



# **Master's of Science in Psychology Program**

## **Graduate Students' Handbook**

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## General Information

New Mexico Highlands University is located in Las Vegas, New Mexico. It was founded in 1893. More information about NMHU can be found online at <http://www.nmhu.edu>. More information about Las Vegas can be found at <http://www.lasvegasnewmexico.com>. More information about the psychology program can be found at <http://www.nmhu.edu/psychology>.

This document is designed to provide students with information regarding the Master of Science program in psychology at NMHU. This document includes information regarding general university policies as well as information specific to the psychology program. While some of the information contained in this document is taken straight from the NMHU Graduate Catalog, it is not meant to serve as a substitute for that catalog. Students should obtain a copy of the Graduate Catalog and the Student Handbook and familiarize themselves with both of those documents in addition to this one.

## Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Master of Science program in psychology at NMHU to train master's level psychologists who can utilize critical thinking skills, an understanding of the scientific method, and knowledge of major disciplines of psychology to their work as teachers, researchers, or practitioners. The program is designed to prepare students for either work as master's level clinicians or continued study in psychology at the doctoral level. This mission is achieved through a high level of professor-to-student interaction, ample opportunities for research and practical experience, and exposure to a multicultural community setting.

## Overview of the Program

The department offers two tracks that lead to a Master of Science degree in psychology. The **General Psychology** track requires 36 credit hours and is intended to provide a background similar to that given in many Ph.D. programs. This track is organized around a general core of courses designed to educate the student in all areas of psychology. In addition, the thesis and elective hours permit the student an opportunity to pursue further an area of interest such as physiological, experimental, neuropsychological, developmental, or social psychology. This track is especially useful for those students whose goals include either entering a Ph.D. program or working in a non-clinical position (research, etc.) upon completing the master's degree.

The **Clinical Psychology/Counseling** track is a 66-credit hour emphasis area which is unique in that it is one of the only programs in the U.S. that provides comprehensive training in psychological therapy and assessment. This emphasis area takes a minimum of two years (including summer semesters) to complete.

In addition to the general core of courses required in the General Psychology emphasis area, this track provides the opportunity to gain solid psychological testing and assessment skills in four areas: neuropsychological, behavioral, intelligence, and personality. This Clinical Psychology/Counseling track is designed to prepare students to continue their education at the doctoral level or to work as a master's level clinician. The student successfully completing this track will qualify for licensure as a counselor in the state of New Mexico as well as a master's level clinician in approximately 40 other states.

Both options emphasize the science of psychology. Students will be expected to graduate from the programs with the skills and knowledge necessary to plan, conduct, analyze, and report sound scientific research. General Psychology students are required to complete a research-based thesis in order to practice these skills and demonstrate this knowledge. Clinical Psychology/Counseling track students can choose either a Thesis or Non-Thesis option. Thesis students will complete a research-based thesis similar to the General Psychology track. Non-Thesis students take a Comprehensive Examination at the end of their coursework in order to earn their degree. In general, those students whose interests encompass both the art and science of psychology are generally well pleased with our program.

### **Evaluation of the Program**

The psychology faculty is committed to ensuring that the graduate program remains current and continues to meet the needs of our students, even as those needs may change. Because of this commitment, the psychology program undergoes continuous evaluation of both a qualitative and a quantitative nature.

This evaluation is based, in large part, on an assessment of how well the program is meeting its intended outcomes. A copy of our Outcomes Assessment Plan is included in this document as Appendix A.

### **Applying to the Program**

Although the psychology program adheres to the NMHU admission guidelines, the program conducts its own selection and admissions process for all graduate applications. Applications are generally for full-time enrollment only, part-time study is discouraged. Applications are reviewed on an on-going basis each spring until the class for the fall semester is full. Although there is no application deadline, students are encouraged to apply early. Students who are interested in applying for assistantships in particular are encouraged to apply early, since assistantships are granted based in part upon date of admission to the program.

Students should submit an application form (available from the Graduate Student Office) as well as:

1. Provide a minimum 5 page writing sample, preferably a scholarly paper written for an upper division Psychology class.
2. Minimum 500 word statement of educational goals and objectives addressing research interests and experience (if General or Clinical Thesis track) or to discuss in their statement of educational goals and objectives what their career goals and interests are (if Clinical Non-Thesis track).
3. Letters of Recommendation: At least one letter should be an academic reference (i.e., professor, advisor, etc.). The other reference can be an academic or professional reference. Letters of recommendation from family or friends are not appropriate.

GRE scores are recommended but not required.

To gain admission to the program, students should have at least a 3.0 overall GPA (based on a 4.0 scale) and the equivalent of a major or minor in psychology, with a 3.0 GPA in psychology also. Please note that we offer graduate assistantships to many of our students, and strength of applications and performance in the graduate program will be used as criteria for these awards. Students who do not meet these requirements but who demonstrate other strengths may be admitted to the program on a provisional status while they make up deficiencies.

Successful applicants should demonstrate the ability to perform well in a challenging academic program, the interest and ability to perform sound scientific research, and the personal characteristics and integrity necessary for the practice of psychology. The successful applicant will possess goals and a career orientation that are congruent with the psychology program's philosophy and emphasis.

## **Program Requirements**

The program is designed to facilitate student intellectual and professional growth. The program requirements reflect this, and students are given regular feedback on their performance in both these areas. In order to emphasize the importance of meeting appropriate standards in both these areas, students are asked to sign the Academic and Behavioral Agreement (Appendix B) at the time they first enroll in the program. This document summarizes the academic and behavioral expectations for students enrolled in the program. Violation of this agreement may constitute cause for disciplinary action including dismissal from the program.

### **Required Coursework**

#### **Coursework Required From All Students.**

Psych 601	Data Analysis and Statistics	3 cr hrs.
Psych 602	Behavioral Research Methods	3 cr hrs.
Psych 605	Memory and Cognition	3 cr hrs.
Psych 612	Psychopharmacology	3 cr hrs.
Psych 621	Advanced Social Psychology	3 cr hrs.
Psych 640	Advanced Developmental Psychology	3 cr hrs.
Psych 651	Professional Ethics and Issues	3 cr hrs.
Psych 671	Advanced Psychopathology	3 cr hrs.
Psych 608	Introduction to Neuropsychology	3 cr hrs.
Psych 699	Thesis (Gen & Clinical Thesis)	3 cr hrs.
<u>Or</u>		
Psych 696	Publishable Papers/Capstone (Clinical Non-Thesis)	3 cr hrs.
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>30 cr hrs.</b>

### General Psychology Track

In addition to the core required coursework, students in the General Psychology track must also complete 6 credit hours of electives, including at least one Assessment course (3 hours credit), which are selected in consultation with an advisor. Advisors work with the student in order to structure the elective courses in accordance with the student's career goals.

Elective courses (including an Assessment course)= **6 cr hrs.**

**Total credit hours for General Psychology M.S. = 36 cr hrs.**

### Clinical Psychology/Counseling Track

In addition to the core required coursework, students in the Clinical Psychology/Counseling track must also complete the following required coursework for a total of 66 credit hours:

Psych 525	Introduction to Group Psychotherapy	3 cr hrs.
Psych 677	Multicultural Psychotherapy and Counseling	3 cr hrs.
Psych 672	Introduction to Counseling and Therapy	3 cr hrs.
Psych 674	Individual Intelligence Testing	3 cr hrs.
Psych 675	Personality Assessment	3 cr hrs.
Psych 679	Behavior Therapy and Assessment	3 cr hrs.
Psych 681	Neuropsychological Assessment	3 cr hrs.
Psych 627	Career Development	3 cr hrs.
Psych 634	Practicum	<u>12 cr hrs.</u>
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>36 cr. hrs.</b>
<b>Core Coursework Subtotal:</b>		<b>30 cr. hrs.</b>

**Total credit hours for Clinical/Counseling M.S. = 66 cr hrs.**

## **Time Limitations**

From the time of initial enrollment in the graduate program, students have five calendar years to complete the program requirements. This includes successful completion and defense of the thesis. Work accepted for transfer from other institutions must have been completed within this same time period.

