

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

GUIDE TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

(for students starting Fall 2026 or later)

Revised August 2026

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The primary goal of the graduate program in Psychological and Brain Sciences (PBS) at Dartmouth is the training of highly-qualified students for productive careers in research and teaching. Only students who intend to pursue the PhD degree full-time are accepted into the program. The program of study involves research, a set of required courses, and advanced electives. Training culminates in the production of a publishable thesis based on original research in the student's chosen field of investigation. Each student is required to work on the thesis in the laboratory of a faculty advisor. This association will determine, to a large extent, the nature of the student's individual course of study. The guidelines that follow have been adopted by the faculty to ensure that each student completing the graduate program will have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to be effective in research and teaching in their chosen sub-discipline.

Students are accepted into the program to work with a specific faculty advisor and lab. Per the [Guarini Policy](#), continuation in the program is contingent upon both satisfactory academic progress and the advisor's continuing commitment to provide research supervision. All students are encouraged to become familiar with the research programs of all faculty in their chosen subspecialty and should feel free to discuss research-related matters with any member of the faculty.

The Graduate Program in Psychological and Brain Sciences is divided into three programmatic groups: Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience, Social and Affective Neuroscience, and Systems and Behavioral Neuroscience. Although most requirements are similar for the three groups, each group can set independent requirements beyond the minimum standards set by the PBS Graduate Program. Regardless of the group in which the student completes his/her training, the student can opt to follow one of two sets of course requirements to receive his/her PhD in [Psychological and Brain Sciences](#) or in [Cognitive Neuroscience](#) (see [Program Requirements](#) section).

In addition to the faculty advisor, graduate students have access to several other resources for mentorship and support, including the [Mentoring Committee](#), the Department Chair, and the Chair of the Graduate Committee, all of whom are available for advice about general progress and adjustment to academic life.

Typical Program of Study

The following provides an overview of a typical program for a student who enters with a baccalaureate degree. Please note that the Graduate Committee, on behalf of the Department, is prepared to make changes in the program of any student when it considers the educational goals of its students to be advanced thereby. Detailed requirements for **Coursework and Teaching Assistantships, Research** and Program Milestones (**Master's degree** and the **Dissertation Process and Defense**) can be found in the next sections of this guide.

First Year

First-year graduate students must complete the *Proseminar* (PSYC 100) and two of the three Core Concepts Courses (PSYC 101, PSYC 102, PSYC 103). First-year students may also take the two-term sequence in statistics (PSYC 110 and 111), or may defer this to their second year, or petition to the Chair of the Graduate Committee for replacement courses.

First-year students are expected to engage in the ongoing activities of a laboratory or research program. This serves to introduce the student to the research being conducted in his/her mentor's laboratory. Students will enroll in PSYC 188 (1 research credit), PSYC 288 (2 research credits), or PSYC 388 (3 research credits) to meet the minimum 3 credits per term to be considered "active."

Second Year

Second-year graduate students complete the third course in Core Concepts series (PSYC 101, PSYC 102, PSYC 103). By the end of the second year students must also complete the two-term statistics requirement (PSYC 110 and 111) if it was not taken during their first year. The instructor, in consultation with the Graduate Committee, may excuse a student with exceptional preparation from one or both Stats courses. In such instances, the student will be required to enroll in other analysis methods courses relevant to their research and approved by the Graduate Committee. Students will also begin to fulfill their TAsip requirements.

The major milestone that must be achieved before the end of the second year is the Master's degree. The course and thesis requirements are outlined [below](#). Students have the option of completing the requirements to earn the degree at the Spring conferral (thesis submission deadline of May 15) or Summer conferral (thesis submission deadline of August 15). Extensions beyond August 15 of the second year will only be granted for extenuating circumstances and must be approved in advance by the primary advisor, secondary mentor, and Chair of the Graduate Committee. Successful completion of the Master's degree by the end of the second year is required to remain in good standing in the program and to progress to the Third Year.

Third Year

In Fall term of the Third year, students will enroll in PSYC 118, Research Presentation. This is a required research presentation to the full department. As in the first and second years, each student will continue to conduct research with a member of the faculty. Students are also encouraged to complete their course requirements this year (though this is not required), including electives on topics that will contribute to the formulation of a dissertation proposal. Students will also continue to fulfill their TAsip requirements.

