**Request for New Specialization**

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The following describes the material which should be included in a proposal for a new area of specialization in an existing graduate degree or for a change in an existing area of specialization. Areas of specialization are recognized on a student’s permanent record (transcript). Approval is required by the department or program curriculum committee, the College Curriculum Committee, the GCCC, Graduate Council, and by the Graduate Dean. The proposal should be sent to the Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee (GCCC) with documentation of approvals by the department and college:

Graduate Curriculum and Catalog Committee

1137 Pearson Hall

Iowa State University

Ames, IA 50011-2206

**1. Name of the area of specialization.**

Social Psychology

Cognitive Psychology

**2. Name of the major.**

Psychology

**3. Graduate degrees to which it applies.**

Ph.D.

**4. Name of the department(s) or program.**

Department of Psychology

**5. What is the change you are requesting? (Answer only if you checked the Change box)**

**6. Other existing areas of specialization for the same major and same degree.**

Counseling Psychology

**7. Are areas of specialization optional or required? (Can a student choose the major without selecting an area of specialization?)**

Optional, although all new students enter into one of our areas of concentration: Cognitive, Counseling, and Social. Counseling is the only area until now to be formally recognized as a specialization. Occasionally a student enters the Counseling psychology program but moves out of it after a time. These students often become generalists and do not specialize in one of our other areas (cognitive or social). So we would like to maintain the option of a degree without a specialization for such cases.

**8. Reasons for proposing the new area of specialization or change in the area of specialization.**

For at least 25 years, students have applied to one of the three areas of concentration in Psychology: Cognitive, Counseling, or Social. Students were only admitted to our graduate program if their interests aligned with a faculty member in one of these three areas. Once admitted, students must satisfy specific requirements for each of these areas. Thus, in practice, the Department of Psychology has had three areas of specialization for years. With this request, we want to formalize those areas. This has two primary benefits: a) it will make the application process less confusing for applicants (right now, when they apply, they only are provided with the option of Counseling psychology as a specialization); and b) students’ transcripts will indicate their area of specialization. This will make them more competitive for jobs in which specialization is assumed.

**9. Requirements for the area of specialization (how are the requirements different for this area of specialization compared to other areas of specialization or to the major without an area of specialization). (For new specialization only.)**

As mentioned above, these areas of specialization have been in effect informally for years; the specific requirements are already included in the Department of Psychology Handbook for Graduate Education. Here are the specific requirements for the proposed specializations in Cognitive and Social Psychology (students may specialize in only one area):

**Additional Cognitive Area requirements:**

**Advanced Cognitive Psychology (516)** – This course examines contemporary psychological models and related neurological substrates underlying cognition in normal and brain-damaged individuals.

**Seminar in Cognitive Psychology (598)** – This seminar focuses on current topics in Cognitive Psychology including: Applied Memory Research (598Q); Applied Cognition (598G); Human Learning & Memory (598H); Visual Perception (598S); Evolutionary Psychology (598S); Spatial Cognition (598I). A minimum of 4 sections of this course (1 for the MS and 3 additional for the Ph.D.) should be completed en route to the Ph.D.

Students entering the program with a Master's degree and for whom the POS committee determines that a transferring course is equivalent to 1 section of 598 will complete a minimum of 3 sections of 598.

**Research Seminar - Cognitive (692Q)** – This seminar provides focused reading on special topics in cognitive psychology. Students will take 1 credit of 692Q each semester. This requirement will be waived for students who have successfully completed the oral preliminary examination, have an approved dissertation proposal, and are not in residence on campus.

**Additional Social Area requirements:**

**Psych 580: Advanced Social Psychology.** This course focuses on current theories, methods, and research in social psychology with an emphasis on cognitive and interpersonal processes such as attribution, social cognition, attitude change, attraction, aggression, and social comparison.

**Psych 595:** This is a social psychology seminar course that has multiple sections (A, B, C…) varying in content. All students must take at least one of the Psych 595 sections prior to proposing to defend their dissertation proposal. Note that a 595 course taken in fulfillment of core requirements cannot also be counted towards this requirement.

**Psych 692R Research Seminar: Social.** This seminar provides focused reading on special topics in social psychology. Students must sign up for this course each semester until they have successfully defended their dissertation proposal. After that, registration in 692R is optional, but attendance at colloquia is expected.

**10. Estimate the number of students who will graduate with this major and degree each year and the number who will graduate with this area of specialization. (For new specialization only.)**

Approximately ten students each year graduate with a Ph.D. from the Department of Psychology. Of these, two students will graduate with the specialization in Cognitive Psychology and three students will graduate with the specialization in Social Psychology (the remainder are in Counseling Psychology)

**11 What resources (faculty, courses, research facilities, library facilities, etc) are available to support the area of specialization? (For new specialization only.)**

The **Cognitive** Psychology program area includes six faculty with research emphases in a variety of core areas of cognition. Several faculty members are also a part of other interdepartmental programs, such as Human-Computer Interaction and Neuroscience.

The **Social** Psychology program area includes twelve faculty who investigate a variety of basic and applied questions, including human aggression, social cognition, media influence, close relationships, health behaviors, and psychology and law. Two of the faculty are also a part of the Human-Computer Interaction program.

**In both the Cognitive and the Social programs,** each faculty member has his/her own lab, with the equipment needed for student research. The courses required for these specializations are already provided and are offered at regular intervals. The ISU library carries the key journals for scholars in these areas. Research in these areas is supported by grants from several sources, including the National Science Foundation, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, and the James L. McDonnell Foundation. Specialized seminars are provided for students in both areas every semester (Psychology 692).

**12. What future financial support will be needed? (For new specialization only.)**

As already noted, these areas of specialization have been in place for a long time, thus, the necessary resources are already available to students. No new financial support is needed. The specialization on the transcript simply recognizes the specialization already present in the doctoral program in psychology.

**Academic Program Approval Voting Record**

This document is to be appended as the last page of the proposal for any new or revised academic program to record the successive votes of approval as the proposal moves through its required review and approval steps. Consult Faculty Handbook Section 10.8 or the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee website for information regarding Committee review and voting requirements for each action.

Curricular Action: (check appropriate boxes below)

1. □ New Program □ Name Change □ Discontinuation □ Concurrent Degree for:

2. □ Undergraduate Major □ Graduate Major □ Undergraduate Minor □ Graduate Minor

□ Undergraduate Certificate □ Graduate Certificate x Other: \_**Graduate Specialization**

3. Name of Proposed Change: **Specialization in Cognitive Psychology; Specialization in Social Psychology**

4. Name of Contact Person: David Vogel e-mail address: dvogel@iastate.edu

5. Primary College: **LAS** Secondary College:

6. Involved Department(s): **Psychology**

**Voting record for this curricular action:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Votes | | |  |
| Voting Body | For | Against | Abstain | Date of Vote |
| Dept. or Program Committee |  |  |  |  |
| Psychology Grad. Program Committee | 4 | 0 | 0 | 12.19.17 |
| Faculty, Dept. of Psychology | 23 | 0 | 0 | 3.19.18 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| LAS Curriculum Committee | 8 | 0 | 0 | 3/23/2018 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| College Approval Vote |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Graduate College Curriculum Comm. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Graduate Council |  |  |  |  |

[FSCC – November 2013]