Students who, for reasons beyond their control, are unable to complete the work within the five-year limit may petition the Academic Affairs Committee for an extension of one year, giving good and valid reasons for the delay. The psychology faculty and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will be requested to make a recommendation as to the currency of the course content in question. If approved, the student may be required to update the work by assigned readings and possibly by the preparation of a paper for each outdated course.

Any additional extension of time will require a testing-out examination on all outdated work as stated in the Testing-Out of Classes by Special Examination section of the Graduate Student Catalog.

## **Academic Probation/Suspension**

Students must have a grade point average of at least 3.0 in the graduate courses listed on the Program of Study to receive a Master degree. Failure to maintain a satisfactory average will result in probation or suspension. No course in which a grade below a "C" is earned will be given graduate credit, but it will be counted in determining the grade point average.

Any student whose grade point average in graduate work falls below 3.0 in any semester will be placed on probation. Any student whose cumulative average falls below 2.4 may be suspended. A student on graduate academic probation for two consecutive semesters may be suspended. After one year, suspended graduate students may apply to the Academic Affairs Committee for readmission.

## **Standards for Professional Behavior**

Graduate students are viewed as "junior colleagues" by the faculty and as such are expected to follow the ethical standards of our field. In psychology, these are spelled out by the American Psychological Association in the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, which are readily available online. In addition, the Ethical Principles are covered in detail in the fall semester of Psych 651, Professional Ethics and Issues, which each student is required to enroll in during his or her first year in the program.

In addition to the APA's Ethical Principles, students in the program are expected to abide by the New Mexico Highlands University Code of Student Conduct.

Students are provided with a copy of this code when they begin the program and sign this as a contract with the Psychology Program.

## **Advisement and Program of Study**

Advisement is an important part of the graduate program. Students are assigned a member of the psychology faculty to act as his or her advisor at the time the student is accepted to the program. A student may change advisors at any time as his or her interests evolve. To change advisors, the student must notify the former advisor, the new advisor and the graduate coordinator of the psychology program.

Students are required to meet with their advisors on a regular basis to review their progress in the program. In addition, the advisor will discuss with the student the results of the Faculty Review of Student Progress (Appendix C), which is conducted at the end of each student's first and second semesters in the program.

Students should meet with their advisors to review their plans before registration for each term. Students should also meet with their advisors to complete a Program of Study. This form should be completed by the end of the student's first semester in the program.

Advisors are also available to discuss with students their career plans, personal concerns that are affecting progress in the program, and to make referrals for additional help when necessary and appropriate.

### **Transfer, Workshop and Institute Credits**

A student may transfer up to 6 semester credits from another accredited institution, provided that the hours were earned in graduate residence at that institution with "C" or higher grades, were completed within the specified time limitations, and were earned in courses acceptable for a graduate degree at the institution where they were earned.

Acceptability of transfer credits will be determined by the psychology faculty, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The request for transfer of credit must be submitted on a special application provided for this purpose, and should be listed on the Program of Study. These transfer credits will not be used in computing grade point averages to determine probation or eligibility for assistantships and graduation.

The final 8 semester credits (not including independent study or research) will be in courses offered in residency by New Mexico Highlands University.

No workshops or institute credits may be used toward a graduate degree.

## Graduation/Commencement/Posting of the Degree

Students need to apply for graduation on a form available in the Registrar's Office. A one-time, non-refundable graduation fee is charged for each degree. Graduation is subject to completion of all requirements, and students are reminded of the importance of the Final Degree Check. A student **must a) be within one semester of completing all required coursework and b) must obtain permission from his/her committee chair** before commencement in order to be allowed to participate. The degree earned will be recorded on the student's transcript at the end of the semester during which all requirements are completed and after the grades have been received by the Registrar.

## Schedule of Classes

Below are examples of a typical schedule for a student in the Clinical Psychology/Counseling track (2-year and 3-year models).

### Two Year Suggested Clinical Program of Study

#### Year 1

Fall		Spring		Summer	
PSY 671 - Advanced Psychopathology	3	PSY 602 - Behavioral Research Methods	3	PSY 525 - Group Psychotherapy	3
PSY 608 - Intro to Neuropsychology	3	PSY 681 - Neuropsychological Assessment	3	PSY 634 - Practicum	3
PSY 674 - Individual Intelligence Testing	3	PSY 672 - Introduction to Counseling and Therapy	3	PSY 627 - Career Development	3
PSY 651 - Professional Ethics and Issues	3	PSY 621 - Advanced Social Psychology	3		
		PSY 675 - Personality Assessment	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

#### Year 2

Fall		Spring		Summer	
PSY 679 - Behavior Therapy and Assessment	3	PSY 612 - Psychopharmacology	3	PSY 699 - Thesis Or PSY 696 Publishable Papers/Capstone	3



PSY 605 - Memory and Cognition	3	PSY 640 - Advanced Developmental Psychology	3	PSY 627 - Practicum	3
PSY 627 - Practicum	3	PSY 677 - Multicultural Psychotherapy	3		
PSY 601 - Data Analysis and Statistics	3	PSY 627 - Practicum	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

### Three Year Suggested Clinical Program of Study

#### Year 1

Fall		Spring		Summer	
PSY 671 - Advanced Psychopathology	3	PSY 602 - Behavioral Research Methods	3	PSY 525 - Group Psychotherapy	3
PSY 608 - Intro to Neuropsychology	3	PSY 681 - Neuropsychological Assessment	3	PSY 634 - Practicum	3
PSY 651 - Professional Ethics and Issues	3	PSY 672 - Introduction to Counseling and Therapy	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

#### Year 2

Fall		Spring		Summer	
PSY 674 - Individual Intelligence Testing	3	PSY 612 - Psychopharmacology	3	PSY 627 - Practicum	3
PSY 601 - Data Analysis and Statistics	3	PSY 675 - Personality Assessment	3	PSY 627 - Career Development	3
PSY 627 - Practicum	3	PSY 677 - Multicultural Psychotherapy	3		
		PSY 627 - Practicum	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

#### Year 3

Fall		Spring		Summer	
PSY 679 - Behavior Therapy and Assessment	3	PSY 640 - Advanced Developmental Psychology	3	PSY 699 – Thesis Or PSY 696 Publishable Papers/Capstone	3

PSY 605 - Memory and Cognition	3	PSY 621 - Advanced Social Psychology	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Financial Aid and Graduate Assistantships**

Highlands offers a comprehensive financial assistance program. Funds for student financial assistance come from University, state, and federal sources.

Assistantships, fellowships, work-study hours, and loans are awarded on the basis of academic merit, availability, and need, while scholarships are awarded mainly on merit and, in some cases, need. The Office of Financial Assistance is located in the Felix Martinez Building, Suite 201. The office is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To apply for financial assistance, students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid. These forms are available in the University's Office of Financial Assistance. Students should apply for financial aid by the priority deadline **March 1**. Only U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens will be considered for financial aid, and must not be in default on any educational loans or owe repayment of any educational grant received at any institution. Recipients must also maintain satisfactory academic status to continue receiving aid and must abide by all Financial Aid policies and procedures.

