

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



**GRADUATE
STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2008-2009



Dear Graduate Student:

The faculty members of the MSU Psychology Department have prepared this handbook with the hope that it will help make your move to Mississippi State and your introduction to our graduate program as easy and painless as possible. We wrote the handbook to answer some frequently asked questions. In addition, important graduate policies are described to clarify issues about continuing in and graduating from our program. Some information about the university community and about Starkville also is provided.

No matter how comprehensive it is, a handbook cannot cover every situation that you will encounter. Feel free to talk to any of us if you need help or if you have any questions that are not answered in this handbook.

We are happy to have you with us and wish you good luck at MSU and in our graduate program.

Sincerely,

Stephen B. Klein, Ph.D.
Professor and Head

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KEY PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

**Stephen Klein, Department Head &
Acting Director, Applied Cognitive Science Ph.D. Program**
110 Magruder
325-3202
(Chief executive officer; approves doctoral committees)

Kevin Armstrong, Assistant Department Head and Graduate Coordinator
311 Magruder
325-7657
(Makes TA assignments; approves final form of theses and doctoral dissertations)

Marty Giesen, Director, Concentration in Experimental Psychology
123 Magruder
325-7654

**Kristine Jacquin, Director, Concentration in Clinical Psychology
& Psychology Research Program Administrator**
315 Magruder
325-1022

Donna Barnes, Administrative Assistant
110 Magruder
325-3202

Monica Robinson, Accounting Assistant
101 Magruder
325-7653

Lisa Baker, Office Associate
110 Magruder
325-3202

GENERAL POLICIES

The following are Mississippi State University Psychology Department policies of relevance to graduate students. Any exceptions to the policies will be made only with the concurrence of a majority of the voting faculty (and only if the exception is consistent with University policy).

- a. A copy of the minutes of faculty meetings will be made available to interested graduate students.
- b. Near the end of each fall and spring semester, program faculty will evaluate the academic progress of each graduate student. Written feedback from the spring meeting will be given to each student and more frequent feedback may be provided to students needing it.
- c. All graduate students should be familiar with various regulations and requirements listed in the *Graduate Student Bulletin* available on-line (<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/>).
- d. A graduate degree is much more than courses and a thesis or dissertation. Developing research ideas, ethics, teaching ability, grants, and ‘professional style’ are all essential elements of being a professional psychologist. We encourage students to get involved, not just with an adviser, but also with other faculty inside and outside the Department, as well as with regional and national organizations such as the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA, <http://www.cas.ucf.edu/sepa>), the American Psychological Association (APA, <http://www.apa.org>), and the Association for Psychological Science (APS, <http://www.psychologicalscience.org>). If you’re in the clinical master’s program, you should consider joining the North American Association of Masters in Psychology (NAMP, <http://enamp.org>). For students in the applied cognitive doctoral program, we encourage you to consider joining the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES, <http://www.hfes.org>) and the Cognitive Science Society (<http://www.cognitivesciencesociety.org>).
- e. The *Guidelines for Preparing Dissertations and Theses* for thesis/dissertation research credit will govern the development of the required thesis/dissertation project. This booklet is maintained by the Office of Graduate Studies and is available on-line (http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/Thesis_Dissertation_Guidelines.pdf). A copy of the *Graduate Student Handbook* (the document you are now reading), and other official statements of departmental policy will be given to all students enrolled in the graduate program but can also be found in the graduate section of the departmental webpage (<http://www.psychology.msstate.edu>). In addition, our Professor Emeritus Mike Thorne has prepared a list of “common thesis problems” that you should study carefully before starting to write your thesis/dissertation proposal and/or your thesis/dissertation. The Graduate Coordinator also helps provide access to helpful handouts and Internet resources.

MASTER'S PROGRAM

Admissions Requirements

Before you enter the program, you should have taken undergraduate courses in **statistics** and **experimental psychology**. Additional courses required by the different concentrations are as follows:

Clinical

Abnormal Psychology
Physiological/Biological Psychology

Experimental

Physiological/Biological Psychology
Psychology of Learning

If you have not taken these courses, you must take them in our program as soon as possible. (In general, it's a good idea to get as much psychology background as you can before you enter any of our graduate programs.) We will consider your application without penalty if you have not completed the required undergraduate courses, with the understanding that you will have to make up any such courses while taking our regular program. It may be possible to petition out of prerequisite courses. Contact the program directors to discuss this possibility.

Requirements for the Concentration in Clinical Psychology:

PSY 8214	Quantitative Methods in Psychology II
PSY 8513	Psychological Research
PSY 8323	Psychopathology
PSY 8354	I.Q. Testing
PSY 8533	Clinical Skills
PSY 8364	Personality Appraisal
PSY 8333	Systems of Psychotherapy
PSY 8454	Practicum
PSY 8464	Practicum
PSY 8573	Psychopharmacology
PSY 8000	Thesis Research and Thesis
PSY 8383	Behavior Therapy
Electives	(3 credit hours)
Total Hours:	47

The Master's Program-Clinical Emphasis is accredited by the Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council (MPAC), with the term of accreditation extending through June 30, 2009.

Requirements for the Concentration in Experimental Psychology:

Beyond the hours required of all master's students—Quantitative Methods, Psychological Research, and Thesis/Thesis Research—no established set of courses is required. The experimental concentration does have as prerequisites two specific psychology courses in

addition to statistics and experimental psychology: Psychology of Learning, and Physiological/Biological Psychology. These prerequisites and the required graduate courses ensure a broad base of psychological information. Working with an advisor, students are expected to select a sensible set of courses to complete the 40 hours needed from options both inside and outside the Department. Because of the diverse nature of experimental psychology, this type of program enables each student to be as well-prepared as possible to pursue his or her chosen career goals beyond our program. Again, the total number of hours required is 40, and none of the prerequisites will count as part of the 40 hours.

Grades

- a. A student who receives two grades of C or lower in a single semester or who receives a total of three grades of C or lower in his or her graduate work will be terminated automatically from the program. A student who has been dismissed may formally petition the program faculty for readmission to the program. A clearly stated rationale in support of the student's appeal for reinstatement must be included in the written request. Readmission requires a positive vote by the majority of the faculty.
- b. Grades of C or lower indicate incomplete mastery of knowledge and skills considered important in this program. Courses in which a student does not receive an A or a B will be remediated according to requirements set on an individual basis by the departmental faculty. Students are reminded that a cumulative GPA of 3.00 in the M.S. program is required for graduation.
- c. All students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the APA Ethical Principles (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html>), the Mississippi State University Honor Code (<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/PDF/1207.pdf>), and University policies relating to students (http://www.msstate.edu/web/student_policies.html). Behavior inconsistent with principles/rules set forth in these documents may result in the dismissal of the student from the Psychology Graduate Program.

Masters Thesis Requirements and Deadlines

Master's students must complete their thesis proposal by November 10th before the end of their 2nd Fall semester in order to maintain eligibility for graduate assistantships.

Master's students who have not defended their thesis by the end of their 3rd Fall semester will be automatically placed on probationary status. Each student is required to submit a detailed plan for completion of the thesis and the plan will have to be approved by the advisor and program faculty within 30 days of the beginning of the semester following their 3rd Fall semester. Failure to develop an approved plan by that date will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the program.

Failure to defend the thesis by the end of the semester following their 3rd Fall semester will result in recommendation for dismissal from the program unless revisions to the thesis completion plan are approved by the advisor and program faculty by the last day of classes in that semester.

Failure to defend the thesis in later semesters will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Policies and Procedures for Theses
in the Department of Psychology

Approved December 11, 2002

Policies

I. *Roles and responsibilities.*

A. The responsibilities of the *student* include

- a. working with the thesis chair and committee to develop an original and complete research project;
- b. working with the chair and committee to determine what is expected of the student;
- c. recognizing that it is ultimately the student's responsibility to make changes requested to the satisfaction of the thesis chair and committee;
- d. having thorough familiarity with all phases and components of the thesis project and the relevant literature;
- e. copy editing their own thesis in accordance with departmental requirements, the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) requirements, the departmental webpage, and other appropriate sources;
- f. awareness of, and adherence to, timetables and deadlines;
- g. adherence to reading time requirements; and
- h. compliance with other requirements specified on the departmental webpage or required by the graduate coordinator.

B. The responsibilities of the *thesis chair* include

- a. working with the student and thesis committee to develop an original and complete research project;
- b. to determine that the thesis is of adequate quality for a proposal or defense;
- c. providing reasonable guidance to the student in the development of proposal, IRB requirements, design of study, data collection procedures, data analysis, and preparation of defense draft of thesis;
- d. providing guidance in selection of committee members;
- e. ensuring that modifications suggested by the committee (considered by the chair to be reasonable suggestions) are made by the student;

- f. monitoring postdefense revisions made by the student (e.g., in response to graduate coordinator or OGS);
- g. providing reasonable assistance in copy editing (but not rewriting) the proposal and defense drafts; and
- h. providing a thorough reading of the proposal and defense drafts for major and minor flaws.

C. The responsibilities of the *thesis committee* include

- a. working with the student and thesis chair to develop an original and complete research project;
- b. thorough reading of proposal and defense drafts for major and minor flaws as “cold” readers of what should be a nearly complete product; and
- c. indicating to the chair if the thesis is ready for proposal/defense meeting, and if not, providing general comments for improvement to the chair and student.

D. The responsibilities of the *graduate coordinator* include

- a. providing a “good read” to identify deviations from departmental and OGS standards; and
- b. if discrepancies with these standards are detected, provide general notes rather than detailed corrections and return thesis to the chair; and
- c. respect academic freedom of the chair and committee, particularly with respect to substantive issues related to the thesis.

II. *External review of thesis.* The student is ultimately responsible for proofing the thesis and ensuring that it complies with APA and OGS style requirements. Should the student or chair feel that assistance is needed in this process, an external review is strongly recommended, particularly prior to the predefense meeting. In such cases, the student should arrange for an external review reader as available through the library, OGS, or by appropriate individuals outside the university. Use of available software to achieve APA style compliance also should be considered.

III. *Special circumstances perceived by student.* Often, students may perceive themselves to be in “special circumstances” due to situations related to personal finance, employment, medical or health concerns, or other circumstances; and believe that policies and procedures should be modified to respond to their special circumstances. In general, it is the responsibility of the student to meet deadlines and quality standards, and to engage in appropriate planning and time management to avoid such circumstances.