By the end of the Third Year, in consultation with their advisor, students should have chosen the internal (Dartmouth affiliated) members of their dissertation committee. In the Spring of the third year, students should schedule a meeting with their committee to review past research progress and discuss future research plans.

Fourth Year and Beyond

Research for the dissertation usually comprises the major program of study in the fourth year. Students are expected to complete their course and TAsip requirements by the end of their 4th year.

COURSEWORK, TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS, and RESEARCH

Coursework

PhD in Psychological and Brain Sciences:

- *Proseminar* (PSYC 100). REQUIRED; taken by students in the Fall of their first year.
Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research is included in the Proseminar course
- Core Concepts in PBS (PSYC 101, PSYC 102, PSYC 103). REQUIRED; taken by first- or second-year students.
- *Measurement and Statistics I & II* (PSYC 110 & 111). REQUIRED; taken by first- or second-year students.
- *Electives*. REQUIRED to take at least 3, one of which must be from the Primary Electives list:
 - o Primary Electives (take at least one, chosen in consultation with advisor):
Advanced Topics in Social Neuroscience (PSYC 123)
Systems Neuroscience (PSYC 126/IND 102) * Req for all Behavioral Neuro students
Advanced Topics in Cognitive Neuroscience (PSYC 128)
Advanced Topics in Cognitive Science (PSYC 129)
 - o Other Electives:
*Note that this is a non-exhaustive list of electives that have been offered in the past. Class offerings are subject to faculty availability and enrollment.
Perception (PSYC 121)
Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience (IND 101)
Introduction to Programming for Psychological Scientists (PSYC 132)
Models of Memory (PSYC 133)
Imaging Methods (PSYC 160)
Computer Programming for Brain Scientists (PSYC 161)
Human Electrophysiology Lab (PSYC 162)
Advanced Statistics (PSYC 163)
Computational Methods (PSYC 164)
Professional Development (PSYC 167)
Brain Evolution (PSYC 171)
Language of Perception (PSYC 172)
Computational Neuroscience (PSYC 174)
Current Issues in Behavioral Neuroscience (PSYC 175)
Interacting Minds (PSYC 177)
Computational Foundations for Human and Systems Neuroscience (PSYC 178)
Seminar in Special Topics (PSYC 179)

PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience:

- *Proseminar* (PSYC 100). REQUIRED; taken by students in the Fall of their first year.
Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research is included in the Proseminar course
- Core Concepts in PBS (PSYC 101, 102, 103). REQUIRED; taken by first- or second-year students.
- *Measurement and Statistics I & II* (PSYC 110 & 111). REQUIRED; taken by first- or second-year students.
- *Required Topics Courses (Must take both):*
Systems Neuroscience (PSYC 126/IND 102)
Advanced Topics in Cognitive Neuroscience (PSYC 128)
- *Electives. Required to take at least 2 of this non-exhaustive list:*
Advanced Topics in Cognitive Science (PSYC 129)
Perception (PSYC 121)
Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience (IND 101)
Introduction to Programming for Psychological Scientists (PSYC 132)
Advanced Topics in Social Neuroscience (PSYC 123)
Models of Memory (PSYC 133)
Imaging Methods (PSYC 160)
Computer Programming for Brain Scientists (PSYC 161)
Human Electrophysiology Lab (PSYC 162)
Advanced Statistics (PSYC 163)
Computational Methods (PSYC 164)
Professional Development (PSYC 167)
Brain Evolution (PSYC 171)
Language of Perception (PSYC 172)
Computational Neuroscience (PSYC 174)
Current Issues in Behavioral Neuroscience (PSYC 175)
Interacting Minds (PSYC 177)
Computational Foundations for Human and Systems Neuroscience (PSYC 178)
Seminar in Special Topics (PSYC 179)

Additional Notes for both Psychological and Brain Sciences and Cognitive Neuroscience Degrees:

1. Students in the Systems and Behavioral Neuroscience group must take both IND 101 and IND 102.
2. Students may petition to receive credit for courses in other departments by requesting approval from the Graduate Committee before enrolling in the course. The student's advisor and the course instructor must also approve. In general, there is a limit of two graduate courses from outside the department that may count toward fulfilling the course requirements, unless it can be adequately demonstrated that an alternative course design would be a better program for the student.
3. In addition to courses, all graduate students must attend a weekly area research meetings and all departmental colloquia.
4. Some graduate courses are offered annually each year, including the *Proseminar* course (PSYC 100), and *Measurement and Statistics I & II* (PSYC 110 & PSYC 111). Other courses are offered on a rotating basis. Students should plan their course schedule accordingly and communicate with their advisors and/or the Chair of Graduate Studies to devise a curriculum suitable for the student's goals and experience.
5. As described below, students are also expected to be enrolled in at least one credit of Graduate Research (PSYC 188, 288, or 388) during every term.