For more information, forms, or assistance, contact the Office of Financial Assistance (505) 454-3318, or write to the office in care of New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM 87701.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

The psychology program has available a number of teaching and research assistantships that are awarded to graduate students. Application for an assistantship should be made by March preceding the beginning of the academic year in which the assistantship is to be held. Information provided in the student's application to the program is used to determine which incoming students will be awarded assistantships. Assistantships are awarded after the applicant has been admitted into the program and has been recommended by the faculty and Dean and approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Full-time assistants are expected to devote 20 hours per week to their duties. Part-time assistants should devote time proportional to their award. The psychology program has a commitment to financially support as many graduate students as possible who express a desire for an assistantship and who possess the necessary qualifications. Because of this commitment, the majority of assistantships awarded are half to three quarters time. It is rare for the faculty to

award a student a full assistantship, although this may occur if the needs of the position require it.

Students who are awarded an assistantship receive payment of their tuition in relation to the size of their assistantship (for example, students awarded a half-time assistantship receive half of their tuition for that semester). In addition to tuition, graduate assistants also receive a stipend. Currently (2013-14) the stipend equals \$3,500 per semester. Assistantships do not cover additional fees or room and board, however, any student awarded at least a half-time assistantship is assessed the remainder of his or her tuition at the New Mexico resident rates.

Assistantship awards are for one semester only. Students should be aware that checks from assistantships **do not continue over winter and summer breaks** and should budget accordingly. The award of an assistantship in one semester does not guarantee the student an assistantship in any other semester.

Graduate students who hold assistantships and whose cumulative grade point averages falls below 3.0 at the end of any semester may, with the advice of the faculty and Dean, have the assistantships revoked by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

While students may have more than one part-time contract, the sum of the contracts and the work required shall not exceed the equivalent of one full-time graduate assistantship (20 hours of work per week). It is not recommended that you work more than 20 hours per week as a full-time graduate student.

A student who has been admitted to the program but who has not earned a bachelor's degree prior to his or her first semester of graduate study may not hold a graduate assistant position.

Assistantships will be awarded only to those students enrolled full time (a minimum of 9 credit hours) in psychology courses during the first two semesters of their graduate program. Students should be aware that dropping below 9 psychology credit hours during the semester could result in the loss of an assistantship. After the first two semesters, the minimum number of psychology credits necessary to qualify for assistantships can be determined in consultation with and approval of a psychology faculty member.

Some assistantships require particular skills or experience. These will be awarded to qualified students who possess the necessary skills.

Assistantships that do not require unique skills will be awarded to qualified students according to their date of acceptance into the psychology graduate program. Qualified students with the earliest acceptance dates will be awarded

assistantships first, and awards will continue according to date of acceptance until all assistantships have been distributed.

An assistantship is a job, and, like any other job, in order to maintain an assistantship students must perform the work adequately. Inadequate performance can result in the loss of an assistantship.

Although the assistantships available vary somewhat from year to year, a description of the positions generally available, and the requirements for the positions, is available from the department.

In general, assistantships will be awarded to graduate students on Thesis tracks before Non-Thesis track students.

### **Tuition**

NMHU has extremely low tuition rates for New Mexico residents. In 2016-17, tuition is \$2933.28 per semester for a full-time, resident graduate student taking 12-18 credit hours. The full-time tuition for non-resident graduate students is \$4500.00. Thus, it is to every student's advantage to try and achieve residency status.

### **Residency Status**

Due to the large difference between resident and non-resident tuition rates it is to every student's benefit to become a legal resident of New Mexico. A student who enters and remains in this state principally to obtain an education is presumed to continue to reside outside this state and such presumption continues in effect until rebutted by clear and convincing evidence of bona fide residence. A student determined to be financially dependent on a parent or guardian also assumes the residency of that parent or guardian. The "burden of proof" is on the student. The student must secure and file the petition with the appropriate documents of evidence in the manner described herein. All documents submitted for this purpose will be kept confidential.

To become a legal resident of New Mexico, four basic requirements must be completed by the student. Each person must meet these requirements individually.

- The 12-month Consecutive Presence Requirement.
- The Financial Independence Requirement.
- The Written Declaration of "Intent" Requirement.
- The Overt Acts Requirement.

Other persons and their dependents who provide appropriate evidence of moving into New Mexico to work full time, practice a profession, conduct a business full-

time, or formally retire shall not be required to complete the 12-month duration requirement.

Other relevant factors may be considered along with those listed above. There is a reciprocity agreement between the states of Colorado and New Mexico to allow a limited number of Colorado residents to attend NMHU and pay only resident tuition. Students interested in this must complete the proper application. Any Native American student who is a citizen of the United States is entitled to resident student status. Again, the proper application must be filed.

*Students awarded a graduate assistantship that includes the payment of at least half their tuition costs will be assessed the remainder of their tuition costs at the resident rate, regardless of residency status.*

A brochure explaining all requirements for establishing New Mexico residency and residency petitions is available from the Registrar's Office. Residency petitions will be accepted until the first day of each semester in the Registrar's Office. **For more information, please call (505) 454-3233.**

## **Student Involvement in the Department**

Given their status of "junior colleagues", graduate students are invited and encouraged to participate in as many aspects of the psychology program as possible. There are numerous opportunities for involvement in research and teaching activities and graduate students are encouraged to not only take advantage of these opportunities, but to also give their feedback and suggestions regarding these aspects of the program. In addition to teaching and research activities, there are also several more formal avenues for students to become involved with the program and to give feedback and suggestions.

### **Psi Chi**

Highlands has had an active chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology, for over 50 years. In the past decade, the officers of the NMHU Psi Chi chapter have utilized this organization as a mechanism for providing both graduate and undergraduate students with speakers on topics of interest, social activities, and opportunities for service. In addition, Psi Chi members raise funds that are then used by students as travel funds to attend professional conferences. All students, both graduate and undergraduate, are encouraged to join Psi Chi.

### **Graduate Student Representative**

Each year the graduate students chose a representative who is charged with serving as an official liaison between the graduate students and the faculty. The representative may attend all departmental meetings. The representative also

brings concerns of the graduate students to the attention of the faculty, and seeks input from the students on current issues in the program.

### **Course Feedback**

Students complete course evaluation forms at the end of every course. This is an opportunity for students to comment on the structure and content of courses, the appropriateness of reading materials, and the strengths and weaknesses of the professors teaching styles.

### **Grievance Procedure**

The mechanism by which student concerns are addressed in the department depends upon the nature of the concern. If the issue is of general interest to the graduate students, it should be discussed at a meeting of the students and then brought to the attention of the faculty by the graduate student representative.

If the issue is limited to one student, there are a number of ways the problem could be addressed. These are outlined below, from least to most formal. It is strongly suggested that the student attempt to resolve the issue informally before moving on to more formal procedures. For issues of an academic or non-academic nature, the first steps are the same.

