Department of Psychology Graduate Student Handbook

2025-2026

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Welcome!

Welcome to the Psychology M.A. program at Southern Connecticut State University. The graduate program in psychology is designed to provide students with a rigorous, research-based Liberal Arts program that develops creative problem-solving skills which will be applicable in clinical, industrial, and educational settings. Flexible enough to be completed either on a full-time or part-time basis, it is appropriate for a wide range of candidates. For those potential doctoral candidates who are not able to enter a Ph.D. or Psy.D. program at the present time, this program can serve as a foundation for later acceptance to such programs. For those already working in clinical, educational, or industrial settings, the program offers an opportunity to update and strengthen credentials. For those whose background in psychology is limited, the program is designed to allow them to explore their personal interests in obtaining employment in settings related to psychology. Teachers in elementary schools can learn how to measure student progress and strengthen understanding of human development; those in secondary schools may use the program to prepare themselves to teach psychology in addition to their current certification. Emphasis is placed on faculty advisement to help in tailoring the program to the needs of the individual student.

As a general program, the curriculum is designed to cover the breadth of psychology, while allowing students to select those areas in which they desire to deepen their knowledge of psychology. By doing so, it is able to meet the educational goals of a variety of students. It must be noted that the program ***IS NOT*** designed to lead to licensure by the State of Connecticut as a therapist. This certification is offered by other programs, and students with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact the Psychology Graduate Coordinator.

Psychology Faculty and Research Interests

The educational background and research interests of full-time faculty in the Psychology Department can be found on the Psychology Department website. You also can read about their research labs here. As a graduate student in our department, you should feel free to seek the advice of *any* of our faculty about career opportunities or specific topics in psychology in which you have a special interest. The posted information regarding faculty research interests may help you to select a suitable thesis advisor to approach to discuss the thesis project.

Becoming a Matriculated Student

To apply to the program, students must submit the following (see School of Graduate and Professional Studies website for submission link):

- The graduate school application.
- All college transcripts.
- Two letters of recommendation from academic or professional references sent to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.
- A 300- to 500-word statement explaining why the applicant is interested in obtaining a Master's degree in psychology, and what type of career the applicant is seeking.

Once your application is complete, it is reviewed by the Psychology Department and a recommendation is made to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. If accepted, you will receive a letter from the Graduate Studies Office stating that you meet the requirements for entrance into the Master's program. This letter will also notify you of the need to submit any remaining paperwork to become a matriculated student. Once you receive your acceptance letter, you should also contact the Psychology Graduate Coordinator for advisement.

Academic Status

Full-Time vs. Part-Time Status

Graduate students who have been formally admitted to the university by the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies are considered matriculated and eligible to register on a full-time (9-15 credits) or part-time basis (fewer than 9 credits). Students who register for 9 or more credits are charged the full-time graduate rate. Students who register for fewer than 9 credits are charged the part-time rate. Students are responsible for any tuition or fee increases that occur before the first day of classes. Tuition and fees are charged based on student type or student level (graduate/undergraduate) not course level. Please notify the Graduate Coordinator if you are planning to change your status from full- to part-time, or vice versa.

Time to Completion

The Graduate Catalog states:

"All requirements for a graduate degree at Southern must be completed within a period of six years prior to the granting of the master's degree or sixth year professional diploma. The six-year period begins with the semester in which the first graduate course is completed that applies to the program or the date of acceptance, whichever comes first. Graduate courses more than six years old at the time of graduation do not count toward meeting degree requirements. This includes transferred courses.

An extension of the time to complete degree requirements may be granted only if there are compelling extenuating circumstances. To obtain an extension, a student must petition the graduate

coordinator in writing prior to the expiration of the course or program. The graduate coordinator then forwards the petition, with a recommendation, to the Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. The student and the graduate coordinator will be notified in writing of the approval or disapproval of the petition.