Advanced Standing

Students who enter the program with previous graduate training at another institution may be granted credit for certain departmental requirements. The Graduate Committee, in consultation with appropriate faculty members and the Dean of Graduate Studies, will grant such credit. It is the responsibility of the student to request consideration for advanced standing by the end of the Fall term of the first year. Dartmouth stipend eligibility is reduced commensurate with advanced standing.

Teaching Apprenticeship Requirement

Each student will be required to serve as a teaching apprentice (TA) in four courses during his or her graduate training. This requirement is generally spread out over the second through fifth years, and may include classes during the summer term. Assignments are made in the Spring for the following academic year, taking student and instructor preference into account. Students who enter the program with advanced standing may petition the Graduate Committee for a reduction in teaching commensurate with their previous teaching experience. Note, however, that advanced standing reduces the number of terms that students are eligible for Dartmouth stipends. Students should register for PSYC 115 when TA-ing a course, and a grade is assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to be available throughout the entirety of the term and to attend all classes, unless otherwise notified by the course instructor.

Third Year Research Presentation

During the fall term of their third year, graduate students are required to give a presentation discussing research they have conducted since arriving in PBS. These presentations will be given to the entire department on a day(s) determined by the Graduate Committee. Each presentation should last about ten minutes, and the student will then answer questions from the audience. The student will register for the PSYC 118 course to receive credit for this presentation. Although mandatory, the presentation is not graded and serves as a celebratory event for students to share their work with the entire department.

General Research Requirements

Research lies at the heart of the PBS PhD experience, driving students to generate new knowledge and advance the frontiers of their discipline. All students must have a research advisor of record to remain in the program. Students are expected to engage in research under the supervision of their research advisor during each term in the program and must be enrolled in Graduate Research (PSYC 188, 288, or 388) each term. Students are required to give at least one presentation each year, including in the first year, to a research area meeting (e.g., SLAB, CBB, B4). Students in the B4 group are required to give two presentations per year starting in the first year.

Note: The difference between the three graduate research courses above reflects different amounts of course credit. PSYC 188 carries one credit, PSYC 288 carries two credits, and PSYC 388 carries three credits. Students must enroll for a minimum of three credits each term. For example, if a student is taking a seminar course (worth one credit), they would also sign up for two credits of research, PSYC 288.

MASTER'S DEGREE

Requirements for an en route Master's degree

All students will be recommended for the non-terminal **Master of Science** degree upon completion of the relevant program course requirements and research credits.

Course requirements

1. Proseminar (100), fall of the first year [this course now incorporates the PSYC 700 "Ethics" curriculum]
2. Measurement and Statistics (110, 111) or two other approved analysis-related methods course(s) if exempted from PSYC 110 and/or 111
3. Core Concepts in PBS (PSYC 101, PSYC 102, PSYC 103)

Other Degree Requirements:

4. Completed Master's thesis and successful defense (PSYC 117)
5. Six credits of Graduate Research. PSYC 388 counts as 3 credits, PSYC 288 as two credits, and PSYC 188 counts as one.

Master's Written Thesis

Students should write and defend a written thesis on a research project that was conducted at Dartmouth during their time in the graduate program. This report should follow the format of a scientific research paper (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion). Students may submit an accepted full-length manuscript, based on their work at Dartmouth, in lieu of a research report. To defend their thesis, students should arrange a meeting of their assigned Master's thesis committee. The Master's thesis committee is comprised of the student's primary PI and one additional PBS faculty member, assigned by the graduate committee in consultation with the student's PI. To begin the Master's thesis process, students should send a brief, 2-page prospectus of the project they are planning to write their thesis on to their committee for approval (by email). The goal of this approval step is for the committee to establish that the research project: 1) is substantial, 2) was led and completed by the student, and 3) was performed at Dartmouth. Note that the research project described in the Master's thesis need not yet be complete, published, or even publishable (i.e. it may describe a null result or research in progress). Next, students should schedule a 1-hour thesis defense with their committee. Completed research theses should be submitted to the committee by email 2 weeks prior to the scheduled defense, unless otherwise arranged with their committee. During the defense, the student will present the project and the committee will provide feedback on the student's work and suggest any necessary revisions.