1. The student should first try to address the problem through an informal conversation with the professor, student, or university staff member involved.
2. If the issue is still unresolved, it is suggested that the student discuss the matter with another member of the faculty, who may suggest another meeting.
3. If this is unsuccessful, the student has the option of discussing the matter with the Chair of the Department involved or with the supervisor of the student or staff member involved. It is recommended that the student write a letter to the Chair or supervisor, outlining in detail the nature of the concern, and the desired outcome. The Chair or supervisor will attempt to mediate a resolution.
4. If no resolution is met, the student has various options, depending upon the nature of the problem.
  - a. For issues of an academic nature, the student should write a letter to the school or college dean. Carefully explain the concern, include appropriate documentation, and describe the desired outcome. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student may write a letter to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice President

for Academic Affairs will be final. If the concern is in regard to a specific grade received, the student may want to use a Student Grade Appeal Form available in the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

- b. For issues of a non-academic nature, the student should write a letter to the Dean of Students. Carefully explain the concern and include appropriate documentation. The Dean may refer the matter to an advisory group. The decision of the Dean of Students will be final.

If a student has a concern regarding a campus club, the student should first try to resolve the issue by meeting with the members of the club and the club's faculty advisor. If the issue is unresolved, the student may write a letter to the Office of Campus Life, describing the situation, including appropriate documentation and a description of the desired outcome. If the matter is still unresolved, the student may write a letter to the Dean of Students. The decision of the Dean of Students will be final.

For more information on grievance procedures, please refer to the NMHU Student Handbook.

## **The Thesis**

The graduate program in psychology at NMHU is based upon the scientist-practitioner model of psychological training. For this reason every student enrolled in the program, regardless of his or her occupational goals, is expected to fully master the theory and practice of designing, collecting, analyzing, and critiquing scientific research. The capstone experience in the program through which the student is expected to demonstrate mastery of the scientific method is the thesis. The goal of the psychology faculty is that every student's thesis project results in a successful learning process and a product in which both the student and the faculty can take pride.

### **Outline of the Thesis Process**

This outline is intended as a guide to help the student successfully complete a thesis. These steps have been formalized in order to ensure that all interested parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities in the thesis process. This document is intended to clarify and formalize the process so that misunderstandings can be minimized. The primary purpose of this document is to ensure that the student's time and effort can be put to best use.

1. Thesis Topic.

The student is to select a research topic or area in which the thesis will be completed. An integral step in selecting and refining an appropriate area of the

thesis is to enroll in the Psych 602 course (Behavioral Research Methods) offered each spring and required of all students. In this class students will begin developing a thesis proposal. By the end of the course students will have stated a research problem, conducted a preliminary review of the literature, and outlined a research method.

The student should note that it is not necessary to delay progress on the thesis until the spring semester and the PSY 602 course. The student is encouraged to begin selection of a topic and completion of the following steps as early as possible. The focus on thesis in PSY 602 has traditionally been during the spring term to meet the needs of the majority of our students. However, there certainly have been students who began work on the thesis before the spring term and utilized the PSY 602 course for further refinement and assistance on their thesis research.

## 2. Thesis Committee.

After deciding on an area of research, the student should select a thesis chairperson. The chairperson should be a psychology faculty member who has a background in the student's area of interest since this individual will typically be the primary resource person for the student in carrying out the research. The student should also select another psychology faculty member to serve as a second committee member (second reader) and a faculty member from outside of the psychology discipline to serve as outside reader. There may be additional members of the committee, but there must be at least two psychology faculty members (one of whom is the chair) and at least one member who is not on the psychology faculty.

The student is first to contact the psychology faculty member whom the student wishes to be the chair and discuss the student's research interests. Upon agreement by the faculty member to serve as chair, the student will then discuss with the chair the selection of the other members of the committee. These committee members should be selected with the advice and consent of the thesis chair. Upon identification of other faculty as prospective members of the committee, the student will then be responsible for contacting and securing the agreement of these individuals to serve on the committee.

After the formation of the committee, the student is to complete the Thesis Committee Form (see Appendix D) and have it signed by all committee members. After obtaining the signature of each member of the committee, the student is to provide a copy of the form to each member and file a copy in the departmental office.

After completion of the Thesis Committee Form, any changes in committee membership desired by the student must be formally approved. A written statement which clearly specifies the reason(s) for the requested change is to be



submitted to the chair. The student is also to provide a copy of the written statement to the committee member identified in the request (if different from the chair).

If the committee member is in agreement with the student on replacement, the committee member will provide the thesis chair with a written statement requesting withdrawal from the committee. If the member withdrawing from the committee is the chair, the other psychology member (second reader) will be provided with the written statement from the chair requesting withdrawal. At this point, the second reader would assist the student in formation of a new committee and resubmission of the Thesis Committee Form.

If agreement between the committee member and the student cannot be reached regarding replacement, the student can request a hearing on the matter at which time all involved parties may be heard. A hearing board of four faculty members would be designated and would be comprised of two psychology faculty members not serving on the student's committee and two faculty members from the other disciplines in the Department of Behavioral Sciences. The board would then attempt resolution of the matter and would make recommendations for such resolution to the thesis committee chair (as appropriate) and to the Chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences.

In the event that a member must withdraw from the committee, the member is to submit to the chair a written statement specifying reason(s) for the requested withdrawal. If the member requesting replacement on the committee is the chair, the written request would be submitted to the second reader. A copy of the statement requesting withdrawal would be provided to the student by the member requesting replacement. As described above, a new committee would then be formed and the Thesis Committee Form would be resubmitted.

### 3. Thesis Proposal.

The student should prepare for the thesis chair a formal thesis proposal in accordance with the attached guidelines and requirements pertaining to the proposal. Under the direction of the thesis chair, the proposal will be revised as necessary until acceptable to both the chair and student. While there may be significant involvement of the other committee members in the development and revision of the proposal, a formal presentation of the proposal may not be scheduled without approval by the chair.

Upon determination by the chairperson that the proposal is acceptable a presentation and defense of the proposal are to be made by the student.

The student should expect to make revisions and to rewrite until the thesis proposal meets widely recognized standards. (Please refer to the current university catalog for thesis specifications.) The student must arrange submission

of the thesis material to the chair in such a way that regular academic schedules are observed and recognition of the many other demands and duties of faculty is given. For example, the first two weeks and last two weeks of a semester are traditionally extremely demanding on faculty time and the student should avoid expectations of immediate assistance on the thesis proposal during these times. Once the student and chair determine that the thesis proposal is acceptable, the student will submit the proposal to the second reader (and outside reader if he/she is participating in the defense). **The student will submit the thesis proposal to all readers at least two weeks before the scheduled date of defense. Failure to do so may result in delay of defense date.**

The presentation is to be made to at least the chair and second reader, whereas the outside member is optional. The presentation will be open to all interested faculty and students and will be announced. At the conclusion of the presentation, the proposal may be: 1) accepted without further revisions; 2) accepted with revision required; 3) not accepted in present form. When the proposal is accepted with no further revision necessary, the student must complete the Thesis Proposal Approval Form (see Appendix E) and obtain signatures of the psychology faculty members (and the outside member if present at the presentation). One copy of the form will be provided to the chair and one copy filed in the department office.

**ONLY AFTER THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN FORMALLY ACCEPTED AS SPECIFIED ABOVE MAY THE STUDENT BEGIN DATA COLLECTION.**

Furthermore, before any data may be collected, research involving the use of human participants must be approved by the University Human Subjects Committee and research involving the use of animal subjects must be approved by the University Animal Research Committee.

4. Conducting Thesis Research.

Any departures from the research method as specified in the proposal must be approved before implementation in writing by the thesis chairperson.