IV. *Committee composition and balance.* Committee chairs should work to insure that the committee has a composition suitable to maintain content and technical quality of the thesis. Such efforts might include (but not be limited to) selecting committee members with strengths in methodology, statistics, or other appropriate specializations.

- V. *Committee membership.* Although ordinarily the membership of a student's thesis committee, once established, remains unchanged through the thesis defense, it is possible for changes to occur. After consulting with the thesis chair, the student may decide to reconstitute his or her thesis committee (i.e., to drop and replace members). Also, the student may decide to seek a new thesis chair. Changes to the committee initiated by the student must be justified and approved by the department head. Faculty members are also free to resign as chairs or members of thesis committees.
- VI. *Thesis as requirement.* The thesis is a requirement for completion of the degree program. Enrollment in the program and completion of course work is not a guarantee of program completion/graduation. What a student might consider acceptable for a thesis may not be passing as judged by the chair and committee. Departmental degree program policy requires satisfactory completion of the thesis.

Procedures

- I. *Preproposal meeting.* When the chair and student decide that the thesis is ready to propose, a preproposal meeting may be scheduled with the entire committee. The purposes of the preproposal meeting is to give the committee members an opportunity to review the thesis proposal and to help determine if the proposal is developed to the extent that it is appropriate to propose. The main difference between the preproposal and proposal meeting is in the adequacy of the preparation of the proposal. If the written proposal is adequate (as judged by the committee), the preproposal meeting may become a proposal meeting.

An appropriately developed proposal should have, at a minimum, well written and appropriately formatted Introduction and Method chapters as well as a properly formatted Reference section. Page numbers, section headings, tables, margins, and so forth should be formatted in a manner consistent with APA and OGS guidelines.

It is expected that the preproposal meeting will begin with a conference between the chair and the committee to determine if the thesis draft is suitable for proposal. If there is complete consensus that the thesis draft is suitable for proposal, the preproposal meeting may be upgraded to an official proposal meeting, and conducted accordingly.

If any member of the committee feels that the thesis draft is not ready for proposal, the preproposal meeting continues. During the preproposal meeting, at the discretion of the chair and committee, there may be informal discussion during which committee members provide appropriate feedback or comments regarding improvements or changes needed to make the thesis draft ready for formal proposal.

At the end of the meeting the committee may select any of the following decisions concerning the proposal: (a) accept the proposal as presented or with minor revisions, (b) accept the thesis topic as a legitimate area for study, but proposal needs major revisions, (c) reject the proposal as an unacceptable area of study for the thesis, or (d) other decision as appropriate and approved by the chair and committee. In outcomes (b) or (c), another preproposal meeting must be scheduled

Note: The expectation is that students will not begin to collect thesis data prior to successful completion of their thesis proposal meeting. Although components of ongoing research programs may serve as thesis projects, faculty are under no obligation to accept a proposal where data collection has already begun. This recommendation is not intended to exclude theses using archival database sources. Rather it is intended to allow committee members the opportunity to provide meaningful input early in the thesis process. Once the student and the thesis chair have determined that part of an ongoing research project might serve as a thesis, committee members should be notified and the preproposal meeting should be held as soon as possible.

- II. *Predefense meeting.* When the chair and student decide that the thesis is ready for defense, a predefense meeting will be scheduled with the entire committee. The purpose of the predefense meeting is to give the committee members an opportunity to review the thesis and provide input as to whether the thesis is truly ready for defense. The main difference between the predefense and defense meeting is in the adequacy of the preparation of the thesis draft. If the thesis draft is adequately developed and appropriately formatted (as judged by the committee), the predefense meeting becomes the defense meeting. To be ready for defense, a thesis should contain all relevant sections (e.g., cover sheet, table of content, list of tables, abstract, the four chapters, references, appendices) presented in the appropriate format (i.e., consistent with APA and OGS guidelines).

It is expected that the predefense meeting will begin with a conference between the chair and the committee to determine if the thesis is truly ready to defend. If there is complete consensus that the thesis is ready, the defense may take place. If any member of the committee feels that the thesis is not ready, the defense may not continue. Rather, the meeting may continue as a predefense meeting or the chair may decide to receive written feedback from the committee regarding modifications needed for the thesis to be ready for defense. At the discretion of the chair and committee, the meeting may continue as a predefense meeting where committee members provide appropriate feedback or comments regarding improvements or changes needed to make the thesis ready to defend. When the recommended changes have been made and approved by the chair, another predefense meeting may be scheduled.

- III. *Notification from thesis chair to graduate coordinator.* It is understood that the graduate coordinator will not review a thesis until the thesis chair indicates, in writing, that the chair believes the thesis is ready for the graduate coordinator=s review. If the graduate coordinator identifies problems with the document, the graduate coordinator will return the thesis to the thesis chair. Prior to each subsequent review conducted by the graduate coordinator, the graduate coordinator will require written notification from the thesis chair that the chair believes the thesis is ready for review.
- IV. *Use of the Thesis Requirements Checklist.* The Thesis Requirements Checklist should be used to facilitate adherence to APA and OGS style and technical requirements for theses. The purpose of the checklist is to address problems with OGS and APA style, writing style, and other technical writing issues rather than substantive issues and methodology. This checklist would be made available on the Theses Website. When students submit each draft of their thesis to the chair, students will check off every item and sign their name indicating that their draft conformed to all relevant items. In reviewing the draft, if the thesis chair found any failures to conform to the checklist, the relevant items would be indicated, and the draft and checklist would be returned to the student. Likewise, preproposal and predefense meetings would not be held unless the checklist was signed by the student and chair, and the theses draft found to be in compliance by all committee members. Further, theses submitted to the graduate coordinator should be accompanied by the checklist signed by the chair and student. If the graduate coordinator found lack of compliance, the thesis and marked checklist would be returned to the chair.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Before you enter the program, you should have taken undergraduate courses in **Statistics, Experimental Psychology, Physiological/Biological Psychology, and Cognitive Psychology**. In addition, you should be familiar with one or more computer languages. If you have not taken these courses, you must take them in our program as soon as possible. (Generally, it is a good idea to have a solid background in psychology before you enter any psychology graduate program.) We will consider your application without penalty if you have not completed the required undergraduate courses, with the understanding that you will have to make up any such courses while taking our regular program.

Departmental Requirements for a Doctorate in Applied Cognitive Science

Curriculum Requirements (see course list below)

1. At least 72 hours of credit (51 hours curriculum requirements, 21 dissertation hours)
2. Continuous enrollment in the Applied Cognitive Science Research Seminar Series (ACCESS) 8 hrs
3. An acceptable GPA
4. Research Methods and Quantitative Core 10 hrs
5. Cognitive Science Core (CSC) 6 hrs
6. Cognitive Science Integration (CSI) 3 hrs
7. Applied Cognitive Integration (ACI) 3 hrs
8. Cognitive Psychology Integration (CPI) 3 hrs
9. Advanced Graduate Seminars (minimum of 3) 9 hrs
10. Graduate electives (3) 9 hrs
11. At least 2 courses must be taken from outside the Psychology department

Research/Dissertation Requirements

1. Selection of an advisor
2. Formation of first-year project committee
2. A first-year project
3. A second-year project
4. Research Skills Requirement
5. Qualifying exams: general and specialty
6. Formation of a doctoral committee
7. A comprehensive doctoral oral examination (dissertation proposal)
8. A doctoral dissertation
9. Twenty-one hours of Research/Dissertation Hours
10. A final doctoral oral examination (dissertation defense)

A description of each of these requirements follows.

The Total Unit Requirement

The total unit requirement consists of at least 72 hours of academic credit. Of these, 48 must be earned while you are in residence on this campus.

Students Entering with a Master's Degree

If you enter with a master's degree, the program will consider how much credit to award you towards your Ph.D. on a case-by-case basis, but you will still have to complete all departmental requirements listed below (unless you successfully petition to have one or more of them waived).

In order to ensure a consistent knowledge base across the doctoral students in the program, core courses required for the degree must be taken at Mississippi State University. Core courses are in the Research Methods and Quantitative Core, Cognitive Science Core, Cognitive Science Integration, Applied Cognitive Integration, and Cognitive Psychology Integration categories. Students can petition to have two courses taken outside of Mississippi State University to serve

as electives. Students should write a letter petitioning to have the two courses applied to their program of study and should include any supporting documents, including course syllabi.

Students entering the doctoral program with a Master's degree can also petition to waive the First Year Project requirement. The petition should indicate the student's prior research experience, whether the Master's degree was thesis generating, and have attached a copy of any publications, including the thesis, if applicable.

Applied Cognitive Science Research Seminar

Each semester you will need to enroll in the PSY 8731 Applied Cognitive Science Research Seminar (ACCESS), for 1 credit. The research seminar meets once a week, with presentations from program faculty, external faculty members, and students. In your second semester, you will present the experiment(s) proposed for your first year project. In your third semester, you will present the results of your first-year research project. In your fourth semester, you will present your proposed second year project, and in your fifth semester you will present the results from the second year project. It is expected that you will attend every seminar and will make a presentation to the seminar at least once a year following the presentation of your second year project. Formal presentations, such as the first and second year project presentations and dissertation proposal presentations, will be evaluated by the audience. Students will meet with the ACCESS coordinator to discuss evaluations as soon after the talk as possible.

Graduate students are expected to participate in the seminar, not simply to attend. Participation includes asking questions of the presenter, participating in debates about issues, providing constructive feedback on evaluations, and making presentations. Participation is an important part of your professional training: Professional jobs often demand good speaking skills and the ability to think critically (both positively and negatively) about research. These skills will be honed through your participation at the research seminar.

Grades

Grades of C or lower indicate incomplete mastery of knowledge and skills considered important to the program. Courses in which a student does not receive an A or a B will be remediated according to requirements set on an individual basis by the program faculty. A student who receives two grades of C or lower in a single semester or who receives a total of three grades of C or lower in his or her graduate work will be terminated automatically from the program. A student who has been dismissed may formally petition the program faculty for readmission to the program. The petition should include a clearly stated rationale in support of the student's appeal for reinstatement. Readmission requires a positive vote by the program faculty.

Curriculum and Course List

RESEARCH METHODS AND QUANTITATIVE CORE		HOURS
You must take all of the following (or be given credit for):		
PSY 8214	Quantitative Methods in Psychology II	4
PSY 8803	Advanced Quantitative Methods for Industrial/Organizational and General Psychology	3
PSY 8513	Psychological Research Methods	3
TOTAL RESEARCH/QUANTITATIVE		10
COGNITIVE SCIENCE CORE (CSC)		
You must take both of the following (or be given credit for):		
PSY 6653	Cognitive Science	3
PSY 8713	Issues and Methods in Cognitive Psychology	3
TOTAL CSC		6
COGNITIVE SCIENCE INTEGRATION (CSI)		
You choose 1 course:		3
CSE 6633	Artificial Intelligence	
PSY 8723	Cognitive Models of Skill	
CSE 8633	Natural Language Processing	
PHI 6143	Philosophy of Science	
EN 6403	Introduction to Linguistics	
TOTAL CSI		3
APPLIED COGNITIVE INTEGRATION (ACI)		
You choose 1 course:		
PSY 6753	Applied Cognitive Psychology	3
IE 8153	Cognitive Engineering	
PSY 6123	Psychology of Human Computer Interaction	
PSY 6353	Psychology and Law	
IE 6113	Human Factors Engineering	
MKT 8413	Seminar in Consumer Behavior	
TOTAL ACI		3
COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY INTEGRATION (CPI)		
You choose 1 course:		
PSY 6423	Sensation and Perception	3
PSY 6733	Memory	
PSY 6713	Language and Thought	
TOTAL CPI		3
ADVANCED GRADUATE SEMINARS: Must take a minimum of 3 seminars		9
Faculty members will offer a seminar on a topic of current interest in cognitive science at least once a year. Students must take a minimum of three (3) seminars. These seminars will be on a variety of topics (decided by the instructor):		
PSY 8403 - 8413	Cognitive Science Reading Seminars (offered each Spring):	
TOTAL SEMINARS		9

Curriculum and Course List (cont)

GRADUATE ELECTIVES: You choose 3 Topics Courses:		9
Intended to provide additional depth of knowledge in own area of interest. May be in the department or not. Approved by student's committee.		
TOTAL GRAD ELECTIVES		9
MISCELLANEOUS		
PSY 8731	Applied Cognitive Science Research Seminars (ACCESS)	8
TOTAL MISC		8
DISSERTATION HOURS		TOTAL DISSERTATION HOURS
		21
TOTAL HOURS		72
RULES AND RESTRICTIONS		
At least 6 credit hours overall must be taken from outside the Psychology department, whether from the CSI, ACI, or Graduate Electives categories.		

Advisors and First-Year Project Committee

Incoming students will select an advisor within the first two weeks of their first semester. Their advisor, along with the Program Director, will provide guidance through the program of study.

Doctoral students will also form a First-Year Project Committee (FYPC) consisting of at least three faculty members. The FYPC committee should be formed within 6 weeks of the start of the student's first semester. A FYPC form, available on the Program website, should be completed and turned into the Program Director. The FYPC is responsible for approval and evaluation of the first year project.

Annual Review Reports

Students will be evaluated on an annual basis by the program faculty. In order to facilitate the evaluation, students are required to provide the program faculty with an Annual Review Report to include information concerning progress through the program. In addition, future goals and plans will be included in the letter. An Annual Review Report template and sample report are located on the Program web page. Students will complete the pertinent areas and submit the form by the last day of classes each spring semester.

The First-Year Project

Within the first two weeks of their first semester, students must identify an advisor who will direct their first-year demonstration of research proficiency. Please feel free to consult with the Program Director for help in identifying potential advisors. During the first year, each student must complete a research project. Often this project will consist of one or more experiments conducted and analyzed by the student, but other research projects (such as the development of a cognitive model) will be permissible as well, as long as they are consistent with the goals and themes of the applied cognitive science program. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that students master research skills early in the program, which will allow them to develop as researchers as they continue in their graduate program. In many cases, the first-year project will be assigned to students by their advisors, although students may propose a project to their advisors. Please note that any research involving human subjects must be approved by the Human Subjects Committee. Details on this process are included later in this handbook.

Students work with their advisor to create a project proposal. This proposal is due by 5 p.m. on the first day of the second semester in January. Please provide the Program Director with a copy. The student's FYPC will review and approve the proposal in January. Your advisor can help to identify potential faculty to serve as FYP committee members. A good strategy is to reach agreement with your advisor on a first-year project, write up a short (two-page) research proposal, and then show the proposal to your FYPC. The committee may have some suggestions for how to improve the research project. After completing the research, a project report must be prepared. This report is due by 5 p.m. on the first day of the fall semester of the student's second year and will be evaluated by the FYPC. Students who fail the first-year project will be placed on probation and will be dropped from the program at the end of their third semester. Students also will present their first-year project at the applied cognitive science research seminar in their 3rd semester.

The Second-Year Project

Ideally, the second-year project will continue the line of research initiated by the first-year project, which would facilitate having a publishable product at the beginning of the student's third year. The second-year project should be of sufficient quality to be submitted to a journal for publication, and follows the same format and deadlines as the first year project. Students work with their advisor to develop a second year project and submit a formal proposal to the Program Director in by 5 p.m. on the first day of class in January at the beginning of their fourth semester. This will be reviewed by the core cognitive faculty and approved in January. Students must submit their project report by 5 p.m. on the first day of class in August of their fifth semester. The report will be evaluated by the core program faculty. Students who fail the second-year project will be placed on probation and will be dropped from the program at the end of their fifth semester. Students also will present their second-year project at the Applied Cognitive Science Research Seminar in their fifth semester.

(Note: On rare occasions students are admitted during the Spring semester rather than the Fall semester. For all program deadlines, these students will be considered as having been admitted in the following Fall semester.)

The Research Skills Requirement

All students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in a particular research skill. Competency in a significant research skill is required to fulfill this requirement. For instance, proficiency in using and analyzing eye-tracking data, designing and analyzing functional magnetic resonance imaging data, and taking advanced quantitative statistical courses could all satisfy the requirement. Programming an experiment in EPrime or another basic presentation software package would not. Proficiency will be demonstrated by writing a one-page paper describing the techniques acquired and how proficiency was demonstrated (e.g., conducted an experiment, etc.). The paper should be approved and signed by your advisor and submitted to the Cognitive Science Program Director prior to the oral comprehensive examination.

The Qualifying Exams: General and Specialty

By the end of the fifth semester, students will take a general exam, and they must take a specialty exam the semester after passing the general exam. The general exam will consist of questions that are synthetic in nature and not rigidly tied to specific courses. Students will be expected in their answers to demonstrate a certain mastery of basic facts and to show that they can connect and apply that information in creative and constructive ways. Students must notify the director of the Applied Cognitive Science program at the beginning of the semester they wish to take the exam. At that time the faculty will meet and determine the form of the exam and then notify students what kind of exam to expect. All parts of the exam will be graded by all core program faculty. If students fail part or all of the examination, the faculty will inform them of what is needed to pass the examination on a second administration the following semester. Students who do not pass the examination after the second administration will be recommended for dismissal from the program.

The specialty exam can consist of two options: a) a written exam similar to the general exam or, b) a written review paper. If the written exam option is selected, the specialty exam will be constructed by the student's doctoral committee. Students may suggest a reading list for their specialty exam, but the committee decides upon the final list. Again the form of the exam will be determined by the committee and the student will be notified what to expect on the exam. If the written review paper option is selected, students will develop a topic with the advice and consent of the doctoral committee. Research must be integrated around a central theme, must provide a critical review, and suggest avenues for future research. The review paper format should be in the form of a *Psychological Bulletin* review article. Regardless of the option selected, if students fail part of their specialty exam, they may retake components as needed by the end of the following semester. Failing to pass the specialty exam after the second attempt will also result in a recommendation for dismissal from the program.

Forming the Doctoral Committee

The doctoral committee is comprised of at least four members of the graduate faculty. It is chosen by you in consultation with your doctoral thesis advisor. Most members are likely to be members of the Applied Cognitive Science Program. At least one member of your committee must be a member of the Psychology Department, and at least one member must be from outside the Department. The committee should be constructed so that experts in all aspects of your study will serve as members. The composition of the doctoral committee must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator and by the Department Head. If changes in the approved committee

become necessary, written concurrence from any member being replaced, along with the revised committee list, must be presented to the Department Head for approval.

In order to meet the Office of Graduate Studies guidelines, the committee must meet the following requirements:

The Graduate Committee will be composed of the major professor as chairman who must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty ... and at least three other members, two of whom are to be drawn from the student's major field of interest. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

The Doctoral Dissertation

Supervision of Ph.D. research is carried out by your dissertation advisor and your doctoral committee. The usual procedures involved in preparing to carry out the research are as follows:

- a. Prepare a written statement of your dissertation proposal in consultation with your doctoral committee advisor. The length of the statement will vary with the nature of the problem, the hypotheses under investigation, the design of the study, and the proposed methods of analysis.
- b. At least **2 weeks** before your comprehensive oral exam, you should distribute copies of the proposal to your doctoral committee. A request to take this examination must be filed with the Graduate School at least **two weeks** prior to the exam date. If your final program of study form has not already been approved, this request must be accompanied by your finalized Program of Study form.
- c. Set up a meeting with your doctoral committee to review the proposal and decide on any changes. As a general rule, this meeting will constitute the Comprehensive Examination (see next section).

The doctoral committee serves in an advisory capacity throughout the course of your research on the problem. It is convened whenever departures from the approved design are contemplated or if other special circumstances make a meeting desirable. Of course, the committee members are available for consultation and discussion, as your project progresses.

The Oral Comprehensive Examination

This examination is administered by your doctoral committee after (a) you have passed the general and specialty exams, (b) your final program of study form has been approved, and (c) you get within six hours of completing all non-dissertation course work on your program of study. The form and content of this examination are determined by your doctoral committee. Notify the Office of Graduate Studies of your intention to take the preliminary examination at least 2 weeks before the anticipated date of the examination. You will be responsible for contacting committee members and setting up a meeting time.

You may begin data collection for your doctoral dissertation research only after passing the comprehensive examination. A certificate of the results (Pass/Fail/Deferred) of the

preliminary examination must be completed by the committee and returned to the Office of Graduate Studies.

The Dissertation Defense

The Dissertation Defense is held upon completion of your dissertation research and your dissertation. You should submit a complete draft of the dissertation to each committee member at least **2 weeks** before the examination. The examination is administered by your thesis committee. The request to take this examination must be filed by the student with the Office of Graduate Studies at least 2 weeks before the anticipated date of the examination. A certificate of the results (Pass/Fail/Deferred) of the final examination must be completed by the committee and returned to the Office of Graduate Studies. Remember to review Office of Graduate Studies regulations, in addition to the ones given in this Handbook, regarding the dissertation and its submission. Following the defense, students must complete any requested revisions for their committee. Once approved by the committee, the document is provided to the Graduate Coordinator for a review of formatting. This can take several business days. After these revisions, the document is provided to the dean's office for their review. Finally, the document is provided to the library for the last edits. The post committee editing often adds 2 weeks to the timeline. Each student should consult with the committee about providing electronic or printed copies of the completed dissertation. Students must email the final PDF file to the graduate coordinator once the library has accepted the completed manuscript. A document describing the regulations governing dissertation preparation is available from the Office of Graduate Studies' web page (http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/Thesis_Dissertation_Guidelines.pdf).

Candidates will find it useful to contact the Graduate Coordinator a month or so before their formal defense for help in satisfying University requirements.

Other Requirements

During the course of the year, the Department will sponsor a few seminars. All graduate students, regardless of status in the program, are expected to attend these presentations. All students are expected to be thoroughly familiar with the APA Ethical Principles (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html>), the Mississippi State University Honor Code (<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/PDF/1207.pdf>), and University policies relating to students (http://www.msstate.edu/web/student_policies.html). Behavior inconsistent with the rules and principles set forth in these documents may result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the Psychology Graduate Program.

ADVISING - RESEARCH ADVISOR

Unless you have identified and established an advisor prior to entering the program, the Program Director will provide advice on your first-semester schedule. Within two weeks of the start of the semester, you will need to identify a research advisor to assist you with your first-year project. You may approach any faculty member in the Applied Cognitive Science Program to see if he or she is willing to serve in this capacity. Usually faculty are happy to serve in this capacity, although in some cases a faculty member may not have sufficient time to serve as your advisor. The Program Director will be happy to discuss your research interests and to suggest possible research advisors for you. Please notify the Program Director when you first decide upon a

research advisor. Note that your advisor need not be a member of the Psychology Department: You are free to choose your advisor from among the entire Cognitive Science faculty.

Your advisor has the general responsibility of discussing with you all matters involving the Department and the Office of Graduate Studies. Your advisor is in a sense your primary representative to the Psychology Department, although of course you are free to consult at any time with other members of the Department, your program faculty, the Program Director, and with the Graduate Coordinator or Department Head. If your advisor is NOT a member of the Psychology Department, he or she will likely need to discuss program requirements with the Program Director.

After the first year, you and your research advisor may continue to work together, or you may select a new advisor who you feel better matches your developing interests. Again, feel free to consult with the Program Director or the Graduate Coordinator about your situation. Once you decide to change your advisor, you *must* notify the Program Director about this change.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PREPARATION OF PH.D. DISSERTATIONS

A manual describing the regulations governing dissertation requirements is available from the Office of Graduate Studies' web page (http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/Thesis_Dissertation_Guidelines.pdf). Although this manual provides the definitive guidelines for the preparation of a dissertation, our Graduate Coordinator conducts a comprehensive check of the style to ensure it closely adheres to the official regulations. You should not use this fact as an excuse to prepare a document that departs wildly from the OGS requirements, however, as the Graduate Coordinator reserves the right to reject any thesis/dissertation in which it is obvious that the student has made little attempt to follow OGS guidelines.

The best starting point is to examine different Masters' theses and Dissertations on file in the main departmental office. Obtain the manual from the Office of Graduate Studies, and use both sources in drafting your dissertation. Few, if any, dissertations are perfect on their first submission: Plan on making some minor corrections to your dissertation after review by our Graduate Coordinator. Once the Graduate Coordinator approves your document, the dean is next. Then the library requests and oversees any final editorial revisions.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AND EVALUATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Members of the program will meet to review each student at least once per year. The purpose of this review is more than simply to decide on the quality and work of each student: We also provide guidance to students as they work towards their doctoral degrees. At the faculty meeting, each student's advisor or the Program Director will summarize the student's status in the program. Faculty and other supervisors report on the student's performance, and a consensus is reached on feedback to be given to the student. In order to facilitate the evaluation, students are required to provide the program faculty with an Annual Review Report to include information

concerning progress through the program, as well as future goals and plans. The Annual Review Report is due to the Program Director by the last day of classes each spring semester. A formal guidance letter is written by the Program Director in consultation with your advisor. Student and advisor will then meet to discuss the feedback.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Master's Students

First priority will be given to continuing students who already hold assistantships. A student who has been awarded an assistantship will continue to hold that position as long as funding is available, and (a) the student successfully completes 9 credit hours (not including courses taken for audit) each semester with no grades of C or lower; (b) Master's students must complete their thesis proposal by November 10th before the end of their 2nd Fall semester in order to maintain eligibility for graduate assistantships; and (c) the student receives satisfactory evaluations for the conduct of job responsibilities. (An "unsatisfactory" evaluation will require documentation by the faculty member supervising the student's work.)

Clinical students may be offered a paid practicum position instead of a research or teaching assistantship. Students who refuse these positions may also lose their eligibility for departmental assistantships.

New and continuing full-time students who do not have assistantships will be ranked by the Graduate Committee, and the polled rankings will determine the order in which the assistantships will be offered. Although each rater may use slightly different criteria for determining individual rankings, students should be aware that GRE scores, GPA, and past work experience are among the factors influencing the decision.

Assistants work 20 hours per week for the Department, with specific assignment determined by the Department Head. An effort will be made to accommodate requests for particular kinds of work experiences, but the primary function of the assistantship is to provide limited financial support to the student while at the same time accomplishing necessary research, teaching, and other tasks for the Department.

Ph.D. Students

The doctoral program intends to provide at least half-time academic-year support to all doctoral students in good standing through their fifth year. (Students who enter the program with a Master's degree will be supported for 4 years.) The exact form of support is determined by the Department. Students remaining enrolled beyond the fifth year are placed on "limited status" and have no further support guarantee.

A wide variety of assistantships, traineeships, and fellowships are available for students in the doctoral program. In addition to departmental teaching assistantships and research assistantships, other types of aid include American Psychological Association Fellowships for minority students, external research assistantships, and tuition and fee waivers.

Stipends for fellows, assistants, and trainees normally increase from year to year and are competitive with stipends available at other large universities. See your advisor or the Program Coordinator for current amounts.

Research Assistantships

Research assistantships are usually paid from funds obtained by faculty members in support of their research. Therefore, appointments are arranged through discussions between faculty members and graduate students. See your advisor or Program Coordinator for procedures used. Students are expected to participate actively in the research program in which they are appointed and to perform the duties assigned by their supervisor.

Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistantships are coordinated by the Department Head in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, Program Coordinators, teaching faculty, and graduate students. If you wish to have a teaching assistantship in any given academic year, you should discuss your plans with your advisor and/or Program Coordinator. Employment as a Teaching Assistant carries an obligation to perform such duties as are assigned by the supervisor.

All first-time graduate Teaching Assistants are required to attend and pass the Teaching Assistant Workshop, which is held annually before the beginning of the fall semester. The workshop focuses on the role of the classroom instructor and presents such topics as the role of the TA, syllabus construction, ethics in the classroom, assessing academic achievement, and academic support services. In this program, the students are tested in a classroom simulation task. This test consists of a 5-minute student presentation to a panel of three judges. After each presentation, the judges engage the student in a dialog related to some aspect of his or her presentation in order to evaluate the student's ability to effectively communicate in a classroom. Failure to complete and pass a required teaching workshop will render a student ineligible for a teaching assistantship.

International students with TAs must attend and pass an additional workshop designed for students whose primary native language is not English (i.e., many international students). This week-long session focuses on communication skills, cultural adjustment to the United States, and an orientation to the University.

Students who are not successful in a required workshop are not permitted to hold a teaching assistantship. These students are strongly encouraged to attend a special semester-long class (at no cost to them). This class further assists the students with their language deficiencies as diagnosed in the fall workshop. At the end of the semester, the students are again tested on their language skills. International students must be considered successful in both components of the workshop to be eligible for classroom instruction.

Tuition and Fee Waivers

Students who hold a 50% teaching and/or research assistantship through the Psychology Department during the academic year will receive a tuition and partial fee waiver. All students are required to pay a modest sum each semester for specific student fees.

Here is a word of advice to all students, but especially to unfunded students. A graduate education is, more than anything you may have experienced, what you make of it. To that end, your best qualities will be curiosity and enthusiasm. Actively seek out faculty and discuss their interests. Move quickly to find a mentor and start doing research. Even if you are not funded, it is in your best interest to volunteer time and energy as a faculty assistant. Based on the collective experience of the faculty, we are certain that you will find that “noncredit” experiences—e.g., assisting with research, attending invited lectures and conferences and good intellectual discussions with faculty and peers— are a valuable part of your education.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The materials needed for consulting with your advisor include this handbook, information on each program's web page, any materials distributed through e-mail, seminar announcements, etc., and the Graduate School Bulletin (<http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/>).

STEPS IN REGISTRATION

1. Read this handbook before you see your advisor.
2. Work out a program with your advisor. If you are a Teaching or Research Assistant, your program should take into account the demands of your job. In all cases, be sure that your own classes and those in which you are a Teaching Assistant do not conflict! Work with the Graduate Coordinator to resolve any conflicts.
3. Obtain your registration access code (RAC) from your advisor. The Program Director can provide you with this number if necessary. You'll need this number to register on-line through the BANNER system linked from <http://www.oncampus.msstate.edu>
4. Complete registration through BANNER.

PETITIONS, APPEALS, AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Department Petitions

If you wish to be exempted from rules, regulations, or procedures of the MSU Department of Psychology, you may submit a petition. This merely consists of a written statement that justifies the request. Give the letter to your advisor, who will transmit it with his or her recommendation to the Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator.

Appeals of Division and Departmental Decisions

If a student has a grade-related grievance, the procedure for appeal is outlined in policies available on-line (http://www.msstate.edu/web/student_policies.html). If the grievance concerns other issues, the standard procedure is as follows:

- a. If you disagree with any faculty decision concerning you or your status in the Department, it is usually desirable to discuss the matter informally with the faculty involved, with the Program Coordinator, and/or the Graduate Coordinator.
- b. You may appeal any decision by writing a letter containing pertinent information to the Department Head.
- c. If resolution is still not achieved, take the grievance to the Departmental Grievance Committee to which all voting departmental faculty members are assigned; or
- d. If the matter is still unresolved, the Department Head will explain further steps.

Student Access to Academic File

Students may examine their own academic files simply by completing a request in the main departmental office (110 Magruder). Please submit your request 2 days in advance. The Graduate Coordinator will remove from the folder any material, such as letters of recommendation, that was provided on a confidential basis. Students may make copies of any documents contained in their folders.

Leaves of Absence

Masters Students

Graduate students need to complete a departmental leave of absence form before their departure. These forms can be obtained from the main office (110 Magruder). Graduate students are required to give the Department and their division 3 MONTHS notification concerning their RETURN from a leave of absence. If a student expects to return in the fall semester, he or she should contact the Graduate Coordinator no later than JUNE 1; for the spring semester no later than OCTOBER 1. The Department needs sufficient notification to complete student support plans and office assignments for each semester.

Ph.D. Students

Students may request a leave of absence by submitting a written letter to the Program Director. Leaves are normally granted for up to a 1-year period. Extensions may be requested and will be considered by the program faculty to determine if circumstances warrant an extension. Students who return from leave early are not guaranteed support from the program.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

a. Definition of Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is the unauthorized giving, taking, or presenting of any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work that is to be considered in the determination of the course grade or completion of other academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, deceptive acts such as the following:

1. Using unauthorized notes or materials (crib notes, books, etc.) as an aid during an examination;
2. Substituting the examination answers of another for the student's own; that is, copying another's examination paper;
3. Acquiring, receiving, and/or possessing an examination or assignment or any part thereof, at any time or in any manner, not prescribed by the instructor;
4. Submission by a student of any course materials or activities, not his/her own, to be evaluated by the instructor in determining the student's course grade, allowing such a submission to be made for the student, or making such a submission for another;
5. Using the ideas, organization, or words of others, whether it be from a book, article, paper, or file, in any assignment to be evaluated by the instructor without giving proper credit following accepted rules of citation (plagiarism).

- b. Procedures for Dealing with Academic Dishonesty: See the Mississippi State University Honor code – details are available at <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1207A.html>

DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

Mail Boxes

Graduate student mail boxes are located on the first floor of the psychology building. These boxes provide a convenient means of getting in touch with you. Important messages will sometimes be left in your mail box, so please be sure to check its contents regularly.

Communication

At the beginning of each semester and from time to time during the year, you will receive notices and/or forms requesting information needed in the main office, 110 Magruder Hall. Please provide the requested information and submit the forms as soon as possible. Among the items we will need from every graduate student are a current address, telephone number, and campus e-mail address. If you move or get a new phone during the semester, please inform one of the departmental secretaries right away. If you do not routinely use your campus e-mail for incoming messages, you must create a “.forward” file that routes your e-mail to the mail host you prefer. You are also responsible for monitoring the size of your campus e-mail box so that it doesn’t become full. If your e-mail box becomes full, important e-mail will be missed.

Photocopies

Photocopies may be made using the departmental machine, currently at a cost of 5 cents per page. The library also has copiers available. The departmental staff will make copies of instructional material used in classes. See one of the departmental secretaries for information on submitting an instructional request. (Normally this will be done at the behest of one of the faculty, as you assist him or her in preparing course materials.)

RESEARCH WITH HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research with human subjects is governed by federal requirements. All research must receive prior approval by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and all researchers (even your research assistants) must receive IRB approved training in conducting human subject research. The local review board has set up a series of procedures needed for approval to conduct research with human subjects. *Failure to follow these procedures is serious. Not only will it jeopardize your own access to human subjects and your standing as a graduate student, it can potentially impact all human subject research at the entire University. For these reasons, you should work closely with your advisor to make sure you have followed all necessary steps before running human subjects.*

Before you conduct research here, you must receive training through the IRB to conduct human subjects research. Additionally, you must be recertified every 3 years at MSU. You can sign up for the training at <http://www.orc.msstate.edu/human/> - do it soon!

Second, you must follow a submission process to obtain permission from the Institutional Review Board to run your study.

Third, if you wish to use the Psychology Research Program to recruit participants, you should work with your advisor to request the appropriate number of credit hours through the PRP and to set up your study's PRP page. See below for more details. This involves planning ahead!

The IRB submission and Psychology Research Program steps will be detailed next. Please note that it may take several weeks for the Institutional Review Board to consider your request, so you will need to submit the necessary paperwork well in advance of the date you intend to start your project.

Institutional Review Board

Before you begin the approval process by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), you must have a well-defined project. Make sure that your research design has been reviewed and approved by your faculty sponsor. Although we strongly encourage both independent efforts and initiative, some departmental faculty member must be aware of any research that involves human subjects. At that point, you will be ready to seek IRB approval (assuming you have completed the mandatory IRB Human Subjects Training mentioned above).

Step 1: Obtain and complete an IRB (Human Subjects) application form, including an "informed consent" form, from the IRB web site (<http://www.orc.msstate.edu/human/>). Applications must be word-processed. If you have any questions about the IRB form, you should discuss them with your faculty sponsor. There are a variety of extant pamphlets and web pages that explain everything you need to know about MSU IRB policies and procedures. In addition, the University IRB Administrator can provide that information.

Step 2: Have your IRB form reviewed by your faculty sponsor, who will sign it to indicate his/her approval.

Step 3: Submit your IRB form to the University IRB Administrator in the Office of Sponsored Programs.

At this point, the IRB will begin consideration of your proposed project. Depending on the type of research, full consideration can take several weeks. You *cannot* begin to use human subjects until you have received final approval from the University IRB Administrator in writing. If your research involves minimal risks, approval may take only a few days. If your research involves more than minimal risks, uses children, or otherwise requires a full review, the process could take from 2 to 3 weeks. The IRB Administrator may require some additional information from you or may suggest that you attend a meeting of the full IRB board to discuss your research. It is possible that your request will be returned unapproved until changes in your proposed procedures are implemented. **In any event, you cannot begin your research until you have received written approval from the University IRB Administrator.**

Psychology Research Program: Information for All Researchers 2008-2009 Academic Year

Overview

The Psychology Department provides researchers with access to human subjects through the Psychology Research Program (PRP). The PRP sign-up system is web-based, using Sona Systems software. Through this system, undergraduate psychology students may sign up for experiments, other research activities, research talks, and clinical activities.

A lot of information is presented below. Please read it carefully. Here's an overview of some of the most important points:

- Research requests for fall 2008 must be made before August 8, 2008. Research requests for spring 2009 must be made before December 20, 2008. Requests should be made in writing (email is OK) to the PRP administrator (Kristine Jacquin); requests should include the number of credit hours you plan to use. Student requests must come from their faculty advisor. If student requests are included in a faculty member's request, the student's name and credit hour request should be listed separately from the request of the faculty member.
- For fall 2008, experiments and other research activities can be scheduled from August 19 through December 2. Experiments must end by 5 PM on December 2, and final credits/penalties must be reported by 6 PM.
- For spring 2009, experiments can be scheduled from January 8 through April 24, ending by 5 PM on April 24. Report final credits and penalties by 6 PM on that day.
- Please do not schedule experiments on university holidays or breaks. However, you may schedule research activities on the weekends (not during breaks). In that case, you must make appropriate arrangements for unlocking and locking the building and relevant rooms.
- Make sure you know the names of the participants you are expecting for an experiment, and do NOT run anyone who is not already signed up.
- Within an hour of an experiment, you must post credits and penalties (however, if you have 15 or more participants in one session, you have 4 hours to post credits and penalties). Credits are for people who participated and penalties ("no show/penalty") are for no-shows.

- Participants are only allowed to cancel through the web site and through the PRP administrator (Dr. Jacquin). You should not take action if someone tries to cancel through you or your lab, other than to alert the person of the proper channels for canceling.
- If you are expecting one or more participants who have not yet shown up, do NOT begin your experiment early. If you are uncertain of the time, use the university clock tower chimes or the clock on the university web site or Banner to determine the exact time.
- If for some reason you must cancel your own experiment, contact the PRP administrator for instructions. This should be exceptionally rare and for emergencies only.
- Student experimenters and research assistants may not earn credit through the PRP except for their work as research assistants; see below for more information.
- The term “experiment” is used loosely in this document to refer to all types of research.
- Research talks, alternatives to research, and clinical practice activities can also be scheduled through the PRP; contact the PRP administrator for more details.

Requesting Use of the PRP

The PRP is available to Psychology Department faculty and students only. To use the PRP, researchers must request PRP credits prior to the beginning of the relevant semester. Research requests for fall 2008 must be made before August 8, 2008. Research requests for spring 2009 must be made before December 20, 2008.

Requests should be made in writing (email is OK) to the PRP administrator (Kristine Jacquin); requests should include the total number of credit hours you plan to use. See the section below (“setting credit value for an experiment”) for guidelines about setting the credit value for each experiment. PRP credit requests should take into consideration the number of participants needed for an experiment for that semester and the credit value per participant. For example, if you need 100 participants for a 2 hour/2 credit experiment, your credit request would be for 200 credit hours.

Student requests must come from the faculty research advisor. When student requests are included in a faculty member’s request, the student’s name and credit hour request should be listed separately from the request of the faculty member.

Introduction to the Experiment Management System

The Psychology Research Program’s Experiment Management System (PRP-EMS) is used for scheduling and managing experiments and other research-related activities for psychology students. As a principal investigator (P.I.) or experimenter, you can set up your experiments in the system, schedule the sessions (timeslots) when students may participate, and grant credit or penalties after the session. All of this is handled through a simple web-based interface that you can access at any time, from any web browser.

If you are a P.I. or lead graduate researcher for an experiment, you are responsible for ensuring that all experimenters read these guidelines and abide by them. You are also responsible for ensuring that all research assistants are IRB certified and otherwise trained to work with human subjects.

Dates for Fall Semester 2008 & Spring Semester 2009

Experiments can be posted immediately, for dates/times as early as the second day of the semester (any earlier and students would not have the chance to sign up because they cannot sign up or cancel within 24 hours of a timeslot). Experiments should not be scheduled on university holidays or fall or spring break. The last day to hold experiments is the last day of the semester. Experiments must end by 5 PM that day and all credits and penalties for that day must be posted within one hour.

Getting Started with the PRP-EMS

For new users to the PRP system, a user account must be established. The principal investigator (P.I.) should provide the PRP administrator with the first and last name and net ID, and MSU email address of each user. The P.I. must be a faculty member in the psychology department. When an account is established, the P.I. and each experimenter (research assistant or graduate student researcher) will be provided with their user ID's and passwords via email. Each P.I. and experimenter will have their own account; each of the P.I.'s experiments will be accessible through their own account and through the account of any experimenter listed for that experiment. There are no shared experiment accounts (i.e., accounts with a user ID used by everyone involved on the experiment).

Note: all of this information applies to clinical activities, research talks, and alternatives to research as well. In such cases, the "P.I." is the supervisor of the activity, and the "experimenters" are the individuals running the activity.

To start an experiment, the P.I. or lead RA (if that person is a graduate student) should provide the following information to the PRP administrator:

1. P.I. name
2. A copy of the IRB approval letter or the most recent renewal letter (this must be received by the PRP administrator before a study can be made active and visible to participants). Note that in many cases, IRB sends a copy of the approval letter directly to the administrator (your copy will indicate whether this has been done; if so, you do not need to provide the letter directly to the administrator).
3. Information that will be posted for potential participants (in lieu of providing this information directly to the PRP administrator, the PI or lead RA can post it on Sona Systems, and simply alert the PRP administrator when it has been posted).

4. If there are RA's involved with the project who do not have a Sona Systems account, the PI should provide each RA's name, net ID, and MSU email address to the PRP administrator, who will create accounts for each RA.

The PRP administrator must make the experiment "visible" before participants can see it. This is also true if changes are made to an experiment listing.

Using the PRP web site

The system works best if you use a web browser that is less than 2 years old. You must be able to accept cookies in order to use the site. On this system, it is not necessary to use the back button. You can always use the toolbar on the top to navigate to anywhere on the site.

Go to: <http://msstate.sona-systems.com>. Enter your user ID and password.

Once you login, you will be asked to review and acknowledge MSU's human subject policy. You will need to acknowledge this once every 6 months. You will see the Main Menu after you acknowledge the policy.

Your login (also known as a session) will expire after a certain period of inactivity, usually 20-60 minutes. When you are done using the system, choose Logout from the top toolbar to log out.

Working with Experiments

Starting an Experiment

When you are ready to make the experiment available for potential participants, or if you make changes to the experiment, contact the PRP administrator. Only the administrator can make the experiment visible to participants.

Setting Credit Value for an Experiment

Each research activity is worth a certain number of credits. The credit value of your experiment is based upon the amount of time required to complete the experiment. Please use a 0.5 credit value for experiments requiring 30 minutes or less to complete. For such experiments, set the time duration for the experiment at 30 minutes. For experiments lasting between 30 and an hour, a credit value of 1 should be used, and the experiment should be scheduled to last 1 hour. Use these guidelines to set credit hours for longer experiments. With respect to time requirement and credit value, your consent form must be consistent with the posted information in PRP (e.g., if

your consent form says the experiment takes 45 minutes and participants will get 1 credit, your PRP page for the experiment should show 1 credit and 1 hour timeslots).

Pretest Participation Restrictions

The system contains an online pretest that students must complete. You may place participation restrictions on your experiment based on pretest responses. Students are unaware that such restrictions are placed on the experiment. These restrictions are never provided to them. If they do not qualify to participate in an experiment because they do not meet the pretest participation restrictions, then the experiment will simply not be listed to them.

You may restrict an experiment on any question or questions on the pretest that allowed for a multiple-choice answer. You may restrict to one choice or many choices for any question. To set participation restrictions, click on the experiment name and choose *View/Modify Restrictions*. You will see a list of eligible questions that you may use for your restrictions. Choose the questions you would like to restrict upon, and click on the *Set Restrictions* button. On the subsequent page, select each value that is *acceptable* for each question you have chosen. Once you have selected all the acceptable values, save your changes and they will take effect immediately. It is important to note that if you change the restrictions, it will *not* remove the experiment sign-ups for students who qualified under the previous set of restrictions.

If you anticipate the need for pretest questions that are not currently listed, such requests must be made prior to the beginning of the semester. Address such requests to the PRP administrator. Please note that the IRB must have approved the use of such screening for your experiment.

Viewing Experiments

To view your experiments (and not the experiments of others), choose the *My Experiments* option on the top toolbar. The system will list all your experiments in alphabetical order by experiment name. To view all experiments that are visible to participants, choose the *All Experiments* option from the top toolbar.

Working with Timeslots (Sessions)

Timeslots (also referred to as Sessions) are the available times when a participant may participate in the experiment. Timeslots allow you to specify a date, time, location, and maximum number of participants for a session. For each experiment, only one person should be in charge of posting timeslots.

If you run experiments in a multi-use location (e.g., Magruder 100, 120, 140, or 226), be sure to use the appropriate channels to sign-up for the location **BEFORE** posting timeslots on the PRP system.

Creating Timeslots

Click on the name of the experiment, and choose the Edit option in the Timeslots column.

You will see a list of any existing timeslots, and the Add A Timeslot option at the bottom of the page. Click on Add A Timeslot. Select the appropriate date, start time (including AM or PM; the end time will be calculated automatically based on the duration of the experiment), number of participants desired for the timeslot (participants will NOT see this information), and location of the experiment.

The system will automatically fill in the date, time, and location based on the ending time of the last timeslot for this experiment. If applicable, your current timeslot usage will be listed, and you will be prevented from adding a timeslot that would exceed your timeslot usage time limit.

Modifying and Deleting Timeslots

To modify or delete a timeslot for an experiment, you must first choose the experiment that you would like to deal with. To view your experiments, choose the My Experiments link from the top toolbar. Choose the Edit option in the timeslots column for the desired experiment. Select the timeslot you would like to deal with, and click the Modify button.

If the timeslot has no participants signed up for it, you will see a Delete button. If you would like to delete the timeslot, click the Delete button, and you will see a confirmation page. Choose Delete again to delete the timeslot. *You may not delete a timeslot that has participants signed up for it.* If for some reason you must cancel an experiment, contact the PRP administrator for instructions.

If you would like to modify the timeslot, modify the desired information and click the Update button just below the timeslot information. It should be noted that participants will *not* be notified (by email) of any changes you make to the timeslot, so you should contact them if information needs to be passed on to them (a link is provided on the same page to do so). *Because of this, please do NOT modify the location of any timeslot!* If you must, please post an RA at the original location to re-direct participants to the new location. Also, if you change the maximum number of participants to a lower number than before, the system will *not* cancel the sign-ups for any participants who are over the new limit of participants.

Viewing the Participant List

To view the list of participants who have signed up for your experiment, you must first select the experiment and timeslot you wish to see. To view your experiments, choose the My Experiments

option from the top toolbar. Click on the timeslots link for the desired experiment, then find the appropriate timeslot.

The participants will be listed. Please note that participants may cancel their participation up to 24 hours in advance. However, they are informed that they may only do this themselves, through the system, or by calling the PRP administrator. They cannot cancel by emailing or calling you, so you can feel free to disregard any such messages or inform such participants of the appropriate cancellation methods.

Please note that the participant list is confidential information. You must not post this information or otherwise make it publicly available. In general, such information should be restricted to those who have been identified through your IRB application as having access to such information.

Handling Experiments

Before beginning your experiment, please ensure that ONLY those participants who are signed up to participate are those who are present to participate. If someone is not signed up, do NOT allow them to participate – no exceptions. This is for your own protection (e.g., to make sure they meet the proper criteria, to make sure they have not participated previously, etc.) and the protection of others (e.g., to make sure that students don't start showing up to experiments without signing up).

Participants are told that they must arrive on time for experiments or they will be considered absent. If a signed-up participant is not present, please wait for a few minutes before beginning experiments, or set your start time a few minutes in advance of the desired start time, in order to account for minor differences in watches/clocks. However, definitely start within 5 minutes of the scheduled time so that you can finish on time. If someone arrives late, you should refuse their entrance; such participants should be given a penalty (see below).

Be very careful to ensure that you know who participated and who did not participate in your experiment, and that they are credited or penalized appropriately (see below). Many complaints are received every semester by students who are penalized for experiments they say they participated in; in some cases, the student is correct and it is the experimenter who made the error. Please do all that you can to eliminate this problem.

Granting or Revoking Credit

At the completion of a session, you should promptly deal with the participants, in the system, to ensure proper credit grants. Credits/penalties must be posted within 1 hour of experiments with fewer than 15 participants, and within 4 hours of experiments with more than 15 participants.

To grant or revoke credit for a timeslot, you must first find the desired experiment and timeslot. To view your experiments, choose the My Experiments option from the top toolbar. Click the timeslots link for the desired experiment, then find the timeslot you would like to see, and click the Modify button.

You will see a list of participants, identified by name. If the participant properly participated in the experiment, click the “Participated” button next to their name. If the participant did not appear, choose the “No-Show/Penalty Assessed” button. The “No-show/No-penalty” option is reserved for participants who cancel in time, but the PRP administrator is not able to make the cancellation prior to the experiment starting; in those cases, the “comments” line will include a note indicating what happened.

When you have granted credits and/or penalties as appropriate, click on the Update Sign-Ups button at the bottom of the list of sign-ups to save your changes. Credit will be granted or a penalty assessed as necessary. The participant(s) will be emailed about this.

It is not recommended to leave any sign-up for a timeslot that has occurred in the “No Action Taken” stage. This is a credit “limbo” and the system will warn you upon your next login about the offending timeslot that has not been dealt with properly.

Students who are Experimenters

If you are an experimenter and you are also a student in a class that uses the PRP (for either required credits or for extra credit), you **cannot** earn credit through the PRP by participating in research activities. You **can** earn credit through clinical activities. In addition, you may be eligible to receive up to 10 credits for your work as a research assistant in a psychology faculty member’s lab. If you work as a research assistant for at least 50 hours during the semester, then you are eligible for 5 credits. If you work for at least 120 hours as a research assistant during a particular semester, then you are eligible for 10 credits. Varying amounts of credit in between 5 and 10 are possible for work between 50 and 120 hours. If you believe that you are eligible for credit, talk to your faculty advisor. That person must contact Dr. Jacquin during the last week of

the semester to discuss the credits that you are eligible for; take responsibility to ensure that this happens.

Please note that if you are receiving class credit for being a research assistant (e.g., through a lab class or directed individual study), you must work extra hours in order to earn PRP credit. In other words, hours worked toward a class requirement cannot be double-counted for PRP credit. If this applies to you, and you are still interested in PRP credits, ask your research advisor to talk to Dr. Jacquin early in the semester to determine the number of extra hours you will need to complete in order to earn PRP credit.

Questions?

Ask the PRP administrator, Dr. Kristine Jacquin (kmj8@psychology.msstate.edu or 325-1022).

Other Issues in Using Human Subjects

Using human subjects in research is a complex affair. It is wise to obtain guidance from your advisor about matters such as: “How does one handle getting the informed consent form signed?” and “What if a subject refuses to participate?”

Protection of Human Subjects

The Institutional Review Board reviews and approves research studies before they are run to ensure adequate protection of human subjects. All persons, whether faculty, postdoctoral students, research associates, graduate students, or undergraduate assistants need to be familiar with the Departmental and University human subjects review requirements. Any research using human subjects carried out by a member of the Department **MUST** be approved by the campus board. The purpose of this process is to provide an independent review of the procedures of each experiment, in order to catch errors that the investigator might not have noticed, and also to provide protection to investigators in the event that a subject complains about their study.

MISCELLANEOUS

- a. A normal full load is considered to be 9 to 12 hours of graduate-level courses. A student on an assistantship must take at least 9 hours and not more than 13.
- b. Concerning graduate student advising, the concentration director will meet with each newly admitted graduate student individually, will advise in any way requested, and will work out a tentative program of study. The concentration director will serve as the adviser of record until the student selects a thesis/dissertation director, after which the student’s thesis/dissertation director (committee chairperson) will become the adviser of record.

- c. Space and resources: Funded students will be provided office/research space, and, if at all possible, all students will be given a place to “hang their hats.” The Department has a general-use computer lab equipped with state-of-the-art computers and funded by the National Science Foundation. Laboratory space is assigned to individual faculty members. The use of lab space should be worked out with the appropriate faculty member.
- d. All students are expected to attend presentations by invited speakers.
- e. **At the beginning of each semester, each graduate student is responsible for providing the office with a current address and telephone number and for updating this information during the course of the semester, if necessary.** A list of graduate student telephone numbers is provided to faculty.

Psychology Department, 110 Magruder Hall

662-325-3202

Faculty

Dr. Stephen B. Klein, Dept Head, 110 Magruder, sbk1@psychology.msstate.edu	325-3202
Dr. Carolyn Adams-Price, 215 Magruder, cea1@psychology.msstate.edu.....	325-7658
Dr. Kevin Armstrong, 311 Magruder, kja3@psychology.msstate.edu.....	325-7657
Ms. Rebecca Armstrong, 302 Magruder, rpa8@msstate.edu.....	325-3202
Dr. Gary Bradshaw, 201 Magruder, glb2@psychology.msstate.edu	325-0550
Dr. Tom Carskadon, 210 Magruder, tomcar@ra.msstate.edu	325-7655
Dr. Stephanie Doane, 301 Magruder, sdoane@inst.msstate.edu	325-5142
Dr. Philip Drumheller, 306 Magruder, pmd3@msstate.edu.....	325-3202
Dr. Deborah Eakin, 214 Magruder Hall, deakin@psychology.msstate.edu	325-7949
Dr. Marty Giesen, 123 Magruder, mgiesen@psychology.msstate.edu	325-7654
Dr. Kristine Jacquin, 315 Magruder, kmj8@psychology.msstate.edu	325-1022
Dr. Crystale Marsh, 313 Magruder, crystal.marsh@psychology.msstate.edu.....	325-3782
Dr. Robert McMillen, 212 Magruder, Robert.mcmillen@ssrc.msstate.edu.....	325-0987
Dr. Jarrod Moss, 305 Magruder, jarrod.moss@psychology.msstate.edu	325-8250
Dr. Colleen Sinclair, 304 Magruder Hall, csinclair@psychology.msstate.edu	325-5108
Dr. Amy Stapleton, astapleton@saffairs.msstate.edu	
Dr. Mike Thorne (Retired), 307 Magruder, mthorne@psychology.msstate.edu	325-7659
Dr. Carrick Williams, 202 Magruder Hall, cwilliams@psychology.msstate.edu	325-1146

SUPPORT STAFF

Donna Barnes, 110 Magruder, dbarnes@psychology.msstate.edu.....	325-3698
Monica Robinson, 101 Magruder, mrobinson@psychology.msstate.edu	325-7653
Lisa Baker, 110 Magruder, abaker@psychology.msstate.edu.....	325-3202

Faculty schedules and office hours are posted in the departmental office at the beginning of each semester.

Campus

Fire	Starkville Fire Department	323-1212, also 911
Medical	Student Health Center	325-2431
Police	Williams Building	325-2121
Utilities	Cooley Building	325-2052
(after 5 p.m., holidays, weekends)		325-3469
VA Education Benefits	126 Magruder Street	325-2024

City/County

Ambulance		323-4344, also 911
Hospital		323-4320
Police		323-4134, also 911
Fire Department		323-1212, also 911
Mississippi Highway Patrol		323-5314
Oktibbeha County Sheriff's Department		323-2421
Utilities: Telephone, off-campus		
Toll free		1-557-6111
Starkville Electric and Water		323-3272 or 323-3133
4-County Electric		323-4502
<i>Toll free</i>		1-800-431-1544
Mississippi Valley Gas		323-2741
Civil Defense		323-8012
Housing Authority		323-5536
Community Counseling Center		323-9261
CONTACT HELPLINE		323-4357
Regional Narcotic Unit	Ask Operator for WX-5500	
<i>(No charge to calling party)</i>		

SOME AREA HEALTH FACILITIES

Mississippi State University

Longest Student Health Center 325-2431

The Longest Student Health Center is designed to provide efficient medical care to the university community. The center has a clinic, a pharmacy, and a laboratory. Medical attention is available when the university is in session to all regularly enrolled students who have paid activity fees. The facilities also are available to the student's spouse and dependents, as private patients.

Referrals for specialist consultations will be made freely when indicated or requested. A student may make an unlimited number of visits to the clinic during office hours. Doctors and nurses are on duty in the clinic from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. For inpatient care, students are referred to Oktibbeha County Hospital.

Oktibbeha County Hospital (OCH)

Oktibbeha County Hospital 323-4320

Located on Hospital Road, which is off North Jackson Street, the OCH is classified as a general medical and surgical facility, acute short-term hospital with an emergency room, operating rooms, intensive care-coronary unit, postoperative recovery room, laboratory, x-ray department, pharmacy, physical therapy, inhalation therapy, and social services. The hospital also maintains the Wellness Connection, discussed later in this handbook. OCH is an excellent facility for the size of the community.

Mississippi State Board of Health, District 4 (MSBH-4)

MSBH-4 323-7313

Whitfield Street, Family Planning Clinic

Oktibbeha County Health Department

Oktibbeha County Health Department 323-4565

Lampkin Street

General Nursing Clinic: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Doctor on Duty: Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 a.m.-Noon

Immunizations available: *diphtheria, typhoid, tetanus, mumps, measles, and rubella.*

Maternity and Child Care Clinic

Family Planning, Sexually Transmitted Disease Control, TB Control

Chronic Illness Screening

Crippled Children’s Clinic

Vital Statistics

Community Counseling Services

Community Counseling Services 323-9261

Located on North Jackson Street, the complex is staffed with professionals who offer a wide array of services, including marriage counseling, assertiveness training, divorce counseling, family counseling, counseling for any kind of behavioral and/or emotional problem (e.g., depression, insomnia, etc.), and alcohol and drug dependency counseling. **In case of emergency, call CONTACT HELPLINE at 323-4357.**

SELECTED SPECIAL SERVICES ON CAMPUS

Learning Skills Center..... 325-2957
Allen Hall Annex, Rooms 266-267

Assistance is provided to all Mississippi State University students in reading, study skills, vocabulary, grammar, composition, and spelling. Of special interest to graduate students, training sessions for the GRE are conducted.

Counseling Center..... 325-2091
103 Lee Hall

The center is open to the university community. Services include psychological counseling, career counseling, marital counseling, and group counseling.

Recreation and Intramural Sports 325-3171

There are racquetball courts and tennis courts on campus open to the public. The University Golf Course is a few miles out of town on Old Highway 82. Also, there are many intramural sporting activities available to students.

SELECTED WORK AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Office of Veterans Affairs 325-2024
P.O. Box 6283
Mississippi State, MS 39762-6283

Any VA beneficiary, veteran, or dependent is eligible through the VA for educational programs, part-time jobs, a veterans club, and services to the elderly.

Mississippi Employment Service 323-2272
Felix Long Building
Lampkin Street
Starkville, MS 39759

The state employment service provides aptitude and vocational testing, counseling, job placement, and processes claims for unemployment compensation.

Student Financial Aid..... 325-2450
Garner Hall, Campus

Student Financial Aid offers loans, grants, and part-time work to qualified students. Students should apply for financial aid through the Department of Student Financial Aid, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education..... 324-3344
300 Montgomery Hall, Campus

Career Services provides a two-fold service: (1) Career Planning-assistance in choosing a career and career testing, and (2) Career Placement-tips on how to look for a job, how to interview, resume writing, job referrals, and assistance in actual job placement.

JUDICARE.....662-327-3981
902 2nd Avenue North
Columbus, MS 39701

JUDICARE also serves the Starkville/Mississippi State area.

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services.....662-494-6122
221 Commerce Street
West Point, MS 39773

LIBRARY FACILITIES

Mitchell Memorial Library..... 325-3060
Campus

The main library on campus contains more than 800,000 volumes, more than 2 million microforms, and is adequate for many research purposes. Patrons need an ID to check out books, but anyone can use materials inside the library. There are good microfilm and interlibrary loan services.

Starkville Public Library 323-2766
P.O. Box 729
326 University Drive
Starkville, MS 39759-0729

The Starkville library has a good selection of books and periodicals as well as VHS tapes and DVD's.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Starkville Parks and Recreation Department 323-2294

*Sportsplex
Lynn Lane*

The services of Starkville Parks and Recreation Department (SPRD) include maintaining the city's parks and providing recreational facilities for activities such as softball, T-ball, swimming, volleyball, tennis, soccer, and arts and crafts.

SPRD's recreational facilities include:

Gillespie Center 608 Gillespie Street
The Gillespie Center has meeting rooms, a playground and basketball court, and kitchen facilities.

Moncrief Park North Jackson Street
Moncrief Park has a swimming pool, an athletic field, a playground, tennis courts, picnic areas, fenced dog park where dogs can play off leash, and a pavilion.

McKee Park Lynn Lane
McKee Park has athletic fields, two pavilions, tennis courts, playground and picnic areas, and a basketball court. The park is the practice site and playing area for soccer, softball, and baseball.

J.L. King Memorial Park Long Street
J.L. King Memorial Park, formerly called Westside Park, has an athletic field, tennis courts, a basketball court, and a swimming pool.

Other recreational facilities include:

Oktoberfest Lake offers 100 acres of fishing, boating, trailer hook-ups, picnicking, and primitive sites. The lake is 15 miles west of Starkville, off Highway 82.

Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge covers 46,000 acres. Nature studies, photography, fishing, and picnicking areas are available. Fishing is allowed between March 1 and October 31. Call 323-5548 for more information.

The Sanderson Center, a \$19 million state-of-the-art facility on the MSU campus, houses swimming, basketball, racquetball, weight lifting, jogging, and other fitness areas for students, faculty and staff. Call 325-7529 for further information.

Mississippi State University Golf Course is an 18-hole golf course on old Highway 82 that is maintained by Mississippi State University and is open to the public. Call 325-3028.

Starkville Country Club is a private facility located on South Montgomery Street. Call 323-1733 for more information.

Starkville Athletic Club is a health club located on Eckford Drive (across from El Sombrero). Call 323-4455 for more information.

Wellness Connection is a membership fitness program at the Oktibbeha County Hospital that is open to Mississippi State University faculty and students, as well as to the community. Call 323-9355 for more information.

Hollywood Premier Cinemas is the local movie theater. It has 9 screens and is located on Stark Road, which is behind the old Wal-Mart, and near the new one. Call 320-9000 for movies and times.

There are a variety of **video rental places**. At least three are on Highway 12—Blockbuster, Movie Gallery, and Video USA.

Lounges, Entertainment

There are several restaurants and/or nightclubs in Starkville, including Cheers, Rick's Café Americain, Dave's Dark Horse Tavern, Cotton District Grill, Harvey's, and Rosey Baby. There also are clubs and dining facilities in Columbus, which is about a 25-minute drive from Starkville. Check with faculty and other students about prices, dress, and other points of interest.

Mississippi State University Continuing Education

Noncredit courses are offered at Memorial Hall. Call 325-2649 for more information.

Bulldog Lanes

This is a new facility on Highway 12. It also includes McCleskey's Deli.

Mississippi State University Lyceum and Lecture Series

The Lyceum Committee brings in guest speakers and musicians. For example, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra and the Mexican Folk Ballet have performed on campus. Most Lyceum-sponsored events are free to students, and the cost is nominal for nonstudents.

Campus Activities Board (CAB) Movies

During the school year, the Campus Activities Board shows relatively recent movies for a nominal fee. A list of movies and the dates they will be shown is printed and distributed at the beginning of the fall semester.

Many drama offerings are provided during the year by the Department of Communication (McComas Hall) and the Starkville Community Theater (Playhouse on Main).

The Starkville-Mississippi State University Symphony

Several free concerts are provided by the local symphony during the year. The symphony chorus also provides concerts free to the public.

Campus-Sponsored Concerts

For more information about concerts each semester, contact Music Maker Productions in the Colvard student union. In addition to the performances in the Humphrey Coliseum, the amphitheater at Five Points also is the site of periodic musical entertainment.

Campus Newspaper

The *Reflector* is distributed free to students and faculty on Tuesday and Friday of each week at sites around campus and in Starkville.

Starkville Daily News

The *Starkville Daily News* is the local newspaper. Newspapers from Columbus, Jackson, and Memphis are also easily obtained.

RESTAURANTS

There are many restaurants in Starkville, and more in Columbus, from fast-food and casual atmosphere to fine dining. The following list is not meant to be complete, but it should give you some idea of the variety of restaurants available in Starkville. Check with faculty and other students for information on prices, atmosphere, etc.. ***Please note that restaurants and other establishments come and go in Starkville, so it is possible that some of these places are already out of business.***

On Campus:

- Burger King
- Chick-Fil-A
- Perry Cafeteria
- Einstein Brothers Bagel Shop (in the library)
- Great Wall (Lee Boulevard)
- Other restaurants in the Colvard Student Union

Off Campus:

Academy Road
Oby's
Richey's

Eckford Drive
El Sombrero Mexican Restaurant
Cappe's Steak House

Highway 12 or Veterans Memorial Drive
Captain D's, Taco Bell, Sonic Drive-In (two locations), Subway (two locations), Wendy's, Hardee's, KFC, Mexico Tipico, Pizza Hut (two locations), China Garden, Shipley's Donuts, Mi Hacienda, Chilis, Piggly Wiggly Deli, Barnhill's, Domino's Pizza, McDonald's (two locations), Arby's, Harvey's, Papa John's Pizza, Ruby Tuesday, and others. (Several barbecue stands are also located along Highway 12.)

Starkville Crossing Shopping Center—Highway 12
Applebee's

Maxwell Street (off University Drive)
Cotton District Grill

Russell Street
Smoothie King (LaGalerie Shopping Center)

University Drive
Bulldog Deli
Lil' Dooney's BBQ (just off University on Fellowship Drive)
City Bagel Café
Bin 612
Shaherazad's

Main Street (Downtown)
Starkville Café
Old Venice Pizza Co.
The Abbey

South Jackson Street
Rosey Baby

South Montgomery (near Highway 12)
Abner's Chicken Tenders

Selected Columbus Restaurants

Ruben's Fish House (*Moore's Creek Road*)
Harvey's (*200 Main Street*)
Woody's (*2420 Military Road*)
Mexican Kitchen (*Highway 182 East*)
La Fiesta Brava (*Highway 45 North*)
Chinese restaurants (*three on Highway 45*)
Stovall's (*Highway 182*)
Applebee's (*Highway 45*)

Again, check with faculty and other students to find out all the information on these and other places.

APARTMENTS

Starkville has an abundance of rental housing. The student association maintains an on-line guide to off-campus housing available at <http://www.thehousingguide.com/schools/msu/msu.html>

UTILITIES

Telephone

AT&T, 1-888-757-6500, *no charge; installation charges vary with type of service.* There may be other options, too.

It's very important for you to call the phone company as soon as you know where you will live, or you may have to wait as long as 2 weeks for a phone. This is understandable because the phone company will install thousands of telephones in about a 2-week period!

Gas

Atmos Energy, 1-800-863-7749

There is a nonrefundable turn-on charge on your first bill. Atmos Energy pays interest on your deposit. Deposits are refundable after 24-months of good credit or on termination of services.

Electricity and Water (*inside city limits*)

Starkville Electric and Water Department, 323-3272 or 323-3133

Deposits differ if there also is gas in the apartment or in your home. Ask about rate differences. If you live outside the city limits, there will be different water systems with deposits required.

Electricity (*outside city limits*)

4-County Electric Power Association, 323-4502

Check with 4-County about an electricity deposit if you stay in a trailer. They will need your state registration number, which should be available from the Oktibbeha County Court House or your trailer owner. All 4-County deposits are refundable. Interest is paid on \$50 of the deposit amount after 3 months.

MISCELLANEOUS

Grocery Stores

Food prices are comparable, on the whole, to other parts of the country. The large stores in town are Kroger, Piggly Wiggly, and Wal-Mart Supercenter. There also are many small convenience stores. The Starkville Community Market sells fresh produce, breads, and arts/crafts on Saturday mornings from 7-11am from June through October. It is located downtown at Lafayette Street between Main Street and Lampkin Street.

Department Stores

J.C. Penney, Lowes, and Peebles are located in Starkville Crossing, which is on Highway 12. Wal-Mart is farther down Highway 12, and there is a Sear's store (catalog facility) on Highway 12. There are some specialty shops downtown and in the two shopping areas on Russell Street (LaGalerie and College Park). Two malls (Leigh and University) are located on Highway 45 in Columbus. Leigh Mall has Sears and J.C. Penney, whereas University Mall has Belk.

Pharmacies

There are several pharmacies in scattered locations around town. The major ones are CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Kroger, Starkville Discount Drugs (on Jackson Street), and Southern Family Markets. The University has a pharmacy at the Longest Student Health Center as well.

Quick Copy Services

Copy Cow (*LaGalerie*)

The UPS Store (Highway 12)

Banks

Regions (*University Drive & Highway 12*)

Merchants & Farmers Bank (*University Drive & Highway 12*)

Cadence Bank (*East Main & Highway 12*)

BancorpSouth (*Highway12*)

Branch locations also are available.

Shop around and you can definitely save money. The services (and fees for them) differ from bank to bank.

Bookstores (Starkville)

Barnes & Noble (*campus*)

The Book Mart (*downtown*)

Campus Book Mart (*Lee Boulevard*)

Bully's Textbook Exchange (*Southdale Shopping Center*)

Bookstores (Columbus)

Books-a-Million (*Leigh Mall*)

Cable TV

Metrocast 323-1615

Voting

If you want to vote in your hometown, the Mississippi State Student Association, located in the Colvard Union, will provide you with the necessary papers to obtain an absentee ballot. If you prefer to vote in Starkville, there is a 30-day residency requirement. Register at the Oktibbeha County Court House on Main Street in Starkville.

Churches

A variety of churches can be found in the area. Check the telephone directory, the *Starkville Daily News*, or ask around for information.

The information above on the local community and Golden Triangle region is by no means complete. Our communities are changing rapidly, but we hope this information will help you get established in this area as quickly as possible.

Revised August 2008