Doctoral Dissertation Defense Committee

The committee consists of five members, three of whom (including the dissertation advisor) must be members of the Graduate Faculty and the Psychology Department. The fourth member must be from outside the Psychology Department, a member of the Graduate Faculty, and serves as Chair of the Dissertation Defense Committee. The fifth member can be inside or outside of the Psychology Department and need not be a member of the Graduate Faculty. At least one person must be a core faculty member in the student’s academic cluster (i.e., clinical, social, developmental, or biobehavioral*), and it is strongly recommended that one be from a department cluster other than the student’s own.

Proposals for thesis or dissertation research must be approved by the full committee in advance of substantive work on the project. Changes in thesis or dissertation plans are to be discussed with the committee for approval as the research is in progress. It is the responsibility of the student to keep her or his committee up to date.

Thesis and dissertation defenses are publicly held. The student must complete the department Intent to Defend Form at least six weeks prior to the defense. The student must follow all Graduate College requirements and deadlines. Only in exceptional circumstances and with the unanimous consent of committee members may defenses be held during June, July, or August. A request must be made to the Department Chair for a defense during these months.

*The biobehavioral cluster serves as the academic cluster for students in the Human Behavioral Pharmacology subprogram.