5. Writing of the Thesis.

As the student progresses on the writing of the thesis, drafts of the thesis chapters should be submitted to the chair. In general, the thesis is to be written in APA style (see latest edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association). Specifically, the thesis is to conform to the guidelines set out by the psychology faculty of the Department of Behavioral Sciences as described in this thesis manual. Upon consultation with the chair, other members may also be provided copies of the draft. The student should expect to make revisions and to rewrite until the thesis meets widely recognized standards. (Please refer to the current university catalog for thesis specifications.) The student must arrange submission of the thesis material to the chair in such a way

that regular academic schedules are observed and recognition of the many other demands and duties of faculty is given. For example, the first two weeks and last two weeks of a semester are traditionally extremely demanding on faculty time and the student should avoid expectations of immediate assistance on the thesis during these times. Once the student and chair determine that the thesis proposal is acceptable, the student will submit the proposal to all members of the committee. **The student will submit the thesis to all readers at least two weeks before the scheduled date of defense. Failure to do so may result in delay of defense date.**

#### 6. Oral Examination and Thesis Defense.

When the chair has determined the thesis to be acceptable, the student is to schedule the oral examination and defense of the thesis with the thesis committee. At this time the Request for Graduate Oral Examination form (see Appendix F) will be completed. (Please refer to the current University catalog for description and specifications of the graduate oral examination.) The oral examination will be open to all interested faculty and students and will be announced. The student will be evaluated both on his or her performance on the oral examination and on the quality of the thesis. The student's performance on the oral examination may be: 1) passed; 2) not passed. The thesis will receive a grade of: 1) Satisfactory; 2) Unsatisfactory; 3) No Grade. A grade of Unsatisfactory indicates that the thesis is completely unacceptable and that only a totally new thesis will be considered. A grade of No Grade indicates that the thesis as it stands is unsatisfactory but that the thesis will be reconsidered after revisions have been made.

#### 7. Final Copy of Thesis.

The student is responsible for making any additional revisions necessary for final acceptance of the thesis. The thesis must conform to all departmental and university guidelines for thesis format and style, as well as other university requirements for final acceptance of the thesis. (Please refer to current guidelines of the library as stated in Appendix G and other academic standards of the university.)

#### 8. Thesis Credit.

Students are required to take three credit hours of Psych 699, Thesis. After initial enrollment for thesis credit, the student must continue to be enrolled for at least one credit hour of Thesis until the thesis is accepted.

#### **Cost of the Thesis**

All thesis projects involve expenses, even if those expenses are only copying costs. Some theses, of course, require much more than that, such as the

purchase of laboratory animals, chemicals, supplies, testing materials, and participant remuneration. The cost of conducting thesis research is the responsibility of the student. The psychology program and NMHU have no regular funds that may be used to help defray the cost of conducting student research.

There are funds, such as money from faculty research grants and other forms of small grants, which graduate students have successfully used to help defray the cost of conducting student research in the past. If a student is interested in conducting thesis research that will involve a significant expenditure of money, he or she should discuss with the appropriate faculty exactly where this money will come from before committing to the project.

## **THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

Students looking to earn the Master of Science (non-thesis option) in Clinical Psychology/Counseling must pass a Comprehensive Examination before being awarded their degree. The Comprehensive Exam is broken into two parts: Written Portfolio and Oral Exam.

### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Examination**

The purpose of this examination is to evaluate the student's ability to integrate knowledge from their coursework and practicum experiences. Because this option is rigorous, students should begin to prepare to take this examination at least 3 months prior to the test date.

### **The Committee for the Comprehensive Examination**

The Comprehensive Examination committee is composed of members of the graduate faculty from the Psychology department.

Review of the Written Portfolio will be done by two full-time clinical graduate faculty members and one full-time or retained term graduate faculty member as assigned by the Graduate Coordinator and deemed appropriate by the Psychology department.

The Oral Exam will be conducted by two full-time clinical graduate faculty members and one full-time or retained term graduate faculty member as assigned by the Graduate Coordinator and deemed appropriate by the Psychology department. Members of a student's Comprehensive Examination Committee will not necessarily be the same for the Written Portfolio evaluation to the Oral Exam.

The Graduate Coordinator will inform students which faculty members will serve as Committee members at least seven (7) days before the Written Portfolio submission date and at least three (3) days before the Oral Exam.

### **Outline of the Comprehensive Examination Process**

This outline is intended as a guide to help the student successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination. These steps have been formalized in order to ensure that all interested parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities in the thesis process. This document is intended to clarify and formalize the process so that misunderstandings can be minimized. The primary purpose of this document is to ensure that the student's time and effort can be put to best use. More detailed directions can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator.

In order to take the Comprehensive Examination, students must have completed all required course work for the first and second years or, for students in the second semester of the second year, they must be enrolled in classes that will complete their required coursework by the end of that semester. Students must also have a GPA of 3.0 or better.

#### 1. Written Portfolio.

Students should meet with their academic advisor to discuss the comprehensive exam procedure and their plans for completing comprehensive exams. Students should work with their academic advisor to assemble their Written Portfolio and submit a completed version to the Committee at least four (4) weeks before the scheduled date for the Oral Comprehensive Exam. Note: while the student's academic advisor can provide guidance on the Proficiency Documents included in the Written Portfolio, the advisor should not be providing feedback, edits, or review of the content of documents. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether he/she believes each included Proficiency Document is suitable for inclusion in the Written Portfolio.

The Written Portfolio should be comprised of a Proficiency Document for each competency area. These Proficiency Documents should be at least 2000 words in length for each competency area, except for the Counseling Theories and Practice Proficiency Document.

The student will submit the Written Portfolio to the Graduate Coordinator via email. The Written Portfolio will be scored within two weeks of submission. The student does not proceed to the Oral Exam until the Written Portfolio is scored and passed. The grading of the portfolio is done by the Committee. The rating scale for the portfolio is: 0= insufficient evidence, 1=not yet meeting standards, 2=meets the standard, 3=exceeds expectations. In essence, a score of 0 or 1 is a "failing" rating and a score of 2 or 3 is a "passing" rating. Raters should only use whole numbers when giving a score. If there is a discrepancy in ratings

among the faculty on a section then the two ratings that are in agreement (regarding “Pass” or “Fail”) will be considered the score for that section. A student may proceed to the oral exam if they receiving a passing score on all six sections of the Written Portfolio. If a student receives failing scores on one section then they must revise and resubmit that section within seven (7) days of notification to the Graduate Coordinator. The resubmitted section will be graded within four (4) days and if that section receives a passing score, the student may advance to the scheduled Oral Exam date. If a student fails two or more sections then they are required to revise and resubmit those sections and wait to take their Oral Exam the following semester.

If a student fails one or more sections of the Written Portfolio after a second submission, the Committee will convene to decide whether further remediation on the part of the student is advisable. Thus the Committee will vote for a “final failure” or a “failure with remediation.” If the student fails any part of the Written Portfolio a third time it will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

In the case of any failing sections, students will receive the written comments of the faculty as well as the numerical ratings. Students are then encouraged to re-read their answers after receiving this feedback in their preparation for the revision of any areas of the Written Portfolio.

Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the following six areas:

1. Research and Scientific Thinking
2. Measurement, Assessment, and Psychological Testing
3. Clinical Theories and Practice
4. Multicultural Issues and Culturally-Responsive Interventions
5. Ethics
6. Broad Psychological Education

To facilitate students’ documentation of coursework for both the portfolio and for subsequent licensure/certification, students are encouraged to keep copies of all course syllabi and assignments from all classes.

Students should reference the Written Portfolio Content Rubric as guidance for Proficiency Documents to include in the Written Portfolio.

## 2. Oral Examination

The oral portion of the examination may not take place until after successful completion of the Written Portfolio. The Oral Exam will be scheduled only once per full semester (i.e., Fall & Spring) near the end of the semester.