Timeline: Students are encouraged to start the Master's thesis process as early as they are ready (likely at the beginning of Y2). It is recommended that the MS thesis defense be scheduled to occur in the Spring term of Y2. At the latest, the thesis must be successfully completed (i.e., defended, revised if necessary, and passed) by August 15 of Y2. Please note that to obtain a master's degree in June, all requirements must be completed by May 15. In the case of extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Graduate Committee on a case-by-case basis by written petition.

Evaluation: The Master's thesis will be evaluated based on the following grading system. HP: Excellent; P: Acceptable to move on to the PhD without revision; LP: Possibility of revision to P or HP, but must be accomplished by August 15 deadline; NC: No possibility of revision. Unless an extension is granted as described above, an incomplete thesis or grade of LP or NC on Dec 1 of Y3 will result in no master's degree and termination from the program.

The same requirements apply to students who aim to get a terminal Master's degree. However, note that no student will be admitted to the PBS Graduate Program with the expectation that only the Master's degree will be completed.

DISSERTATION PROCESS AND DEFENSE

A doctoral dissertation is the written culmination of scholarly work in graduate school. It should describe an original study or series of studies that represent(s) a substantial contribution to knowledge in Psychological and Brain Sciences. In its final form, a dissertation generally includes an extensive literature review relevant to the conducted studies, a description of methods and results, and a thorough discussion of the findings in the theoretical context of the literature. Recent theses are available online via the Dartmouth Library at:

<https://researchguides.dartmouth.edu/dissertations>.

1. **Internal dissertation committee (by end of third year):** Together with their advisor, students should select their Dartmouth-affiliated committee members (advisor who is the chairperson plus two other faculty, at least one other must be within the PBS program). Students should approach the selected faculty members to discuss their willingness to serve on the committee. In the Spring of the 3rd year, students will meet with all internal committee members to talk about their research progress and plans.
2. **Full Committee Approval (about 1 year before dissertation defense):** Together with their advisor, students will select the external (non-Dartmouth affiliated) faculty member of their dissertation committee. Please note Guarini requirements for committee composition [here](#). Once selected, please submit [the approval form](#) to the Chair of Graduate studies, who will sign and then send to Guarini for approval.
3. **Dissertation Proposal (about 1 year before dissertation defense):** Following approval of their committee, students should propose their dissertation to their committee. This ideally occurs at least 9 months prior to the planned dissertation defense. The dissertation proposal consists of two parts: 1) a written proposal, and 2) an oral proposal defense. To get started, students should schedule a proposal defense (2h) with their committee. Student should submit the written dissertation proposal ([see format below](#)) to the Committee by email at least 2 weeks before the scheduled proposal defense (leaving the committee enough time to read the proposal). Upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal, the [PBS Dissertation Proposal Approval Form](#) must be submitted to the PBS Department Administrator and Chair of Graduate Studies.
4. **Written dissertation:** The layout of the dissertation should be agreed upon at the Dissertation Proposal Defense (see more [information below](#)). The dissertation should be submitted to the dissertation committee at least 2 weeks prior to the private oral defense. If any member of the Dissertation Committee finds that the submitted thesis is inadequate before the defense, that member must communicate his/her concerns to the thesis advisor and the other members of the committee. This may result in the cancellation of the private thesis defense, up to 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.
5. **Private Defense:** The Dissertation Committee conducts a private oral examination of the candidate, in which the candidate must present and defend the dissertation and demonstrate in the widest sense that they are prepared for a scholarly career in the field. The defense should be scheduled for ~3 hours. During the defense, the student will make an oral presentation relating to the dissertation studies (~45 minutes), which maybe interrupted with questions from the committee and will be followed by a Q&A period (~60-75 minutes). The student should expect to receive both broad and detailed questions about their presented work. Immediately after the Q&A period, the Committee should privately discuss the written thesis and oral defense to determine the [Thesis Defense Outcome](#) which determines how the student should proceed and the extent of revisions required (~15 mins). The committee will then call the student back into the room and provide feedback to the student (~15 mins). In accordance with College policy, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the Dissertation Committee to ensure that all Dartmouth members of the Dissertation Committee are present in the room at the dissertation defense. The Department does not provide travel or housing funds for the external member. As per College policy, the external member may attend the defense in person or via video conference. Once the dissertation is finalized and all of the Committee members have approved of the written thesis, a copy of the signed cover sheet and dissertation should be provided to the PBS Department Administrator. The student and primary advisor must also sign [this form](#) and submit to the Chair of Graduate Studies.
6. **Public Defense Presentation:** The student must also present and defend the dissertation in a public colloquium attended by committee members and open to the public. The public dissertation defense is a program requirement and should be scheduled at least 2 weeks after the private defense in consultation