When an approved program expires, the student must reapply to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies. Courses that do not meet the validity period cannot be applied to a new program of study unless revalidated by examination. Some graduate programs permit revalidation, while others do not. If revalidation is permitted by the academic department, the student's current knowledge and proficiency in the content, methodology, and skills of each course must be determined and certified by the graduate coordinator. The School of Graduate and Professional Studies does not permit revalidation of more than half of the coursework in a program. Revalidations must be approved and submitted to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies before the student is readmitted."

For more information see:
https://grad.southernct.edu/student-resources/expiration-of-graduate-programs/

Leaves of Absence

If you plan not to register for any credits in a given semester or need to take time off from the program, you should discuss your plans with the Graduate Coordinator and complete the form for taking a leave, which carries a fee of $150/semester and maintains your status as a matriculated student. If you are ill, pregnant, facing military deployment, or caring for a family member, you may petition the Graduate Dean to have the fee waived. The Leave of Absence form can be found at: https://inside.southernct.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/leave-of-absence.pdf.

Program Requirements

Students can complete the 30-credit program by choosing one of two capstone options: 1) the thesis or 2) the comprehensive exam.

General Requirements

ALL students must meet the following requirements in order to earn the Master's degree:

- An overall graduate grade-point average of 3.0 or better.

- **Required:** PSY 500: Design and Analysis in Psychology (3 credits)

- **Psychology Elective Group 1:** Completion of at least <u>one</u> of the following (3 credits):
    - PSY 501: Thinking and Learning
    - PSY 503: Cognition and Memory
    - PSY 505: Contemporary Theories of Motivation
    - PSY 583: Seminar in Comparative Physiological Psychology

- **Psychology Elective Group 2:** Completion of at least <u>one</u> of the following (3 Credits):
    - PSY 502: Problems in Psychology
    - PSY 512: Theories and Issues in Developmental Psychology
    - PSY 517: Seminar in Social Psychology
    - PSY 526: Theories and Research in Personality

Course Requirements for the Thesis Capstone Option

- **Three Thesis Courses:**
    PSY 589: Thesis Seminar (3 Credits)
    PSY 590: Thesis Proposal (3 Credits, Required)
    PSY 591: Thesis (3 Credits, Required)

- **Elective Courses:** Four more graduate courses (12 credits). These can include additional courses from Group 1 and 2 above, additional PSY graduate courses, and up to two graduate courses from other departments.

If a student decides to not pursue a thesis, PSY 589 may be applied to the Comprehensive Exam track.

Those electing the thesis must also:

- Present and submit the thesis proposal to their thesis committee (advisor, assigned member of the Graduate Committee, and one additional reader decided by the advisor and student).

- Present and submit the completed thesis to their thesis committee and successfully defend their thesis.

- Submit the final version of the thesis to their thesis committee for approval and to ProQuest in the approved format. For more information, see here: https://grad.southernct.edu/student-research/ (scroll down to Approval of ProQuest formatting section).

For additional information on process and procedures, students should consult the *Psychology M.A. Thesis Proposal and Thesis Student FAQ* document. They can obtain a copy from their thesis advisor or the Graduate Coordinator.

Course Requirements for the Comprehensive Exam Capstone Option

In addition to the General Requirements listed on page 7, students selecting this option must complete:

- **Elective Courses**: Seven more graduate courses (21 credits). These can include additional courses from Group 1 and 2 above, additional PSY graduate courses, and up to two graduate courses from other departments.

- the comprehensive exam and pass with a C average.

The Psychology Graduate Coordinator will solicit applications each semester (via an online form) from those students who are completing their final requirements for the degree. However, students are encouraged to consult with the Graduate Coordinator to plan ahead.

For additional information on process and procedures, students should consult the *Comprehensive Exam Procedures Student FAQ* document. They can obtain a copy from the Graduate Coordinator.

Psychological Assessment Certificate

Beginning Fall 2025, students may elect to complete a Certificate program in Psychological Assessment. This program requires the following four (4) courses, which may be completed as part of the Master's program curriculum.

- Psychopathology (PSY 528) **[typically Fall semesters]**
- Clinical Methods: Cognitive Assessment (PSY 543) **[Fall only course]**
- Clinical Methods: Personality and Social Assessment (PSY 544) **[Spring only course]**
- Practicum in Assessment and Report Writing (PSY 546) **[every semester]**

Please see the Planned Programs section for more information on how you might integrate these certificate program courses into your Master's program curriculum.

For more information, see the Graduate Coordinator for a detailed handout.

Registering for Classes

Students register for classes online in Banner, which you can access via MySCSU. The Registrar's Office announces the date that graduate registration for upcoming semesters will begin. These dates can be found at: https://calendar.southernct.edu/academic/all. You can also find your registration date and time here: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/registration/dateandtime

To learn how students register for classes, start here and click on the How to Register drop-down menu.

Always register for Psychology graduate classes as soon as possible. Popular courses may fill quickly, so you need to secure a seat.

Graduate Advising

The Graduate Coordinator is the assigned advisor for all graduate students (*note the assigned advisor is *not* the same as the thesis advisor). The Graduate Coordinator is available to assist you with questions about the scheduling, curriculum, and program planning. However, students should also feel free to pursue work with other faculty members whose backgrounds and interests fit with their educational goals. For instance, students may meet with someone who is doing research in an area of common interest. Such "informal advising" is common and highly encouraged.

Faculty have a range of teaching, research, and community service responsibilities, so students may find that making an appointment works best to ensure faculty are available to meet with them.

Pathways to Degree

The Psychology M.A. program is a 30-credit program with a thesis capstone or the comprehensive exam capstone option. There are multiple pathways to the degree.

Traditional Two-Year Program

The Psychology M.A. program was initially designed as a two-year Master's program. This pathway is the recommended program for most students, especially those who plan to pursue admission to doctoral (Ph.D. and Psy.D.) programs. During their time in the program, students are strongly encouraged to pursue a thesis and gain additional research experiences in faculty labs and/or internships.

Below you will find two typical planned programs for the two-year program.

Two Typical Planned Programs

To help you design your program of courses, two typical planned programs are given below as examples, one for the thesis option and one for the comprehensive exam option. Under both options, the required course (PSY 500) is completed in the first Fall semester after matriculation. Both examples also present the minimum number of courses required. Students may take additional courses if desired.

Note that the normal full-time course load for graduate students is three courses a semester, although taking four courses per semester is possible in some cases. However, many of our students do not have the time to devote to three courses per semester, and it is perfectly acceptable to complete the program on a part-time basis, taking one or two courses a semester. Note however, that the university has a six-year time limit for completing a Master's degree program, as explained on page 5.

Thesis Option Planned Program Example:

Under the thesis option, students normally complete the required courses and distribution requirements in their first year and complete the thesis courses (PSY 590 and PSY 591) in their last two semesters.

Fall Semester, First Year	Spring Semester, First Year
PSY 500 Design and Analysis	PSY 589 Thesis Seminar
PSY 5xx (Group 1: 501, 503, 505, 583) **or**	PSY 5xx (Group 1: 501, 503, 505, 583) **or**
PSY 5xx (Group 2: 502, 512, 517, 526)	PSY 5xx (Group 2: 502, 512, 517, 526)
PSY 5xx (Elective)	PSY 5xx (Elective)
Fall Semester, Second Year	Spring Semester, Second Year
PSY 590 Thesis Proposal	PSY 591 Thesis
PSY 5xx (Elective)	PSY 5xx (Elective)

Comprehensive Exam Option Planned Program Example:

Students are advised to take at least five courses that can be used to prepare for the comprehensive exam. The exam is normally taken at the end of the student's last semester. The exam is focused on material from PSY 500 (Design & Analysis) and two other courses chosen by the student from a subset of regular psychology graduate offerings.

Fall Semester, First Year	Spring Semester, First Year
PSY 500 Design and Analysis	PSY 5xx (Group 1: 501, 503, 505, 583) **or**
	PSY 5xx (Group 2: 502, 512, 517, 526)
PSY 5xx (Group 1: 501, 503, 505, 583) **or**	PSY 5xx (Elective)
PSY 5xx (Group 2: 502, 512, 517, 526)	
PSY 5xx (Elective)	PSY 5xx (Elective)

Fall Semester, Second Year	Spring Semester, Second Year
PSY 5xx (Elective)	PSY 5xx (Elective)
PSY 5xx (Elective)	PSY 5xx (Elective)
	(Comprehensive Exam usually taken now)

Naturally, you must take the required courses (as listed in the **Program Requirements** section on page 7), but your choice of electives can be tailored to your background, interests, and career objectives. **Note that some courses are offered every semester, most are offered only every two, three, or four semesters, so you should make sure that each course you want will be offered in the semester you plan to take it.** Students should check the list of courses that the department plans to offer in the next several semesters. A Course Rotation Plan is available to assist with this. Please ask the Psychology Graduate Coordinator for an updated course rotation plan.

It is also possible to take one or two courses outside the Psychology Department if they are relevant to your degree program, but these courses must be approved in advance by the Psychology Graduate Coordinator.

One-Year Option

The program may be completed in two semesters and a summer session if desired. Students wishing this option should consult with the Graduate Coordinator at the time of matriculation. This plan entails four courses each in the fall and spring semesters, and two courses over the summer. Typically, the two courses in the summer will be electives outside of Psychology since the Psychology Department does not regularly offer graduate courses over the summer. Students electing this option must ensure that their work schedules allow sufficient time to be devoted to their studies to ensure success. Students electing this plan can take the comprehensive exam at the end of their second full semester (spring or fall).

Accelerated Pathway

At Southern Connecticut State University, students with a 3.0 GPA and 90+ credits may be eligible to take up to 12 credits of graduate-level coursework; this coursework would apply to both their undergraduate and graduate transcripts. In Psychology, this program is designed for undergraduate psychology majors who wish to extend their research training and to develop creative problem-

solving skills. The program is designed to lead to the completion of a Master's thesis but can also be completed through a comprehensive exam.

Graduate course grades will be recorded on the undergraduate transcript, computed in the undergraduate GPA, and credit may be earned towards completion of the bachelor's degree. If the student earns a 'C' or better in a graduate course, the grade will also be recorded on the graduate transcript, computed in the graduate GPA, and credit may be earned towards completion of the master's degree. Keep in mind that Approval to start graduate coursework during an undergraduate program does not guarantee future admission to the graduate program.

Students will meet with their undergraduate faculty advisor to prepare a Graduate Course Plan. For Psychology, this includes PSY 500 and PSY 589 (listed below under Senior year of undergraduate study). However, students may take up to two more graduate courses in consultation with their undergraduate advisor and the Graduate Coordinator.

Senior year of undergraduate study:
    PSY 500: Design and Analysis in Psychology (3 credits)
    PSY 589: Thesis Seminar (3 credits)
    Apply to MA Program in Fall

After acceptance to the MA Program (Masters year):
Group 1: Completion of at least <u>one</u> of the following courses: (3 credits)
    PSY 501: Thinking and Learning
    PSY 503: Cognition and Memory
    PSY 504: Topics in Perception
    PSY 505: Contemporary Theories of Motivation
    PSY 583: Seminar in Comparative Physiological Psychology.

Group 2: Completion of at least <u>one</u> of the following courses (3 Credits):
    PSY 502: Problems in Psychology
    PSY 512: Theories and Issues in Developmental Psychology
    PSY 517: Seminar in Social Psychology
    PSY 526: Theories and Research in Personality.

Graduate Capstone

  Thesis Track: students must complete the following:
    PSY 590 - Thesis Proposal (3 credits)
    PSY 591 – Thesis (3 credits)
    Electives: 12 credits at the graduate level. These can include additional courses from Group 1 and 2 above, additional PSY graduate courses, and up to two graduate courses from other departments.

  Comprehensive Exam Track: Students must complete the following:
    Comprehensive Exam

Electives: 18 credits at the graduate level. These can include additional courses from Group 1 and 2 above, additional PSY graduate courses, and up to two graduate courses from other departments.

Capstone Options

As mentioned previously, the Psychology M.A. program offers a thesis capstone option or a comprehensive exam capstone option.

The Comprehensive Exam Capstone Option

To fulfill the requirements for a M.A. in Psychology, a student is required to complete 30 credits in course work with a minimum of a "B" average and must pass the comprehensive exam. Students may elect to take the comprehensive exam before they finish the 30 required credits of course work. The Master's degree will not be awarded until all requirements are completed.

The comprehensive exam is designed to test your knowledge in a variety of different areas of psychology. **Three areas are required for all students.** You must take the Design and Analysis (PSY 500) section, plus two of the ten other sections listed below. The right column lists the graduate course that provides the best preparation for each section of the exam. In addition, you should plan to devote a significant amount of time in your final semester toward preparing for the comprehensive exam.

Exam Section	Course(s)
REQUIRED SECTION:	
• Design and Analysis	PSY 500 Design and Analysis
SELECT TWO SECTIONS:	
• Cognition	PSY 503 Cognition and Memory
• Developmental	PSY 512 Theories & Issues in Developmental Psychology
• History and Systems	PSY 502 Problems in Psychology
• Law and Ethics	PSY 592 Issues in Psychology, Law, and Ethics
• Learning	PSY 501 Thinking and Learning
• Personality	PSY 526 Theories and Research in Personality
• Psychopathology	PSY 528 Psychopathology
• Physiological	PSY 583 Seminar in Comparative Physiological Psychology
• Social	PSY 517 Social Psychology

The exam is offered twice a year, typically around the last week of April and the last week of November. If a student does not pass the comprehensive exam on their first attempt, the student may be permitted to take the exam <u>one</u> more time, but not until the next scheduled administration, or at a later time. Students **cannot** change from the Comprehensive Exam to the Thesis option after taking the comprehensive exam.

The Psychology Graduate Coordinator will solicit applications each semester (via an online form) from those students who are completing their final requirements for the degree. However, students are encouraged to consult with the Graduate Coordinator to plan ahead.

For additional information on process and procedures, students should consult the *Comprehensive Exam Procedures Student FAQ* document. They can obtain a copy from the Graduate Coordinator.

The Thesis Capstone Option

To prepare for the thesis, students are strongly encouraged to enroll in PSY 589, which guides the student along the thesis path, including developing working ideas and locating thesis advisors. In PSY 590, the student works directly with their thesis advisor to write the proposal, which must then be approved by their thesis committee. In PSY 591, the student conducts the thesis research and completes writing the thesis, which must be approved by the thesis advisor, a second reader (a member of the Psychology Graduate Committee), their third reader, and accepted by the graduate school.

Preparing for the Thesis Project

If you intend to write a Master's thesis, you should start planning early. PSY 500 presents an

excellent opportunity to begin developing ideas and research the literature in an area of interest. During PSY 589 you should start to think about (1) possible topics you would like to investigate and (2) possible faculty members in the department who could serve as your advisor. The group experience of PSY 589 will facilitate this process. Once you have at least a general idea of a topic area you want to pursue, you should speak to one or more faculty members to find one who will serve as your thesis advisor. Your thesis advisor must be a full-time faculty member in the Psychology Department, even if you are planning to conduct a research project under the direction of someone who works in a laboratory or other facility outside the university. If you are uncertain about who would be an appropriate advisor for your thesis, consult with the Psychology Graduate Coordinator.

You must have obtained a thesis advisor before you can receive the permission to sign up for PSY 590. Before agreeing to serve as your thesis advisor, the faculty member should be reasonably confident that your project has scientific merit and that you will be able to obtain the resources necessary to complete the research (appropriate research participants, equipment, supplies, etc.). You will be wasting your time and money if you register for PSY 590 but do not have a realistic plan for your thesis project.

Registration for Thesis Proposal (PSY 590) begins by having your intended thesis advisor email the Graduate Coordinator to request that a section be opened for you. This request is then passed on, ultimately to the College of Arts & Sciences, where the Associate Dean will approve the request and send it to the scheduling office to appear in the class schedule in Banner Web. The Graduate Coordinator will then enter a permission and notify you when the permission has been entered so you can register. Students may not email the Graduate Coordinator to request a PSY 590 section, even if they cc their advisor. To be sure that the faculty member has discussed the process with you and has agreed to be your thesis advisor, the request must come directly from them.

Writing the Thesis Proposal (PSY 590): During this semester, you should meet regularly with your thesis advisor to plan your research project and to write the thesis proposal. Thesis proposals should follow APA style for manuscripts. To complete the thesis proposal, you will need to complete the following steps:

1. Conduct a review of the literature on your topic.

2. Design your research project.

3. Review information about completing a thesis on the School of Graduate and Professional Studies website (see Student Research section). Write a draft of the thesis proposal, and revise it based on your advisor's suggestions and advice. The citations and references in the thesis proposal must be written according to APA style.

4. Once your advisor believes the thesis proposal is in good shape, contact the Psychology Graduate Coordinator who will assign a second reader (member of the Psychology Department Graduate Committee) to your committee and who will ask you for your choice of third (outside) reader.

5. Once your thesis advisor considers the thesis proposal ready for the next step, and you have secured a committee, notify the Psychology Graduate Coordinator, who will then instruct you to distribute the thesis proposal to the members of the Thesis Committee (and Graduate Coordinator). Two weeks should be allowed for the Thesis Committee to schedule a meeting and review a thesis proposal before a meeting.

6. A thesis proposal meeting will be scheduled, in which you and your advisor will meet with the Thesis Committee. At this meeting, you should present a brief overview of your proposed project, and the Committee members will give you feedback and make suggestions. If the proposal is given tentative approval, you will then need to revise the thesis proposal, based on the written and oral suggestions provided by the Thesis Committee.

7. If your thesis will involve human participants or animal subjects, your project must be approved by the appropriate university committee **before you can start the research**. Obtain the necessary forms online, fill them out according to the instructions, and submit them to the appropriate committee.

8. You will revise the proposal based on the feedback of the Thesis Committee and obtain the approval of the revised proposal from your thesis advisor and the second reader. An electronic signature page is then submitted to the Psychology Graduate Coordinator.

As you can see, completing a thesis proposal requires many steps, which is why an entire semester (and three course credits) are devoted to the proposal. To make sure you can complete the proposal on time, you should start promptly at the beginning of the semester and allocate a block of time each week to work on the proposal (just as you would for any other course). Writing the thesis proposal is a good deal of work, but once it is done you are well on your way to completing a successful Master's thesis.

For additional information on process and procedures, students should consult the *Psychology M.A. Thesis Proposal and Thesis Student FAQ* document. They can obtain a copy from their thesis advisor or the Graduate Coordinator.

Conducting the Thesis Project

Congratulations, you have passed the thesis proposal defense and received approval from all authorized bodies (thesis committee, IRB, IACUC) to conduct your research. Now what?

You will be given permission to register for PSY 591 (Thesis). During this semester, you should complete the following steps:

1. Conduct your research project, as you outlined in your thesis proposal. **IMPORTANT: Remember that you cannot start to work with human or animal subjects until you have received approval from the human subjects committee (IRB) or the animal care committee**

(IACUC).

2. Analyze your data and write the thesis. See the School of Graduate and Professional Studies website and/or the Psychology Website and Graduate Coordinator for guidelines. The document should be prepared using APA style.

3. Have your thesis advisor read your thesis, then revise it according to their feedback.

4. A thesis defense meeting will be scheduled, in which you and your advisor will meet with the Thesis Committee. At this meeting, you should present a brief overview of your full project, and the Committee members will give you feedback and make suggestions. If the proposal is given tentative approval, you will then need to revise the thesis, based on the written and oral suggestions provided by the Thesis Committee.