The Oral Exam will focus on the student’s ability to apply their learning and training to three (3) case vignettes. One case vignette will be prepared by each

Committee Member participating in the Oral Exam. Important aspects of the Oral Exam will be:

- Case Conceptualization
- Diagnosis – Differential Diagnosis
- Assessment & Testing
- Ethical Issues
- Multicultural Issues
- Treatment Plan

Evaluation Criteria for the Oral Examination: Each committee member will rate each case vignette during the student's oral examination using a 5 point Likert Score. The student must receive an overall average score of 3.0 or better on all three case vignettes to pass without additional steps.

If a student gets an average score lower than 3.0 on ONE case vignette but still earns an OVERALL score higher than 3.0, the student will be required to submit a three page Remediation and Review document based on committee feedback within four days. The committee will review the Remediation and Review document and if it is deemed acceptable (per Written Portfolio standards), the student will have passed the Oral Examination.

If a student get an average score lower than 3.0 on TWO case vignettes but still earns an OVERALL score higher than 3.0, this student will not have passed the Oral Examination and will need to wait until the next Oral Examination cycle to test again.

If a student receives an overall average score of less than 3.0, this student will not have passed the Oral Examination and will need to wait until the next Oral Examination cycle to test again.

If a student fails the Oral Examination after a second attempt, the Committee will convene to decide whether further remediation on the part of the student is advisable. Thus the Committee will vote for a "final failure" or a "failure with remediation". If the student fails the Oral Examination a third time, it will result in automatic dismissal from the program.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students must declare their intent to take the Comprehensive Exam to the Graduate Coordinator before the end of the sixth week of class in the semester of the examination. Students must be enrolled during the semester in which they take the comprehensive examination (both written and oral portions). Students must complete or be in the process of completing at least three (3) credits of Independent Study through their academic advisor. Registering for Independent Study should serve the purpose of allotting time for preparation for the Comprehensive Examination. If a student has finished their program of study

coursework, then they may enroll in one credit of Independent Study to meet this requirement.

## Practicum

Students in the clinical track must complete 12 credit hours of Practicum. Completion of the 12 credit hours ensures that each student in this track gains 720 hours of direct clinical experience while completing the program.

Practicum placements are arranged through cooperative planning by the student, the program, and the agency. Students from our program have been placed with the following agencies: The New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute; San Miguel/Guadalupe Community Mental Health Center; Tri-County Family Justice Center; the Las Vegas City Schools; and many others.

Before enrolling in PSY 634 - Practicum, students must:

1. Pass PSY 651 - Professional Ethics and Issues
2. Pass PSY 672 - Introduction to Counseling and Therapy
3. Be evaluated by the faculty to possess the clinical and professional tools and competence needed to serve as a training clinician in outside practicum sites.

If a clinical student does not meet these requirements, he/she may be required to: 1) meet with faculty to discuss weaknesses in his/her skills; 2) switch from Clinical to General track; or 3) retake necessary coursework to demonstrate proficiency.

The practicum student serves as a representative of the NMHU Psychology program to the community at large. Failing to meet the expectations of this role may lead to restrictions. *Participating in practicum is a privilege, not a right.*

The following requirements apply to all students enrolled in Practicum.

- 1) Practicum students must work 60 hours for each practicum credit hour. All hours must be logged and the logs must be submitted to the practicum supervisor at the end of the semester. If a student has not logged 60 hours for each credit hour by the end of the semester, the student will receive an incomplete grade until the remaining hours are completed. PLEASE NOTE that summer semester is much shorter than full-length semesters (i.e., Fall/Spring), so students will have to work several more hours per week to meet practicum requirements for the same number of credit hours.
- 2) Practicum students should understand that placement in practicum sites is similar to having a job. Thus, professionalism is expected (i.e., consistent attendance, proper attire, advanced notification of absence, etc.). Additionally, practicum work may not be restricted to dates bounded by



the NMHU academic calendar (i.e., breaks between semesters) and supervisors may not be aware of scheduled breaks. It is up to the practicum student to inform on-site supervisors of any instances that may interfere with their regularly scheduled practicum hours as early as possible.

- 3) The student shall receive at least one hour per week face-to-face supervision with a staff member at the practicum site with appropriate training and experience.
- 4) The student will meet with other practicum students and the NMHU faculty supervisor on a weekly basis during the semester for group supervision for at least 1.5 hours, to share practicum experiences and to report on the progress of the practicum.
- 5) The practicum site, nature of work, and identity of the supervisor will vary depending upon the needs and talents of the student. However, all of these issues will be determined at a meeting between the on-site supervisor, NMHU faculty supervisor, and the student before the student may register for practicum credit.
- 6) The student, in consultation with the on-site supervisor, will complete a list of goals and objectives for him or herself at the beginning of the semester, along with a list of activities the student will engage in to meet those goals and objectives.
- 7) The on-site supervisor will complete an evaluation of the student twice during the semester, once approximately midway through the semester, and once at the end.
- 8) The student's grade for the practicum will be determined by the NMHU faculty supervisor based upon the on-site supervisor's evaluations and the evaluations of the NMHU faculty supervisor of the student's performance.
- 8) The student will complete a one page summary of the practicum at the end of the semester. The student will also complete an evaluation of the practicum experience.
- 9) The NMHU faculty supervisor will maintain regular contact with the on-site supervisor, and will meet with the student and the on-site supervisor at least three times during the semester, once at the beginning of the semester, once approximately midway through the semester, and once at the end.
- 10) The student, on-site supervisor, and NMHU faculty supervisor will all sign a contract specifying the above information.

## Other University Policies

This section includes some general university policies of which students should be aware. This section is by no means complete, and students should refer to the NMHU Graduate Catalog and the Student Handbook for other relevant information.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of New Mexico Highlands University to maintain a community in which students, faculty, staff and administrators are free to work, study, and reside without being subjected to sexually harassing behavior. Such behavior subverts the mission of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and productivity of all involved. Sexual harassment is therefore prohibited on campus and in programs and activities sponsored by New Mexico Highlands University. It is further the policy of the University to prohibit sexual harassment of applicants for employment by, or admission to New Mexico Highlands University. These prohibitions shall extend to contractors and grantees of the institution.

The University is committed to protecting victims of harassment from retaliation. Therefore, it is a violation of this policy for the individual charged, or anyone who might reasonably be construed to be under their power or influence, to discriminate against, harass, intimidate, or seek reprisal against anyone as a result of bringing complaints or participating in an investigation of complaints. It is also a violation for anyone to file an intentionally false and malicious accusation of sexual harassment. New Mexico Highlands University is committed to taking swift and appropriate action against any of its officials, employees, or students who violate any portion of this policy. The information obtained as a result of this policy is confidential and will not be disclosed except to personnel with a legitimate need to know or by order of a court. **More information on this policy is available from the Affirmative Action Office at (505) 454-3308.**

## Appendix A

### Program Outcomes Assessment Plan

Psychology  
(Instructional Degree Program)

MS  
(Degree Level)

#### **Program Mission**

It is the mission of the Master's program in psychology at NMHU to train master level psychologists who can utilize critical thinking skills, demonstrate an understanding of the scientific method, and apply their knowledge of the diverse fields of psychology to their work as teachers, researchers, or practitioners. The program is designed to prepare students for either work as master level clinicians or continued study in psychology at the doctoral level. This mission is achieved through a high level of professor-to-student interaction, ample opportunities for research and practical experience, and exposure to a multicultural community setting.

