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Counseling Psychology Program

Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation,
Counseling/School Psychology

Auburn University

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM POLICIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Introduction to Counseling Psychology Program Policies

Policy Statement #1

Ethics

Policy Statement #2

Counseling Psychology Faculty: Criteria and Responsibilities

Policy Statement #3

Full-Time Enrollment

Policy Statement #4

Employment/Volunteer Guidelines

Policy Statement #5

Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Students

Policy Statement #6

Due Process, Remediation, and Dismissal

Graduate School Document: Due Process for Graduate Students

Policy Statement #7

Respect for Diversity

Policy Statement #8

Discrimination and Harassment

Policy Statement #9

Filing Academic Grievances

Policy Statement #10

Guidelines for the Exemption of Courses

Policy Statement #11

Doctoral Classification & Residency Papers

Policy Statement #12

Composition of Doctoral Committee

Policy Statement #13

Internship

Policy Statement #14

Taking Courses at Other Universities after Admission

Policy Statement #15

Required Courses

Policy Statement #16

Practicum

Policy Statement #17

Advisor

Policy Statement #18

Use of Independent Studies to Substitute for Required Courses

Policy Statement #19

Participation in the Program's Student Organization

Policy Statement #20

Problems with Competency (Previously "Impairment")

Policy Statement #21

University Policies and Rules

General Introduction to Counseling Psychology Program Policies

The following manual is a compilation of policies and procedures relating to the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University. Exceptions may be made to them when such an exception is deemed appropriate by the Counseling Psychology Faculty. These policies and procedures are subject to revision at any time. All policies and procedures relating to the Counseling Psychology Program have been developed by the Counseling Psychology Faculty, and final authority concerning all policy matters will rest with the Counseling Psychology Faculty, subject to Auburn University policies and legal constraints. Because digital information is easily reproduced and disseminated, outdated policies may be in circulation, whether in hardcopy, on individual computers, or on the web. When there are substantive concerns, students, prospective students, and other interested parties should check with the program director to ensure that they are consulting the latest version of the program policies. NOTE: Within this document, the terms “Doctoral Committee,” “Advisory Committee,” and “Doctoral Advisory Committee” are used interchangeably. The terms “Director of Counseling Psychology Training,” “Director of Training,” and “Program Director” are also used interchangeably.

Policy Statement #1: Ethics

Students must adhere to the most recent version of the American Psychological Association’s “Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.” Consultation concerning ethical dilemmas is strongly encouraged. The program emphasizes the role of personal responsibility and critical introspection. The faculty encourages you to report unethical behavior; the faculty also encourages you to examine your own values and biases carefully before accusing others of unethical conduct.

Policy Statement #2: Counseling Psychology Faculty: Criteria and Responsibilities

The purpose of this policy is to describe the general criteria and responsibilities of faculty members involved in the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University.

Two categories of faculty have been identified for involvement in the Counseling Psychology Program: (1) Counseling Psychology Faculty, and (2) Counseling Psychology Adjunct Faculty. These two groups are described in terms of criteria and areas of responsibility.

I. Counseling Psychology Faculty

A. Criteria

All members of the Counseling Psychology Faculty must be committed to the training of counseling psychologists. They must be familiar with issues such as training models in psychology and guidelines and Ethical Standards promulgated by the American Psychological Association. Active membership in APA Division 17 is strongly encouraged. Counseling Psychology Faculty are also encouraged to participate in APA conventions by attendance, program presentation, and continuing education activities in counseling psychology. Faculty who desire to be members of the Counseling Psychology Faculty may be so designated by majority vote of the current Counseling Psychology Faculty, if they meet the general standards described above and if, in addition, they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Licensed as a psychologist;
- (2) Graduate of an APA-accredited Counseling Psychology Program;
- (3) Any one of the following: Senior authorship of two or more publications in an APA or APA divisional journal; three or more content/poster presentations at the annual meeting of APA; junior authorship of one or more publications in an APA or APA divisional journal plus two content/poster presentations at the annual meeting of APA; achievements or productivity substantially similar to any of the criteria above;
- (4) Membership in, and history of involvement with, Division 17 of the American Psychological Association, the Society of Counseling Psychology.

Persons not teaching in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, Counseling/School Psychology may be considered for membership on the Counseling Psychology Faculty if, in addition to meeting the above criteria, these faculty members have a demonstrated history of support, interest, and involvement in the profession of Counseling Psychology and the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University.

B. Responsibilities

The faculty of the Counseling Psychology Program are expected to have clear and primary responsibility for all aspects of the program. The Counseling Psychology Faculty will generally have the following responsibilities:

- (1) Teaching
- (2) Advising
- (3) Admitting new students
- (4) Developing and reviewing the curriculum
- (5) Developing and reviewing policy
- (6) Directing theses and dissertations
- (7) Reviewing students' progress
- (8) Developing, administering, and scoring doctoral comprehensive examinations

II. Adjunct Counseling Psychology Faculty

A. Criteria

Adjunct Counseling Psychology Faculty will be made up of persons who have a demonstrated interest in the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University. Designation as an adjunct faculty member shall be made by the Counseling Psychology Faculty.

B. Responsibilities

Adjunct Counseling Psychology Faculty may be involved in various aspects of the program and may have the following responsibilities:

- (1) Teaching
- (2) Supervising practica
- (3) Presenting colloquia
- (4) Making recommendations concerning the program
- (5) Serving on student advisory committees

It is expected that adjunct faculty will meet periodically with the Counseling Psychology Faculty in order to maintain open communication, provide input, and receive feedback. Adjunct faculty will not only be involved in the obvious operational aspects of the program, but will also serve as role models for the counseling psychology students.