5. Once your committee agrees that the thesis is acceptable, obtain their electronic signatures, and the electronic signature of the Psychology Department Chair, on the signature page.

6. Submit the thesis electronically to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies using the instructions found on their website.

7. To obtain your degree at the end of the semester, **the completed thesis must be electronically submitted to the School of Graduate and Professional Studies by the date listed on their website**. For more information, see here: https://grad.southernct.edu/student-research/ (scroll down to Approval of ProQuest formatting section). A few weeks after you submit the thesis, you will receive a letter from the Graduate Dean stating whether the thesis has been approved.

Graduate Student Funding

There are several opportunities for M.A. Psychology students to secure funding and resources toward their graduate education.

Graduate Assistantships

Each year, the department awards a limited number of Graduate Assistantships to M. A. Psychology students. The positions can be full-time (20 hours/week) appointments or half-time (10 hours/week) appointments. Graduate Assistants are typically scheduled to work between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., but other arrangements can be made in some cases. The main duties of Graduate Assistants are tutoring undergraduate students, assisting faculty members in research and teaching, and performing a variety of other functions for the department, such as setting up bulletin boards and helping with departmental gatherings and activities. The Graduate Assistants are paid a stipend each semester. They still must pay tuition, but university fees are waived. The Graduate Assistantships provide an excellent opportunity to gain experience in teaching and research, and they are especially useful for students who plan to apply to doctoral programs in the future. For more information, including compensation, please see the Graduate

catalog here.

If you are interested in applying for an assistantship, you should contact the Psychology Graduate Coordinator for further details.

In some cases, the university also has graduate assistant positions available. Students can find out more information here.

Funding for Research and Conference Attendance

GSAC Funds

The SCSU Graduate Student Affairs Committee (GSAC) has limited funds available for graduate students who attend conferences in their fields, or who incur expenses while conducting research for their courses or theses. In either case, these awards will probably not cover all your expenses, but they can help to defray some of your costs, and we encourage you to make use of this resource. Research funding application deadlines can be found on the GSAC webpage. For further information, consult the GSAC webpage: https://inside.southernct.edu/gsac/funding.

The Barbara McEwen Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is available to students who are planning research. It is dedicated to the memory and legacy of the late Dr. Barbara McEwen, Professor Emeritus in the Psychology Department at Southern Connecticut State University. Dr. McEwen received her B.A. from Hunter College, an M.A. from the University of Iowa, a Ph.D. from McGill University. She retired in 1990 and is fondly remembered by current faculty who had the honor to meet and work with her. The scholarship is funded by an endowment given to Southern following her passing.

The award amount will vary depending upon the availability of funds but will not likely exceed $900. The criteria for the scholarship are as follows:

1. The candidate(s) must be a matriculated graduate student enrolled in the M.A. program in Psychology.
2. The candidate(s) must have a cumulative 3.5 GPA or better.
3. The candidate(s) must have nine or more credits in the program.
4. Priority consideration will be given to students who are planning or carrying out independent research, either for a thesis or an independent study.

Resources for Student Research

To help you with course work, graduate theses, or other research projects, the following resources are available for graduate student use. To obtain access to any of these items, ask your thesis advisor or any other faculty member in the department.

1. Access to the University's computer system, which has e-mail and Internet access, a variety of word-processing, data-processing, and statistical packages.

2. A computer lab in Engleman D029 with computers available for the use of psychology students when they are working on course work or thesis research.

3. A supply of various types of equipment used in psychological research with both human or animal subjects. Consult with your thesis advisor for information on what equipment is available to assist you in your research.

4. A variety of psychological test materials for conducting cognitive and personality assessment.

5. Online databases for psychology and related fields, such as PsychInfo, PsycTests, Medline, BIOSIS, and Sociofile.

6. The Psychology area in Engleman Hall has laboratory rooms that are designed for research with adult subjects, with children, or with animals.

Financial Questions

Financial Literacy and Advising

The Office of Student Financial Literacy and Advising is committed to helping students pay for college and manage their finances. The Office provides students with one-on-one advising to develop payment plan options as well as financial aid and scholarship opportunities.

