
4. The student provides only those services, and applies only those techniques, for which s/he is qualified by education, training, or experience.	0	1	2
5. The student demonstrates basic cognitive and affective capacities when responding to requests and in interactions with others.	0	1	2
6. The student demonstrates appropriate oral and written language skills.	0	1	2

*Table 4 Performance Fitness Competency*

**Social and Emotional Maturity**

1. The student demonstrates appropriate self-control (such as anger control, impulse control) in interpersonal relationships with faculty, supervisors, peers, and community members.	0	1	2
2. The student is honest, fair, and respectful of others.	0	1	2
3. The student is aware of their own belief systems, values, needs, and limitations and the effect of these on their work.	0	1	2
4. The student demonstrates the ability to receive, integrate, and utilize feedback from peers, instructors, and supervisors.	0	1	2
5. The student exhibits appropriate levels of self-assurance, confidence, and trust in own ability.	0	1	2
6. The student follows professionally recognized problem-solving processes, seeking to informally solve problems first with the individual(s) with whom the problem exists.	0	1	2

*Table 5 Performance Fitness Maturity*

**Integrity and Ethical Standards**

1. The student refrains from making statements which are false, misleading, or deceptive.	0	1	2
2. The student avoids improper and potentially harmful relationships in the professional setting.	0	1	2
3. The student respects the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people.	0	1	2
4. The student respects the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and choices regarding self-determination and autonomy.	0	1	2
5. The student respects cultural, individual and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status.	0	1	2

*Table 63 Performance Fitness Integrity*

Student's Signature and Date:

Faculty Member's Signature and Date: