



FOR APPROVAL

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: UTSC Academic Affairs Committee

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DATE: February 4, 2019 for February 11, 2019

AGENDA ITEM: 6

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Graduate Minor Curricular Modifications, Department of Psychological Clinical Science

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

University of Toronto Scarborough Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) “is concerned with matters affecting the teaching, learning and research functions of the Campus” (*AAC Terms of Reference, Section 4*). Under section 5.6 of its terms of reference, the Committee is responsible for approval of “Major and minor modifications to existing degree programs.” The AAC has responsibility for the approval of Major and Minor modifications to existing programs as defined by the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (*UTQAP, Section 3.1*).

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For Approval] (February 11, 2019)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

No previous action in governance has been taken on this item.

HIGHLIGHTS:

This package includes minor modifications to graduate curriculum, submitted by the Graduate Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences, which require governance

approval. Minor modifications to curriculum are understood as those that do not have a significant impact on program or course learning outcomes. They require governance approval when they modestly change the nature of a program or course.

Changes are being made to the PhD, Counselling and Clinical Psychology, field in Clinical Psychology to replace the research-focused paper component of the program's research comprehensive completion requirements with a research grant proposal. The unit has identified issues with the current structure of the research paper requirement, including variability in grading standards not being met, and misalignment with the training model of the program. Replacing the research paper with a grant proposal addresses all of these concerns, and it also better serves the purpose of the research comprehensive, which is to establish the student's ability to independently extend their research program within a clinical science training model.

Students currently in year 2 of the PhD will have the option of following the current research comprehensive structure OR they can choose to follow the revised research comprehensive structure. Timelines for both options have been provided to students. Students currently in year 1 of the PhD have been notified of the revised timelines of the comprehensive examination components. For this transition period, extensions will be granted to students in years 1 and 2 of the PhD on an as needed basis. There is no impact on incoming students.

There has been wide consultation regarding the changes, including with students, faculty, and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no net implications to the campus operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved,

THAT the minor modifications submitted by UTSC Graduate Department of Psychological Clinical Science, as described in 2019-20 Curriculum Cycle: Graduate Minor Curriculum Modifications for Approval, Report 1, dated January 22, 2019, and recommended by the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean, Professor William Gough, be approved effective as of Fall 2019 for the academic year 2019-20.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

1. 2019-20 Curriculum Cycle: Graduate Minor Curriculum Modifications for Approval
Report 2: Department of Psychological Clinical Science, dated January 22, 2019.



2019-20 Curriculum Cycle
Graduate Minor Curriculum Modifications for Approval
Report 2: Department of Psychological Clinical Science

January 22, 2019

Program Changes

PhD, Counselling and Clinical Psychology, Field in Clinical Psychology

Summary

- *Changing Program Length or Requirements*
- *Changing Timing of Program Requirements*

The Department is proposing to replace the research-focused paper component of the program's research comprehensive completion requirements with a research grant proposal. Issues have been identified with the current structure of the research paper requirement, including variability in grading, standards not being met, and misalignment with the training model of the program. Replacing the research paper with a research grant proposal addresses all of these concerns, and it also better serves the purpose of the research comprehensive, which is to establish the student's ability to independently extend their research program within a clinical science training model.

Effective Date of Change

Fall 2019

Academic Rationale

<p>The current research comprehensive requirement involves writing a substantive review paper on a topic relevant to clinical psychology, however the topic cannot be the same as the doctoral dissertation or Master's thesis. The topic should be broad enough to locate a sufficient number of papers to support the review and focused enough so that it makes a theoretical and/or methodological contribution to the literature. The review paper is due in July in year 2 of PhD and should be approximately 30-50 pages in length. Two non-supervisory members of the dissertation committee score the paper and take into account feedback provided by an external reviewer.</p>

<p>In the past couple of years, it has become clear that students are having a difficult time understanding the expectations of the research comprehensive. Even though thorough guidelines are provided to students along with assessment materials, students have been submitting papers of varying quality and many of them are not up to program standards. Many students are selecting topics outside of their domain of knowledge, which is requiring them to invest an extensive amount of work on the paper. In the current structure, the Program Coordinator who is responsible for reviewing topic proposals is not able to gauge how appropriate the topic is</p>

relative to each student's research background. In addition, although publication is not a standard or requirement of the review paper, to date no student has submitted a review paper good enough to even be considered for publication. This further reinforces the conclusion that the current research comprehensive is not providing any actual benefit to a student's academic career but rather taking time away from their dissertation research. This is concerning as it may potentially delay time to graduation.

It was also recently noted that different research comprehensive assessors are applying different pass/fail criteria. The research comprehensive is scored by two non-supervisory members of the dissertation committee, which means there are a range of core and associate faculty members serving as assessors. The variability in those providing the scores is resulting in a range of interpretations of the assessment criteria. Too many students are failing the research comprehensive on the first attempt, which further takes time away from work on the dissertation. This also increases the burden on assessors having to meet with students, provide extensive feedback and to re-grade papers.

Through more formal discussion and consultation with faculty and students as well as further review of other clinical psychology training program procedures, it has become clear that these major issues need to be addressed through the restructuring of the research comprehensive.

The Department proposes to replace the research paper with a grant submission modeled after the Brain and Behaviour Research Foundation's NARSAD Young Investigator Grant. Students will design a feasible and innovative research study, which extends their dissertation research program. The grant proposal will demonstrate their vision and innovation including knowledge of study logistics, feasibility, recruitment, significance and budgeting in a two-year project timeline. The grant proposal will be due at the start of year 2 of the PhD program, which better aligns with the due date of their dissertation proposal and allows them to more immediately begin their dissertation work. With respect to grading the grant proposal, three members of the GD-PCS faculty will form the research comprehensive review committee (on a two-year term). The review committee will adhere to CIHR review criteria, applying it appropriately to year 1 PhD students. Criteria for a pass, major revision and reformulation will be made available to students. The Committee will provide feedback on the grant proposals.

To ensure the clinical science model is upheld and research and clinical work continue to be integrated throughout the program, more research focused questions will be added to the clinical oral comprehensive requirement. Given the brevity of the grant proposal relative to the review paper, the oral clinical comprehensive examination will be moved from the end of year 1 of the PhD to the start of year 2 of the PhD, to coincide with the research comprehensive. This revised timeline will allow students to complete the comprehensive requirement in the first term of year 2 of the PhD and focus their efforts on their dissertation research moving forward.

Impact on Students

Students currently in year 2 of the PhD will have the option of following the current research comprehensive structure OR they can choose to follow the revised research comprehensive structure. Timelines for both options have been provided to students and they were required to notify the department of their decision no later than December 14th, 2018.

Students currently in year 1 of the PhD have been notified of the revised timelines of the comprehensive examination components.

For this transition period, extensions will be granted to students in years 1 and 2 of the PhD on an as needed basis.

There is no impact on incoming students.

Consultation

The Program Committee, which includes all core faculty members, student representatives and administrative staff met on October 11th, 2018 to discuss the issues related to the research comprehensive. A working group comprised of two core faculty members was struck to propose a modified comprehensive examination. The proposal was presented and voted on at the November 15th program meeting.

Three core faculty members met with all students on November 26th, 2018 to inform them of the proposed changes to the research comprehensive structure and answer any questions. No issues were raised; overall, the students were very pleased with the changes.

Resources

None

SGS Calendar Entry, Showing Changes

Psychological Clinical Science: Counselling and Clinical Psychology PhD, Clinical Psychology Field

Doctor of Philosophy

Program Description

The field in Clinical Psychology is offered primarily by the Department of Psychological Clinical Science at UTSC. Clinical Psychology at UTSC adheres to a Clinical Science model of training. Housed within the Graduate Department of Psychological Clinical Science, the primary and overriding objective of graduate training in Clinical Psychology at UTSC is to foster exceptional clinical scientists according to the highest standards of research and professional practice.

A unifying theme of faculty research in Clinical Psychology at UTSC is to advance the assessment and treatment of mental disorders, especially depressive and bipolar disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia-spectrum disorders, borderline personality disorder, and neurocognitive disorders, such as dementia due to Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease. The PhD program is designed for applicants interested in a career as a clinical psychologist based on a Clinical Science model of training. Graduate training in Clinical Psychology at UTSC prepares graduates primarily for research careers as psychological clinical scientists in university and academic medical settings. The PhD program has research strengths in clinical

neuropsychology and neurosciences; personality and psychological assessment; and mindfulness- and acceptance-based psychotherapies.

It is distinguished by its innovative cross-disciplinary approach that emphasizes scientific innovation through novel research collaborations that push traditional boundaries in clinical psychology. Importantly, the program meets the needs of students who plan to engage in research, teaching, and/or evidence-based clinical practice. This program is intended to meet the registration requirements of the College of Psychologists of Ontario (CPO) at the doctoral level. The Counselling and Clinical Psychology program (Clinical Psychology field) is offered on a full-time basis, and progress in the program will be reviewed annually.

Minimum Admission Requirements

- Applicants are admitted under the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies. Applicants must also satisfy the Department of Psychological Clinical Science's additional admission requirements stated below.
- A master's degree in Clinical Psychology (or its equivalent) from a recognized university, with a minimum A– average and excellent research performance.
- Competitive scores on General and Subject (Psychology) tests of the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE).
- Two academic letters of reference.
- A personal statement.
- A curriculum vitae.
- Applicants whose primary language is not English and who graduated from a university where the language of instruction is not English must demonstrate proficiency in English. Applicants must complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or its equivalent according to SGS regulations, prior to submitting the application. See [General Regulations section 4.3](#) for requirements.

Program Requirements

- The PhD program requires 6.0 full-course equivalents (FCEs) including coursework, three clinical placements, plus a comprehensive examination, thesis proposal, thesis, and thesis defence:
 - 4.0 FCEs in coursework, normally completed by the end of Year 3 (CPS 1103H, CPS 1201H, CPS 1301H, CPS 1401H, CPS 1501H, CPS 1809H, CPS 3801H, CPS 3901H).
 - Completion of two one-day courses (CPS 2901H and CPS 2902H) assessed as Credit/No Credit (0.0 FCE).
 - 2.0 FCEs in clinical work:
 - 1.0 FCE in two separate part-time clinical placements during Years 1 and 2 (CPS 3999H and CPS 4999H).
 - 1.0 FCE in a one-year, full-time clinical internship at a Canadian Psychological Association- or American Psychological Association-accredited clinical setting (or equivalent), which normally takes place during Year 5 (CPS 5999Y). Eligibility for the clinical internship will be assessed by the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) prior to Year 4 of the program.
- The comprehensive examination requirement consists of two mandatory components:

1. An oral examination focused on clinical expertise (normally completed in the ~~Summer-Fall~~ session of Year 2⁴); and
2. A research-focused ~~grant proposal paper~~ (normally completed in the ~~Fall Summer~~ session of Year 2).
 - A pass on both components is required for a student to continue on to PhD candidacy. Students who fail the oral exam will have the opportunity to retake the exam. Students who fail the research paper will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit. Students who fail either or both component(s) on the second attempt should consult the School of Graduate Studies' Academic Appeals Policy. If after the appeals process and second attempts at either or both component(s) result in a failure, the student will no longer be eligible to continue in the PhD program. Guidelines on the comprehensive requirement can be found in the PCS Graduate Handbook.
 - Thesis proposal, normally approved prior to the start of Year 3 of the program.
 - Completed thesis.
 - Successful defence of the thesis at the Final Oral Examination.
 - For students interested in acquiring additional clinical hours, the PhD program provides the following optional courses: CPS 6999H and CPS 7999H. Please note that optional courses for the PhD must be approved by the faculty supervisor, the DCT, and the Graduate Chair prior to course enrolment.
 - Supervisors will have annual meetings with students to assess academic progress and to develop plans of study. The DCT will also hold formal annual meetings with students to assess clinical and professional progress.
 - The program length is five years, which includes a pre-doctoral internship.

Program Length

5 years

Time Limit

6 years