with Michelle Powers. It is an opportunity to share work with research with colleagues, friends, and family, and to celebrate the achievement of the PhD.

7. **Deposit dissertation and degree conferral:** Guarini dissertation submission deadlines occur quarterly approximately one month before the end of the term that the degree is conferred in. Please check the [Guarini website](#) for current submission deadlines and related submission forms. The Department also requests that students provide one bound hard copy of their dissertation for the Department's library. The degree will be conferred at the next (quarterly) Board of Trustees meeting after the submission deadline.

Dissertation Proposal Format

The Dissertation Proposal is an opportunity to receive feedback and guidance from the Dissertation Committee on the ongoing research that will be included in the dissertation. The dissertation will likely include research that has already been completed by this point in the PhD, included in the Master's thesis, and/or already published. However, the Dissertation proposal must identify new and/or ongoing work to complete before the defense (i.e., conducting a final study remaining in the PhD, completing a remaining set of analyses, or developing a theoretical framework that binds multiple studies together). The format of the written dissertation proposal is somewhat flexible, and should be decided through conversation with the primary research advisor. Most often, the dissertation proposal will take the form of a research strategy of an NIH NRSA (F31) proposal (~6 pages, excluding references). This proposal will emphasize planned/unfinished work, but may feature the work already completed thus far in the PhD as relevant background. Students are also strongly encouraged to submit the proposal to funding agencies that provide support for graduate students.

After submitting the dissertation proposal to their committee (by email ~2 weeks before the dissertation proposal defense), the student will make a presentation to the Dissertation Committee (a proposal defense). The proposal defense should be scheduled for ~1.5 hours, with an oral presentation by the student (~20 minutes) as well as time for questions (~40 minutes). In the oral presentation, the student will outline their proposed work, and might include an overview of their completed PhD work in the motivation/introduction, as well as a proposed timeline for their dissertation work. During the Q&A period, the student should expect to receive both broad questions about their field of inquiry as well as specific questions about the details of his or her proposed studies. Immediately after the Q&A period, the Committee should briefly confer in private to discuss the proposed work (~15 mins), before calling the student back into the room and providing feedback (~15 mins).

Dissertation Format

Please see the [Guarini requirements for Dissertation Formatting](#). The form of the dissertation is otherwise flexible and should be decided through conversation with the committee and finalized at the dissertation proposal defense. Most often, the dissertation will take one of two forms:

1. The "paper sandwich" form. In this form, the dissertation consists of at least five chapters:
 - A broad introductory chapter that describes the overall question and background literature relevant to the three papers.
 - Approximately three publication-quality scientific articles describing original empirical research (one paper / chapter). Because papers vary greatly in complexity, the exact number of papers included will be determined in consultation with the student's PI and committee. Each paper should include an introduction, methods, results, and discussion. The student must be the first author on each paper, or receive permission from their committee to include papers on which they are co-authors. In some cases, a paper may already be published or in-press.
 - A discussion chapter that synthesizes the results of these papers, discusses their theoretical significance, and raises next steps.
2. A single report form. In this form, the dissertation will again consist of approximately four chapters:
 - A broad introductory chapter that describes the overall question and background literature relevant to the student's project(s).
 - A methods chapter, covering the methods of the student's project(s).
 - A results chapter, covering the results of the student's project(s).

- A discussion chapter that synthesizes the results of the student's project(s), discusses their theoretical significance, and raises next steps.

Investiture and Commencement. The Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Dartmouth will host an Investiture Ceremony ("hooding") for graduating doctoral students on the Saturday prior to Sunday's Commencement. Doctoral students are also invited to march in Sunday's Commencement ceremonies on the Dartmouth Green. Graduate and professional students will be emailed assembly instructions (separate from undergraduate students and faculty) in the weeks prior to the ceremony.

