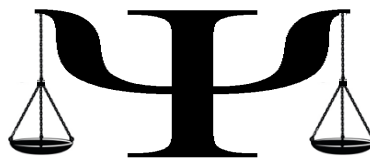


Department of Psychology
Legal Psychology Graduate Program



University Program Requirements
and Procedures



Last updated: Sept 6, 2019

Program Overview

Legal Psychology is a young, vibrant, exciting and growing field. FIU is one of the few universities in the world with a doctoral concentration in legal psychology. We have excellent professors and students. This program offers students broad training in psychology and in-depth training in legal psychology as well as more traditional concentrations (e.g., social, cognitive psychology). Research, professional, and pedagogical skills are strongly emphasized. Students may also obtain significant field experience in the legal system by participating in applied research and expert witness cases, and through potential opportunities for collaboration with FIU's law school.

Degree Requirements

University, departmental, and program degree requirements are listed in the Graduate Catalog (<http://www.fiu.edu/orgs/register/catalog/graduate>). Requirements include 75 semester hours beyond the Bachelors degree. The program of studies, approved by the Legal Psychology Graduate Program Committee (LPGPC), includes: 9 hours of common core courses in Statistics/Methodology; 18 hours of basic psychology, applied legal psychology, or integration of psychology and law; 15 hours of electives (as approved by the student's graduate advisor); 18 hours of supervised research credits; completion of a Master's Project; successful completion of the Qualifying Exam; 15 hours of Doctoral Dissertation and completion of the dissertation project. The LPGPC will try to accommodate individual needs within reason, which means there is some flexibility within the system. Please be advised that the courses below are not offered every semester and new courses may also be added to this list.

(a) Statistics & Methodology Courses (9 Credits)

PSY 5939 Quantitative Methods 1
PSY 5939 Quantitative Methods 2
PSY 5246C Multivariate Statistics

(b) 6 courses (total of 18 credits) on basic psychology, applied legal psychology, or integration of psychology and law (approved by the program director):

CJE 5024 Violent Crime
CJL 6418 Law and Social Control
CJL 6422 Advanced Seminar in Criminal Law and Procedure
CJL 6558 Legal Issues in Juvenile Justice
CLP 5185 Current Issues in Mental Health
CLP 6395 Forensic Psychology
CLP 6438 Psychological Assessment
DEP 5068 Applied Life Span Developmental Psychology
DEP 5099 Proseminar in Infancy, Childhood, and Adolescence
EXP 5099 Proseminar in Experimental Psychology
EXP 5527 Memory and Consciousness
EXP 5508 Applied Cognitive Psychology
INP 5095 Proseminar in Industrial Psychology
INP 5136 Psychology of Legal Consultation
INP 6115 Psychology of Culture and Organizations
INP 6940 Strategies and Methods of Applied Psychological Research

POS 6286 Judicial Research
POS 6612 Seminar US Supreme Court
PSY 5939 Special Topics
SOP 5058 Proseminar in Social Psychology
SOP 6098 Proseminar in Legal Psychology
SOP 6441 Seminar in Social Cognition
SOP 6752 Psychology of Juries
LAW 6310 Alternative Dispute Resolution
LAW 6112 Criminal Procedure
LAW 6114 Advanced Criminal Procedure
LAW 6330 Evidence
LAW 6710 Family Law
LAW 6381 Interviewing and Counseling
LAW 6363 Trial Practice
LAW 7549 Employment Discrimination
LAW 6714 Children and the Law
LAW 6253 Comparative Criminal Law
LAW 7308 Complex Litigation
LAW 6720 Health Law
LAW 6555 Law and Economics
LAW 6313 Negotiation and Mediation
LAW 6234 Race and the Law
LAW 6235 Women and the Law

(c) Electives (15 credits approved by the student's graduate advisor. Common electives include additional legal psychology courses, additional statistics courses, and/or Supervised Research credits)

(d) Supervised research (18 credits)

(e) Master's Project (Note that this project is done completely in-house; students should NOT sign up for Master's thesis credits; students will usually sign up for Supervised Research credits while working on their project)

(f) Qualifying Exam consisting of three separate subexams covering legal psychology, methods/statistics, and a minor area (social or cognitive)

(g) Dissertation (15 Credits)

Students enroll in Dissertation Credits (PSY 7980) after meeting the pre-candidacy requirements (see below) and while working on their dissertation. Passing the Qualifying Exam is a prerequisite to registering for Doctoral Dissertation credits. Once a student registers for dissertation credits, the student must continue to register for three credits of dissertation each term until the dissertation is completed. Only three dissertation credits can be taken in a given semester.

