

## **FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

### **Second Doctoral Exam**

#### **Rationale for the Second Doctoral Exam:**

The purpose of the Second Doctoral Exam is to evaluate the student's overall knowledge about Psychology and to evaluate the student's in depth knowledge about a specific topic area in Psychology. The focus of this evaluation is on the student's understanding of relevant basic psychological theories, methodology, ethical issues, diversity issues, law, and research in the topic area. The topic area selected by the student can be the likely topic of the student's dissertation research, but it can be on any topic of the student's choosing. The goal of the Second Doctoral Exam is to allow the student to investigate an area of psychology in great depth and to prepare the student to develop a dissertation proposal that will make a significant research contribution to the field of Psychology. The proposal defense for the doctoral dissertation will be a separate requirement.

#### **Timing of the Second Doctoral Exam:**

The students should begin working on the Second Doctoral Exam by the time of the successful completion of the First Doctoral Exam or 45 credits of coursework, including transfer credits. The Second Doctoral Exam will ordinarily be taken when the student has completed between 45 and 60 credits of coursework, including transfer credits.

#### **Committee for the Second Doctoral Exam:**

The committee for the Second Doctoral Exam should include the likely members of the student's Dissertation (Third Exam) Committee. The student's major advisor will chair the Second Doctoral Exam committee. The committee will also include at least 2 other members of the Psychology Doctoral Faculty, or other faculty who are eligible to serve on Psychology Doctoral Dissertation committees. The additional committee members will be selected by the student, with the assistance of the major advisor.

#### **Requirements for the Second Doctoral Exam:**

The Second Doctoral Exam consists of two parts: 1) A written paper and 2) An oral presentation and defense of the written work.

#### **The Written Paper:**

The Second Doctoral Exam first entails the successful completion of a paper investigating the chosen area of psychology. The written paper must be an in-depth investigation of a specific topic area in Psychology that is manuscript or publication quality. The intent of this requirement is to allow the student to investigate his or her particular area of research. It is likely that this topic will be the basis for the dissertation, but it is not required to be the same topic as the dissertation. It is also possible for the written paper will to serve as or be modified to serve as the literature review portion of

the student's dissertation proposal. However, the paper will be evaluated as a separate, stand-alone piece of writing for the purposes of the Second Doctoral Exam.

### **The Oral Defense:**

The student is required to orally defend the written paper to the members of his or her Second Doctoral Exam committee. The oral defense will consist of a presentation followed by questions from the committee members on the topics covered in the presentation and on additional related topics not directly covered in the presentation, as the committee sees fit. The Second Doctoral Exam oral defense may be scheduled at the same time as the dissertation proposal defense, but this is not required. If they are scheduled at the same time, the defense of the Second Doctoral Exam must precede the proposal defense and there must be a bifurcated process used during the defenses, so that the defense of each requirement is conducted separately. In the event that the defenses are scheduled in the same meeting, the Second Doctoral Exam committee chair is responsible for ensuring that a full defense of the Second Doctoral Exam occurs that is independent of the dissertation proposal defense and is responsible for the questioning phase of the defense.

### **Outcomes of the Second Doctoral Examination:**

Second Doctoral Examinations will be graded on a "pass," "qualified pass," or "fail" basis. In order to complete the Second Doctoral Exam requirement, the student must earn a "pass" from a majority of his or her Second Doctoral Exam committee. A "pass" indicates that the student has completed the requirement and no revisions to the written work or additional oral defense of the written work will be required. A "qualified pass" indicates that the student has completed the majority of the requirement, but that reasonable revisions are required before proceeding. The student will be required to re-submit the project with revisions to the committee for its consideration. The committee may require an additional oral defense of the revised written work, if a majority of the committee members agree that an additional oral defense is required. A "fail" indicates that substantial revisions would be required in order to pass the Second Doctoral Exam and that the student has failed to meet the minimum requirements of the Exam. The student will be required to re-submit a revised written paper and to orally defend that revised paper.

Ordinarily the Second Doctoral Exam will be completed after the student earns 45 credits and before the student earns 60 credits. If the student does not pass the Second Doctoral Examination by the time the student has completed 10 semesters in the Program, the student will be deemed as not making satisfactory progress within the Graduate Center guidelines. If the Second Doctoral Exam is not passed prior to the completion of 10 semesters, the student will not be permitted to enroll in any additional classes in the Program before passing the exam. Students not making satisfactory progress for this reason will only be permitted to continue in the Program if they are granted special permission of the Executive Officer.