#### **Student Learning Outcome 1**

Develop hypotheses based on a body of research, and design and implement a research methodology to test those hypotheses and present the results in both written and oral form.

#### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1**

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills
- Effective Use of Technology

#### **First Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 1**

Grades from the Psychology 602, Behavioral Research Methods final project will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 90% of students will receiving a B or above on this project.

#### **Second Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 1**

Composite scores from the midterm and final exams in Psychology 601, Data Analysis and Statistics will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 90% of students receiving a B or above on this composite score.

## **Student Learning Outcome 2**

Prepare students to be M.S. level counselors or doctoral candidates in other graduate institutions

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2**

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

### **First Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 2**

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research conducts an annual survey of alumni who received their degrees three years prior to the year the survey is administered. The survey includes a question regarding employment status. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 80% of our alumni demonstrating employment or graduate studies in some area of psychology.

### **Second Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 2**

For those students who take a state exam to become a licensed counselor, we expect a 90% rate of passing. We will obtain this information from the self-report of our alumni.

### **Third Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 2**

Grades from the final paper in Psychology 671, Advanced Psychopathology will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 90% of students receiving a B or above on this paper.

## **Student Learning Outcome 3**

Adopt a high standard for ethical behavior and work performance.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3**

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

### **First Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 3**

Each year the department will compile data from the “Faculty Review of Graduate Students”. This form is filled out at the end of the first two semesters of graduate work. It reflects a consensus opinion of the psychology faculty regarding the student’s performance. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by 90% of students receiving at least a 4 out of 5 on the items “Overall job performance” and “Professionalism” at the end of their second semester in the program.

### **Second Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 3**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors’ review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Final evaluation of the semester. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was considered above average by their supervisors and with no students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was below average or worse.

### **Third Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 3**

The final grade in Psychology 651, Professional Ethics and Issues will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 95% of students receiving a final grade of 90% or better.

### **Student Learning Outcome 4**

Apply knowledge of cross-cultural differences to the understanding and practice of psychology.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 4**

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

### **First Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 4**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors’ review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving comments indicating that their practicum involved work with diverse populations and that they performed well in these settings.

### **Second Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 4**

The final grade in Psychology 677, Multicultural Psychotherapy will be used for this assessment. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 90% of students receiving a final grade of 90% or better.

### **Student Learning Outcome 5**

Apply theoretical knowledge and interpersonal skills to therapeutic relationships.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 5**

- Mastery of Content Knowledge and Skills
- Effective Communication Skills
- Critical and Reflective Thinking Skills

### **First Means of Assessment for Student Learning Outcome 5**

Each year the department will compile data from the Field Supervisors' review of practicum students placed in that year. This is a qualitative review of practicum student performance. Final evaluation of the semester. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 75% of practicum students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was considered above average by their supervisors and with no students receiving ratings indicating that their performance was below average or worse.

**Appendix B**  
**NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY**  
**Graduate Program in Psychology**  
**Academic and Behavioral Agreement**

The following represents an outline of the academic and behavioral expectations of all students enrolled in New Mexico Highlands University's Graduate Program in Psychology.

Academic Expectations:

All graduate students are expected to maintain an overall grade point average of no less than 3.0 per semester. Graduate students are also expected to make substantial, regular and acceptable progress toward completion of the Master's thesis. After enrollment for thesis credit, each student must enroll for at least one credit hour of thesis in each subsequent semester (including summer term) until completion of thesis.

In the event that these standards are not met, academic action may be taken. It must be noted that the procedures of due process are more limited with respect to academic action and thus a hearing is not required. The student will be advised in respect to academic deficiencies and be made aware of failure or impending failure to meet standards prior to action being instituted. Failure to meet the academic standards of the Graduate Program in Psychology may result in loss of graduate assistantship, suspension, or termination from the program of study at the discretion of the Department Chair in consultation with the program faculty.

Behavioral Expectations:

All graduate students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines articulated by both the New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) and the American Psychological Association (APA). The NMHU code of conduct is articulated in the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure while the APA guidelines are presented in the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (2002) which include the principles of competence, integrity, professional and scientific responsibility, respect for people's rights and dignity, concern for others' welfare, and social responsibility.

In the event that these behavioral expectations are believed to have been violated, disciplinary action may be taken by the program or department. Possible consequences include oral warning, censure, restriction, disciplinary probation, loss of graduate assistantship, suspension, or expulsion. In the case of academic dishonesty, possible penalties include automatic failure in a class, suspension, or termination from the program. It must be noted that the procedures of due process as articulated in the NMHU's Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure Manual do pertain to matters of perceived misconduct. Students may appeal the disciplinary actions of the program or department through the Office of Student Affairs.

By signing this document, the student is agreeing to perform and conduct him or herself in a manner commensurate with the standards articulated or referred to by this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

## Appendix C Faculty Review of Student Progress

SEMESTER \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

For purposes of your academic and professional development, the following areas of performance during the past semester have been reviewed by the psychology faculty. If you have questions or wish to discuss any of the following areas, you are encouraged to meet with any faculty member(s).

Excellent = 5  
Good = 4  
Average = 3  
Needs Improvement = 2  
Unacceptable = 1

AREA	RATING
1. Overall academic performance.	_____
2. Overall job performance.	_____
3. Professionalism.	_____
4. Interaction with faculty.	_____
5. Dependability.	_____
6. Motivation/Initiative.	_____
7. Coping with stress and deadlines.	_____
8. Accepting responsibility for own learning.	_____
9. Oral communication skills.	_____
10. Written communication skills.	_____
11. Research involvement	_____

Other Comments



**Appendix D  
APPROVAL OF THESIS COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
External Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Optional Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Optional Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chairperson

**Appendix E**  
**THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM**  
**Master's Program in Psychology**  
**Department of Behavioral Sciences**  
**New Mexico Highlands University**

We have read the thesis proposal written by \_\_\_\_\_  
and the following is our report:

\_\_\_\_\_ ACCEPTABLE  
\_\_\_\_\_ ACCEPTABLE WITH THE FOLLOWING REVISIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NOT ACCEPTABLE - REASONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF THESIS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Chair (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Chair (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychology Reader (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Psychology Reader (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outside Reader\* (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outside Reader (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*Outside Reader is optional for Thesis Proposal Defense

**Appendix F**  
**REQUEST FOR GRADUATE ORAL EXAMINATION**

DATE

STUDENT'S NAME            I.D.#

EXAM TO BE SCHEDULED AT:

DATE            TIME

PLACE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE: (BE SURE PROFESSOR IS AVAILABLE  
BEFORE SUBMITTING HIS/HER NAME.)

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

DEPARTMENT MEMBER

OUTSIDE MEMBER

OTHER MEMBER (OPTIONAL)

APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT HEAD

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL DEAN

APPROVAL OF REGISTRAR

AFTER ALL APPROVALS ARE OBTAINED, THE REGISTRAR IS TO MAKE  
COPIES

AND SEND TO THE FOLLOWING:

DEPARTMENT HEAD

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STUDENT

**Appendix G**  
**NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY**  
**DONNELLY LIBRARY**

**THESIS INFORMATION SHEET**

**PAPER:**

Two clean copies (no corrections), to be submitted to the Library, must be on bond paper with 50% cotton fiber content or higher. This is minimum; better grades may be used. Please have the original thesis approved by the librarian before making additional copies in the event changes are required. Additional copies may be on any paper desired by the student, although a good grade of typing paper is recommended. Your personal copy will look better longer on good paper. E-Z Raze, Racerase, Corrasable, Onion Skin, and other easily erased or these papers are not acceptable as library copies. If you have a question concerning paper quality or copy quality, check with the librarian.