Advising

New students are paired with a faculty advisor by the LPGPC based on research interests. The role of the faculty advisor is to provide the student with guidance concerning course selection and research direction, to help the student with any general in-take issues, to provide yearly evaluations of the student, and to conduct research with the student. However, students are strongly encouraged to work with additional faculty members on research projects.

By the end of the first year the student should have formed a dissertation committee, as per CASE requirements. In addition, the student should be planning (or be in the process of planning) a Master's Project. In doing so, the student must consult his/her faculty advisor regarding his/her plans for forming a Master's Project Committee.

The student should be planning to take the qualifying examination in the summer after their third year (note this timeline may vary if the student enters the program with a Master's degree). The faculty member who agrees to Chair a student's Dissertation Committee becomes that student's Advisor from that point until graduation.

APLS/Conferences

Students are strongly encouraged to become student members of the American Psychology-Law Society and to attend the annual conference. To join, see: www.ap-ls.org/.

Graduate students may receive funding to cover some of the costs/fees of travel to domestic and international conferences. In order to receive funding students must apply through the Graduate and Professional Student Committee <<http://gpsc.fiu.edu/index.php/funding-info/>> and before you can apply, you must attend a GPSC meeting. Information can be found on the website above. Funding for both domestic and international travel is currently at \$500.00, but **this is subject to change based on the availability of funds and the funding cycle**. As soon as graduate students know that they would like to attend a conference, the application process should begin immediately as the deadlines are extremely firm and you must apply well in advance (at least six weeks before the start of the conference).

If graduate students are able to get travel funding through the GPSC, students can apply for matching travel funding up to \$200 through the College of Arts and Sciences. More information can be found here: <http://cas.fiu.edu/graduate/travel-support/>. Note that this policy is subject to change.

Students may also attend other conferences outside of APLS. In the past, legal psychology students have attended SARMAC (Society for Applied Research in Memory and Cognition), iIIRG (International Investigative Interviewing Research Group), APA (American Psychological Association), and others.

Brown Bags (BBs)

Brown bags are usually held every week (at a time convenient for most of the Legal Psychology program) and are an opportunity to present research ideas, address program-related issues, engage in professional development discussions, etc. Students are strongly encouraged to participate by presenting in at least one brown bag during each year. Presentation content is up to the discretion of the student and his/her advisor but should relate to legal psychology. More information will be presented during the first BB of the year.

Transfer Credits

Students with graduate coursework from an accredited university may transfer up to 6 credits toward the master's degree and up to 36 credits of graduate coursework toward the doctorate degree. The LPGPC reviews applications for transfer credit. The LPGPC also reviews requests to waive course requirements.

Master's Degree Requirements for Students in the Ph.D. Program

During the course of graduate study at FIU, students in the Legal Psychology Program obtain a Master's degree by meeting the following requirements:

- **Course Requirements.** Minimum of 36 credit-hours of coursework, including courses listed under the Degree Requirements to meet the following distribution: Statistics & Methodology (9 credits), Basic Psychology, Applied Legal Psychology, or integration of psychology and law (18 credits), and 9 Supervised Research credits, with a grade of "B" or better earned in each course.
- **Master's Project.** Students must successfully complete a Master's Project. The process of completing a Master's Project includes choosing a topic with the approval of an advisor who will serve as Chair of the student's Master's Project Committee, selecting a Master's Project Committee, presenting the Master's Project Proposal to the Committee, conducting the study, preparing the Master's Project document, and defending the Master's Project before the committee. Following a successful Defense, the Master's Project must be submitted to and accepted by the Psychology Graduate Director.

The Qualifying Examination

After the Master's thesis defense and completion of required coursework, the qualifying exam can be taken. The examination qualifying a student for doctoral candidacy is designed to assess the student's mastery of broad areas of psychological research and legal psychology. It is a benchmark to ensure that the student has obtained the mastery over the material required to advance to candidacy and successfully complete a doctoral dissertation. It is required that all students take the qualifying examinations by the end of their third year. It is taken over the course of one week, and is composed of three separate sub-exams covering (a) Legal psychology (Monday; 8 hours), (b) Methods/Statistics (Wednesday; 6 hours), and (c) a minor area of either Social psychology or Cognitive psychology, as determined by the student (Friday; 4 hours). Exams will be accepted up to a maximum of 1 hour late. Note that the specific courses taken by a given student will generally not be considered when designing the exams so the burden is on students to seek out any information they may not have been exposed to in the classroom. This certainly includes approaching faculty members who are experts in relevant subject matter for advice.

The qualifying exam is offered three times per year, once per semester (at the end of the Fall semester, at the end of the Spring semester, and near the beginning of the Summer B semester). Students must inform the legal psychology faculty of their plans to take the qualifying exam (including declaring a minor) by the beginning of the semester in which they wish to take the qualifying exam.

The legal sub-exam typically includes 11 questions, 7 of which must be answered. The methods/statistics sub-exam comprises 5 sections, which are weighted equally. These sections

are: analyze a dataset with SPSS (this section only is open book/ open notes), answer 6 of approximately 8 short answer questions, critique a study, design a study, and answer 1 of approximately 4 long answer questions. The minor area sub-exam typically includes 11 questions, 8 of which must be answered.

In order to pass the qualifying exam a student must a) earn a weighted average score of at least 4.0 across the three sub-exams (with the legal sub-exam weighted .45, the methods/statistics sub-exam weighted .35, and the minor area sub-exam weighted .20) AND b) earn a score of at least 3.75 on each of the three sub-exams. Students will meet with faculty to discuss their areas for improvement if on any sub-exam their score was < 4.0. All questions are graded on a 0-6 scale, with a score of 4.0 being considered a pass. A sub-exam score is the average score across all questions on that sub-exam (or in the case of Methods, across all sections of the sub-exam). Students who fail the qualifying exam must petition in writing to the doctoral program director(s) and the Director of Graduate Studies for permission to re-take the sub-exam(s) on which they failed. The “re-take” will be a new exam, as opposed to the same set of questions. If students are granted the opportunity to re-take a sub-exam or the full qualifying exam, they must re-take the exam(s) within two semesters. However, to avoid falling behind in the completion of programmatic benchmarks, it is normally suggested that students re-take failed qualifying exams within one semester. Failure on qualifying exams will be indicated in the student’s annual evaluation form. Any student who fails the re-take of any of the qualifying exams will be dismissed from the doctoral training program.

After passing the qualifying exam, the student advances to candidacy and is eligible for undertaking a dissertation.

Admission to Candidacy for PhD

Admission to candidacy for PhD is a formal step which occurs after the student has completed all precandidacy requirements, including passing the qualifying examination. Students must complete Form D2 through the University Graduate School in order to apply for candidacy. The application must be approved by the student’s Dissertation Major Professor, the Department Chairperson or Graduate Program Director, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Dean of the University Graduate School. Admission to candidacy is a prerequisite for enrolling in Dissertation credits.

Dissertation Committee

However, the Dissertation Committee **should be formed** by the end of the student’s first year in the program. The Dissertation Committee must be formed (and the appropriate paperwork filed with UGS) at least **FOUR** semesters before expected graduation, and may be formed before formal admission to candidacy. For instance, a student planning on graduating at the end of Summer 2016 must form their committee by the end of Spring 2015. **Make sure to check UGS deadlines for submission of the appropriate paperwork.** As a general rule, documents are due to UGS three weeks before the deadline, to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) one week before UGS, and to the Psychology Graduate Director one week before CAS. In other words, you must have documents submitted to the Graduate Director 5 weeks before they are due. The committee must be approved by the student's advisor, Graduate Program Director, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dean of the University Graduate School. The dissertation committee will consist of at least four members. The Committee Chair (also called “Major Professor”) must be a faculty member in the Department of Psychology and

must be associated with the Legal Psychology graduate program. The major professor must also hold Dissertation Advisor Status within the University. The Committee must also contain at least one other faculty member from the Department of Psychology and at least one other faculty member from a department other than Psychology. These members must be Graduate Faculty at FIU. Other members may be appointed if approved by the University Graduate School.

Important Dissertation Deadlines: <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/calendars.html>

Dissertation Forms: <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/forms.html>

Dissertation Requirements

A dissertation is required of all candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The dissertation shall constitute a significant contribution to knowledge. The dissertation must show technical mastery of a special field, capacity for independent research, and scholarly ability. The topic for the dissertation must be approved by the student's dissertation committee.

The candidate engaged in dissertation preparation must be registered for 3 Dissertation Research Credits (PSY 7980) each semester (and nothing else), including summer sessions, once he or she begins such preparation. The candidate must be enrolled for dissertation credits during the semester in which the doctoral degree is awarded.

The procedures for completing the dissertation are described in detail by the University Graduate School (<http://gradschool.fiu.edu/>).

Annual Evaluations

Student performance is evaluated each year. Each student is required to complete a Legal Self-Evaluation Form and a UGS Self-Evaluation (due dates will be announced). The Legal Self-Evaluation can be found in the dropbox folder and should be emailed to your major professor. The UGS Self-Evaluation form is electronic. Students who have not yet filed the D1 and thus do not have a dissertation committee are evaluated by their major professor. Students who have filed D1 with UGS must schedule a meeting with their entire committee (including all members outside of psychology) during which their performance will be evaluated. All students will receive a written evaluation from the Psychology Graduate Director that will be placed in the student's file.

During the annual evaluation process, students will be evaluated on a number of dimensions using the following scale: (5) Consistently exceeds expectations; (4) Occasionally exceeds expectations; (3) Meets expectations; (2) Occasionally does not meet expectations; and (1) Consistently does not meet expectations. "Meets expectations" is defined as follows for full-time students. Students must:

1. meet the annual progress objective set forth for them by the LGPC;
2. complete 24 credit hours within the previous academic year and have followed the recommended sequence of courses;
3. earn no more than two grades of "B-" or below;
4. participate in research and departmental activities (colloquia, brown bags, AP-LS or other conference).

Failure to obtain at least a "meets expectations" rating means a student may not be eligible for funding from the University.

During the annual evaluation process, the student will be provided with an annual progress objective that will list the goals to be accomplished before the next evaluation period. Students' subsequent evaluations will be based in part on their progress towards meeting those goals.

These objectives are set to ensure that students will make timely progress through the program. The standard progress objective given to first-year students is to choose a Master's Project advisor and form a Master's Project Committee before the Fall of their second year. A typical four-year plan for completion of the Ph.D. is presented below. The LPGPC reserves the right to alter the standard annual progress objectives for a student depending upon the student's situation and research plans (e.g., he or she has chosen to conduct a larger project for a Master's Project, which requires more time).

The yearly evaluations play an important role in determining eligibility for Graduate Assistantships. Based on the Committee's evaluations, students will be deemed either eligible or ineligible. In the event that the number of eligible applications for Graduate Assistantships exceeds the number of available assistantships, the Committee will rank-order students for eligibility based on performance during the previous academic year. In ranking student performance, priority will be given to the following criteria:

1. **Progress in the Program:** Higher priority will be assigned to students making satisfactory progress toward the completion of program (e.g., meeting their annual progress objectives). Students who do not meet their annual progress objectives will be funded only in exceptional circumstances.
2. **Tenure in the Program:** Highest priority is assigned to students who have been in the program for less than five years. Graduate funding should not be expected for students who have been in the program more than four years.
3. **Research Productivity:** Higher priority is assigned to students active in research. Evidence for research productivity includes published research, papers presented at professional conferences and reports from faculty.

Example of Recommended 4-year PhD plan

Fall 2018: Experimental Psychology (Fisher); Quantitative Methods 1; Social Psychology

Spring 2019: Applied Cognitive (Fisher); Quantitative Methods 2; Wrongful Convictions (Evans)

Summer 2019: 6 Supervised Research credits

Fall 2019: Interrogation & Deception (Evans); Multivariate Stats; elective

Spring 2020: Juveniles (Goldfarb); Elective; 3 Supervised Research credits

Summer 2020: 6 Supervised Research credits

Fall 2020: Interviewing (Fisher); 3 Supervised Research credits; Elective

Spring 2021: Eyewitness (Charman), 6 Supervised Research credits

Summer 2021: 6 Supervised Research credits & **TAKE QUALS**

Fall 2021 until graduation: Dissertation credits

Master's Project idea in summer of Year 1, propose by end of Fall in year 2, defend by end of year 3

*This is a suggested timeline. Each student may proceed differently and should consult their advisor for more personalized timelines.

Resources

Department of Psychology: Graduate students have mailboxes in the psychology department. Be sure to check these regularly.

The psychology department also houses some people you might need during your tenure in the program. Here are some:

Dr. Leslie Frazier: Graduate Director

Dr. Kristin Nichols-Lopez: Associate Chair, Director of Undergraduate Studies (mostly deals with scheduling classes)

Jackie Pena: Office Manager (general inquiries)

Brandon Isahack: Graduate Program Secretary (contracts and other important paperwork)

Website: psych.fiu.edu

Phone: 305.348.2880

Location: DM 256

University Graduate School: Assists both prospective and current graduate students in the pursuit of graduate-level programs of study. It is very important to attend orientation and informational sessions offered by the University Graduate School as it will ensure timely progress through the graduate program. You can find deadlines, forms and much more information about completing your dissertation

Website: www.fiu.edu/~ugs

Phone: 305.384.2455

Location: PC 230

E-mail: ugs@fiu.edu

College of Arts, Sciences & Education: Students are required to turn in dissertation paperwork to the College of Arts and Sciences. Their deadlines are typically one week before UGS deadlines. Visit their website for more information.

Website: <http://case.fiu.edu/>

Phone: 305.348.2864

E-mail: casdean@fiu.edu

Office of the Registrar: Any registration issues can be solved here.

Website: registrar.fiu.edu

Financial Aid Office: Livechat available on their website.

Website: finaid.fiu.edu

Phone: 305.348.7272

Legal Program Contacts

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Danielle Sneyd, Psychology Student Graduate Education Committee (SGEC) member
(for the 2019-2020 academic year)