Information about their Office and the services they provide can be found here: https://inside.southernct.edu/financial-advising.

Federal Financial Aid

Financial aid consists of grants and loans that are intended to help students pay for tuition, fees, food and housing (or living expenses, if commuting), transportation, books and supplies.

The FAFSA is the only aid application required by SCSU. SCSU offers a comprehensive financial aid package that may include grants, loans and scholarships. Funding is available from federal and

state governments along with private sponsors and university resources. The Financial Aid Office is available to discuss any questions or concerns that you have about financing your degree. Please note that international students are not eligible for federal financial aid.

More information about the Financial Aid Office and the services they provide can be found here: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/financial-aid/graduate.

Preparing for Graduation

Whether you are following the thesis or comprehensive exam option, you need to ensure that in last two semesters of graduate work, you meet with the Psychology Graduate Coordinator and **check your degree evaluation**.

Regarding **Commencement**, the School of Graduate and Professional Studies sends an email sometime in February to all students who appear to be eligible for their degree in May according to their degree evaluation at that point in time in the Spring semester. It is the student's responsibility to complete the form/survey informing the graduate school of their intention to participate in the Graduate Commencement. Students should check their Southern email regularly throughout the Spring semester for updates on Commencement (as well as tickets for the event, how to purchase regalia, etc.). If your status changes after you initially indicated that you intend to participate in Commencement (e.g., you withdraw from a course and cannot take a replacement in the summer), you may not be eligible to participate. Students can participate in Commencement pending successful completion of the capstone (comprehension exam or thesis) and with two remaining courses (6 credits) to be completed by August. If any courses need to be completed in the Fall semester, the student is **not** eligible to walk in the ceremony.

Statement of Students' Rights

A student in the Psychology Department at SCSU has a right to expect:

1. A clear statement of the content and format of the course (i.e., texts and subjects to be discussed), an outline of the structure of the course, the attendance policy of the instructor, and a statement about grading in the course. This should be received no later than the end of the first week of the semester. The content of the course should correspond substantially to the University catalog description.

2. A published statement of the instructor's office hours and the presence of the instructor during those times.

3. The instructor to meet his or her courses at their assigned times and to begin and end promptly.

4. That there be a reasonable number of evaluations of students' understanding of the material in the course. There should be at least two, and preferably more, such evaluations. Class participation should be encouraged. Instructors should grade and report results to students promptly for all tests and papers. Papers should be returned with written commentary. Opportunity for review of all evaluation results should be provided. Students have a right to know, in advance, how their work will be evaluated, and they have a right to know their approximate academic standing, or grade, during the course of the semester.

5. The overwhelming majority of the time spent in class be directed to the subject matter of the course.

6. Class discussion should be conducted with fairness and without defaming any individual or group. Personal opinions by the instructor should be identified as such.

7. Students with complaints that the instructor has not met these standards are strongly encouraged first to discuss the matter with the instructor and, failing satisfaction there, bring their complaints to the Psychology Department Chair. If satisfaction cannot be obtained with the Chair, the complaint may be directed to the appropriate academic or graduate deans.

Appendix: Important Websites

Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services: https://inside.southernct.edu/casas

Dean of Students: https://inside.southernct.edu/dean-of-students

Financial Aid Office: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/financial-aid/graduate

Graduate Catalog: https://catalog.southernct.edu/graduate/

Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC): https://inside.southernct.edu/gsac/funding/organizations

MySCSU: https://login.southernct.edu

Office of Diversity and Equity: https://inside.southernct.edu/diversity

Psychology Department Website: https://www.southernct.edu/academics/psychology/programs

Registrar: https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/registration

School of Graduate and Professional Studies: https://grad.southernct.edu/

Student Code of Conduct: https://inside.southernct.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct

Student Handbook: https://inside.southernct.edu/handbook

Student Research: https://grad.southernct.edu/student-research/

Wellbeing Center: https://inside.southernct.edu/wellbeing