**GRAPHIC MATERIALS:**

Charts, graphs, tables, etc., which cannot be typed may be reproduced by hand, by Photostat, by photograph, or by photocopy. No other copy process will be allowed. If a photographic reproduction is full-page size (8 ½ x 11), the photographic paper is to be lightweight, flexible, and with matte finish. Glossy finish photographs may not be used except when smaller than full-page size. These are to be securely glued to the regular thesis paper. Rubber cement is a good gluing medium. Hand-drawn graphic materials are to be done with black ink, preferably, India ink. Polaroid photographs must be suitably fixed as prescribed by the manufacturer.

**LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL**

Be sure to complete the Letter of Transmittal and turn it in with thesis copies to the Library.

**TITLE PAGE AND APPROVAL PAGE:**

The first page of the thesis will be the title page (sample attached) and the second page must be the approval page (sample attached). The approval page must be signed by all members of the examining committee, the Graduate Program Coordinator or the Department Chair, the Dean, and by the Provost before final submission to the Library. The two library copies should have original signatures on the approval page.

**MANUAL**

Please consult with your graduate program coordinator or department chair for the appropriate style manual to use. The left margin on all pages must be at least 1 ½ “; all other margins must be at least 1”. Be particularly careful to maintain proper margins. Please ensure that landscape documents face the right margin; the title should be at the left margin.

**FEES**

A binding fee for the original and one copy must be paid to the Business Office and the receipt shown to the librarian. If additional bound copies are desired, the extra binding fee must be paid. The current fee is \$13.00 per bound copy.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO: Donnelly Library

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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Transmitted are two copies (both with original signatures) of a thesis entitled

\_\_\_\_\_

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's or an Educational Specialist degree at New Mexico Highlands University.

The two copies with original signatures are for the library, an additional copies is for the \_\_\_\_\_ Dept./division (if required). Please distribute the additional copies as follows:

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Date



Sample Title Page

**TITLE**

A THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Division  
Department of Behavioral Sciences  
New Mexico Highlands University

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

by  
Name  
Date

Sample Approval Page  
(TITLE)

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Division  
Department of Behavioral Sciences  
New Mexico Highlands University

by  
(Name)

Approved by Examining Committee:

Chairman of Committee,  
Department of Behavioral Sciences

Department of

School Dean      Department of



APPENDIX H:

What to Expect When You're Defending

Prepared by: Shannon Foskey, MS Clinical Psychology/Counseling 2016

So, after months of researching, writing, revising, and re-revising, the time has finally come. Your first reader has given you the stamp of approval to schedule a defense date for your thesis! Congratulations. However, you still have a ways to go. Here is what to expect when you are in the final stages of completing your thesis.

- 1) **Scheduling your actual defense.** This involves contacting your thesis committee, which consists of at least three very busy individuals, and attempting to schedule a date and time that is convenient for all of them and yourself. It may take a week just to identify an appropriate date and time for your defense. This also means that your defense date may be scheduled later than you originally anticipated (as in, 4 to 6 weeks from when you contacted your thesis committee). However, you may benefit from having some extra time to prepare your presentation. You will also need to fill out the Request for Oral Exam form that needs to be signed by the department chair/grad coordinator, Graduate dean, and registrar.
- 2) **Preparing and practicing your presentation.** It is paramount that you not only have a well prepared thesis presentation but that you rehearse it, as well. I would recommend that you practice your presentation as many times as possible before your defense and try to schedule at least two mock defenses with your first reader. This will allow you to see and correct any word choice issues, missing information, and help your presentation to flow more smoothly.
- 3) **Defending.** The day has finally come and you feel confident about your well-rehearsed defense. All three members of your committee have agreed that you have passed...with revisions. Your first reader will not likely have many (or any) revisions for you as this person has already read and re-read your paper and offered revisions throughout the entire process. However, your second and third reader will have a fresh perspective on your paper and will likely have questions, comments, and concerns that they would like to see addressed in your final draft.
- 4) **Revising your paper.** It may seem like a daunting task to address all the revisions your thesis committee has requested. Do not fret! Believe it or not, your committee wants you to succeed and will likely be willing to help you if you need it. The amount of time you spend revising your thesis depends entirely on you. This process could take a few days or a few weeks depending on how much time you are able to devote to addressing your revisions. Aside from the revisions

your committee has asked for, you must also now format your paper for binding. Fortunately, a binding template does exist and you will likely be able to copy and paste your paper into this template with little frustration. This template will include the signature pages you will need; make sure to update the information on them to reflect your specific department and the names and titles of the individuals who must sign the pages.

- 5) **Obtaining signatures.** You have completed revising your paper and have formatted it appropriately. Now, you will email it to your first reader, be sure to verify that this person has the appropriate signature pages for your document and that these pages are printed on the special thesis paper required by the library. Once your first reader has approved this draft, he or she will sign your signature pages. This process will be repeated by your second and third reader. Once your thesis committee has signed off on your paper, it will be sent to the department chair. This person will review your paper and may also request that you make some revisions to it before signing off on it. Address these revisions, then you will send your newly revised paper to the college dean, who will review it (this person may or may not have any revisions for you) and sign off on it. Finally, your paper will be sent to the graduate dean. Once you receive this final signature, the graduate dean will sign a letter of transmittal, which lets the library know that your paper is ready for binding. This process may take some time. Be prepared to wait at least two weeks (longer depending on the part of the semester) before you obtain all your required signatures.
- 6) **Binding your paper.** Finally you have obtained all required signatures! Now you get to submit your document to the library for binding. It is a good idea to send a copy of your paper to the library to verify that it is formatted correctly before you print it out on expensive thesis paper. Meet with librarian Josephine Sena for guidance ([jlsenag@nmhu.edu](mailto:jlsenag@nmhu.edu)). Once the library has confirmed the formatting, you will need to print all your required copies on thesis paper (specified on the library's web page) and save a PDF of your paper to a CD. You will also need to go to the business office and pay the binding fee. Once you have paid the fee, you will take your receipt, the CD, and your printed copies to the appropriate area of the library. The library will send your document off to be bound. This takes at least a month. However, once your letter of transmittal has been sent to the library, your degree requirements will be considered complete. You do not have to wait for your bound copies to be received by the department before being awarded your degree.
- 7) **Celebrate.** Congratulations! You have now completed your thesis. Before the beginning of next semester, NMHU will review your degree requirements and

award your degree. However, if you complete your degree at the middle of the semester, NMHU will not update your transcript to reflect your awarded degree until AFTER the end of the semester. In the meantime, plan your graduation party and reward yourself for all your hard work. Good job, graduate!

## APPENDIX I:

### **New graduate student first steps--Psychology**

1. Go to the campus
2. Talk to ITS to set up your account: Their phone is 505-426-2222. Campus location is located in LIBG-28. You will want to set up your email account with them.
3. You can immediately register for classes on the banner system: Go to nmhu.edu. You can use the Purple Pub computer lab in Student Union Building 213 if needed. Click on MyNMHU at the top of the page. Use your new username and password, and register for classes in your student account. Recommendations are in the Student Handbook for classes to take depending on year and General vs. Clinical/Counseling track.
4. Housing on campus if needed: Go to Student Union Building 328, or call 505-454-3544.
5. *One day after* going to ITS
  - a. On campus: Go to the 3rd floor of the Student Union Building 301 to receive your student ID card.
  - b. Set up your email account using the student email portal the next day.