GENERAL POLICIES

Residence Requirement

To earn the doctorate at Dartmouth, a student must study full-time in residence at Dartmouth for at least six terms (two academic years).

Academic Calendar

The graduate program and stipends are active for all four quarters of the academic year. Graduate students are expected to be in residence, maintain active research programs and course loads during each term that they are registered in the program, including summer. Please note that students may be called upon to serve as a TA during the summer.

Changing Primary Advisors

If a student wants to change advisors, the Graduate Committee must facilitate the process.

Graduate Grading System

Four grades are used to evaluate the academic work of graduate students: HP (high pass), P (pass), LP (low pass), and NC (no credit). HP will signify work of distinctly superior quality; P will signify work of good quality; and LP will signify work acceptable for graduate credit but in which one or more serious deficiencies were exhibited. NC is to be used when a student's work is so unsatisfactory or incomplete as to receive no credit. ON (ongoing) is used when work for a course is continued from one term to the next. ON grades are temporary and are replaced by final grades (HP, P, LP, or NC) once the relevant work is completed. By current practice of the faculty, P is the modal grade. Students are free to seek oral or written evaluations of course and research work from their instructors to supplement the letter grades received, and faculty members are encouraged to provide written evaluations directly to students with copies sent to the Graduate Committee.

Any graduate student who has received more than one LP grade or has received one NC grade will be placed on probation for at least one term, consistent with [Guarini's Policy on Satisfactory Standing](#). The PBS Graduate Committee will review the student's progress during the probationary period. At the end of the probationary period, the Committee will inform the Dean of the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, in writing, as to whether the student has produced coursework and/or research at a satisfactory level. If such is the case, the student will be removed from probationary status. If, however, the student has not met the departmental standards for satisfactory progress, the student will be placed in 'unsatisfactory standing' until satisfactory progress is achieved according to the written requirements of the Graduate Committee. A student in 'unsatisfactory standing' is not eligible for federal loans or Dartmouth awards.

A graduate student who receives more than two LP grades or more than one NC grade will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee for potential dismissal from the program. The primary advisor can petition the PBS Graduate Committee to terminate a student from the program or move them to the Master's track if an 'unsatisfactory academic standing' has gone unresolved after the probationary measures. In addition, faculty can vote to terminate a student from the program, independent of the student's academic standing, if the faculty believes that the student is failing to make satisfactory progress in or violates accepted ethical standards of scholarship. Please also see [Guarini's Dismissal Policy](#).

Graduate Representative

Each year the current graduate students will nominate individuals to serve as Graduate Representatives. The nominations will be considered by the Graduate Committee and put forth for a vote by the graduate students. The goal is that there will be one representative from each research area. The Graduate Representatives will serve as the primary liaisons between the graduate student body and the Graduate Committee regarding graduate program business, policy, and recruiting. They will be invited to attend faculty meetings during discussions of graduate student-related matters and are expected to convey the information to the rest of the graduate students.

Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees will be assigned to all first- and second-year students. The goal of the committee is to provide professional guidance, mentoring, and personal support for students early in their careers. The Committee will consist of 1-2 faculty in addition to the primary mentor and will also include a senior graduate student peer. The committee will be required to meet with the student as a full group at the outset of the fall term of the student's first year. In addition, the student will meet annually with each member of his/her mentoring team (one-on-one) in each of those years. Please find the forms for documentation of these meetings and resources to enable mentoring discussions on the [PBS website](#).

FUNDING

Graduate Student Financial Support

First-year student stipends normally begin September 1 of each calendar year, so the first check is available October 1. When possible, contracts for continuing students are written for twelve months. Students on partial stipends will receive the same monthly stipend, but for fewer months. In the case of students who are in their last year, support will normally end on June 15 unless visa restrictions require an earlier program end date. There is no guarantee that stipend support will be provided to any student beyond the fifth year in the graduate program. Stipend support after the fifth year can be eliminated independent of the source of the stipend (e.g., Dartmouth DF, NRSA, or funds from faculty grant).

Following the public defense of the doctoral thesis, a student's stipend will end no later than the following dates. If a student defends during the Spring term, the stipend will end no later than June 15th. If a student defends during the Summer term, the stipend will end no later than September 15th. If a student defends during the Fall term, the stipend will end no later than December 15th. If a student defends during the Winter term, the stipend will end no later than March 15th. International students are advised to contact their OVIS advisor well in advance to ensure that their program end date aligns with their defense timeline. For students defending during the Spring and Summer terms, health insurance benefits will continue through August 31.

It is the policy of the Dartmouth School of Graduate and Advanced Studies that graduate students who are fully supported (a full tuition scholarship and a full stipend) cannot receive additional payment from Dartmouth College for services rendered. Further, fully supported students cannot accept employment outside Dartmouth without the explicit approval of the PBS Graduate Committee and the Dean of the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.

Students must carry three credits at all times to be considered active in the program and eligible for their stipend.

Travel to Professional Meetings

The Graduate School has limited funds available to cover part of the transportation expenses of graduate students who present papers at professional meetings. Application must be made in writing to the Graduate School Office describing the meeting to be attended, the title of the presentation to be presented, and the source of any other travel funds available to the student. This request should be endorsed by the student's advisor or the department chair.

An annual travel stipend of \$350 is also available through the department, and application for this fund must be made in writing (by email) to the Chair of the Graduate Committee. Like Graduate School funds, department funds are available to pay for travel and conference registration fees for students giving presentations at professional meetings. Students traveling on either department or Graduate School funds must apply for these funds in advance of their trip and prepare College business expense reimbursement forms, with original receipts, upon the completion of their trip.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSESSMENT

At the end of the spring term each year, each graduate student will prepare a progress report (e.g., [See Example Form from 2026](#)) and submit this report, along with an updated CV, to the Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Department Administrator. Each student's advisor will also prepare a report on the student's progress across the year (e.g., [See Example Form from 2026](#)). Additional evaluation will also come from faculty for which the student has TA'ed. These reports are reviewed by the Graduate Committee and discussed with the PBS Graduate Faculty. Information from a student's Master's and Dissertation committees will also be considered in these annual reviews. The faculty will determine whether the student is progressing satisfactorily and will be allowed to continue in the program. Following this evaluation, each student will receive a letter stating his or her standing in the program, as determined by the annual review. In addition, each student will receive from his or her advisor a copy of the advisor's evaluation. It is expected that each advisor will hold a meeting with each student to discuss the past year's progress and goals for the upcoming year.

The faculty has the right to suspend or terminate graduate students who are not making satisfactory progress in courses or in research, or who violate ethical standards. Even if grades allow for a student to continue in the program, a student may still be terminated based on agreement between the Graduate Committee, Graduate School, and faculty advisor or by a vote of the faculty, taking into account the best interests of the student and the program. The faculty may exercise its right to terminate students who are not on probation or unsatisfactory standing if the faculty believes that a student is unlikely to make satisfactory progress or is unsuitable for continuation in the program. Decisions to terminate students can be made at any point during the year.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Students have the right to appeal all decisions made by the faculty. An overview of the grievance process is given below.

A. Informal Resolution Within Graduate Program/PBS

Whenever possible, students should speak directly to the person who bears responsibility for the complaint or who is the alleged cause of the complaint. If this is not possible or proves unsatisfactory, students should discuss the matter with their primary advisor (or members of their Dissertation Committee). If the matter is not resolved at this stage, students should speak to the Chair of the Graduate Committee and/or the Chair of the Department. Failure to resolve the problem at this level necessitates that the student contact the Assistant Dean of the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to arrange mediation.

B. Guarini School Graduate Student Grievance Procedures

If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached within PBS, the student may wish to consult the [Guarini Policy](#).

PBS Dissertation Proposal Approval Form

Date: _____

Student: _____

The student named above has submitted and presented a dissertation proposal to their PhD Dissertation Committee and the Committee has reviewed and approved of their proposal.

Our approval of the proposal indicates that we consider it to be a reasonable plan for dissertation research. However, it is also our understanding that the exploratory nature of original research may require revisions to this plan before an acceptable dissertation is completed. For that reason, we expect the candidate to keep the committee informed of experimental results as the program of research progresses.

Print name of Dissertation Committee Chair

Signature of Dissertation Committee Chair
Signed on behalf of the Committee

Note: This form is to be filled out when the dissertation proposal is presented to the dissertation committee. When the proposal is approved by the committee, obtain the signature of the Committee Chair and submit the form to the PBS Department Administrator.