Policy Statement #3: Policy Concerning “Full-Time” Enrollment

The philosophy of the Counseling Psychology Faculty at Auburn University is that students enrolled in the program should be devoting their professional energy to doctoral study. “Full-time” will be defined as taking a normal course load in sequence (usually four courses, which generally translates into approximately 12 semester hours) as outlined in published program documents. Although students are not technically required to enroll during the summer to remain in good standing, the practicalities of enrollment are such that students will in essence be required to take some courses during the summer. In particular, summer enrollment is required if that is the only term during which a required course is taught.

It is expected that employment, assistantships, and/or volunteer work will not interfere with the student's normal progress through the program. That is, (1) the completion of courses and (2) the completion of courses in the required sequence shall take precedence over employment, assistantships, and volunteer work.

Students must be continuously enrolled while pursuing their degree (except summers) and must enroll in courses as sequenced by the program. Generally speaking, students should be enrolled continuously for dissertation credit following the completion of orals. In the event that there is a compelling reason why a student cannot enroll for the appropriate courses, an exception may be granted upon the concurrence of the student's advisor and the Director of Counseling Psychology Training. Leaves of absence, which are strongly discouraged, may be granted only by the Counseling Psychology Faculty.

Policy Statement #4: Employment/Volunteer Guidelines

The Counseling Psychology Faculty recognizes and supports the notion that some students may want or need to hold a part-time work position relating to the field of counseling psychology while pursuing doctoral study. The faculty also recognizes, however, that students working in jobs related to psychology will inevitably present themselves as Ph.D. students in the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University. To ensure appropriate representation of the program, as well as to ensure appropriate supervision of students in psychology-related experiences, the following guidelines exist: If a student desires to hold any position which is related to psychology (e.g., working at a mental health center, leading groups for a college organization, teaching, etc.), **such employment must be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of Counseling Psychology Training well in advance.** If any situation should arise which cannot be resolved through the procedures outlined in this document, final authority in such situations will rest with the Counseling Psychology Faculty.

Policy Statement #5: Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Students

The Counseling Psychology Faculty believe that it is very important for all counseling psychology students to be periodically evaluated as they progress through the program and that students be provided with appropriate feedback. This evaluative process will occur in a number of ways:

- I. Grades and other sources of feedback received in individual courses are a primary means of evaluation. On-site supervisors for practicum students will be asked to complete evaluation forms

concerning therapeutic skills.

- II. Counseling psychology students and their advisors are encouraged to meet frequently to discuss students' progress. In addition to these regular meetings, members of the Counseling Psychology Faculty will meet individually with each of their advisees at least once a year for the purpose of providing students with comprehensive feedback, and discussing students' goals, development, etc.
- III. Counseling Psychology Faculty will meet as a group once a year for the purpose of evaluating students, with the ultimate goal being the facilitating and encouraging of student progress through the program. In anticipation of this meeting, counseling psychology students will be invited to provide feedback to their advisor concerning their accomplishments and activities. The meeting of the Counseling Psychology Faculty may also include other departmental faculty, in order to secure a broad range of feedback about each student's performance. As a part of this meeting, advisors will briefly discuss each of their advisees' overall development, including strengths and areas in need of improvement. Program faculty and other departmental faculty may also share information about students with students' advisors and make recommendations concerning student progress, in an effort to keep advisors informed about their advisees' development. It is hoped that such meetings will provide advisors with information that may be useful to them when they meet with their advisees. The ultimate goal of this process is that students' progress and development be enhanced. Results of these discussions will be communicated to each counseling psychology student in writing by the student's advisor or by the Director of Counseling Psychology Training.

Examples of factors which may be discussed during the meeting include (but are not limited to) earned grades and general classroom performance, involvement with the profession, research activity, practicum or internship performance, performance as a Graduate Teaching or Graduate Research Assistant, appropriate use of advisor, progress toward the Ph.D. degree, and relationships with students and faculty.

Examples of behavior which would have a positive impact on the evaluation include (but are not limited to) publishing articles and being involved in research, giving convention presentations, attending professional conventions or workshops, showing exemplary performance in courses, receiving positive comments from supervisors, engaging in volunteer activities related to the profession of psychology, being involved in profession organizations, making contributions to the department and program, engaging in behavior which is supportive of other students, and displaying mature or creative handling of difficulties encountered.

It is, of course, impossible to generate a complete list of all students' actions which might have a negative impact on this evaluation or which might lead to a remediation plan at any time during the year as needed. Failure to maintain the required graduate grade-point average may lead to action by the Graduate School. Other student behaviors which may lead to action by the Counseling Psychology Program and/or Department include unethical conduct with a client or fellow student, violations of the Ethical Standards of the American Psychological Association, cheating or plagiarism, failure to perform satisfactorily in an internship, practicum, or assistantship setting, failing to successfully complete comprehensive examinations, dropping courses without permission, failure to complete courses in the required sequence and at the required time, failure to show reasonable tolerance of others and their viewpoints (see Policy Statement #7), failure to respond productively to feedback, failure to follow program policies, showing egregious disrespect for other professions, commission of a felony, violations of Auburn University policies or rules, or engaging in conduct which, in the opinion of the Counseling Psychology Faculty, is inconsistent with the standards generally expected of graduate students in a Counseling Psychology Program.

During the yearly evaluation meeting, special attention will be given to discussing individuals who have completed all requirements for their degree except the dissertation and who have reached the seventh year in the program. Students in this category whose graduation is not imminent shall receive a letter requiring them to submit to their advisory committee (through the chairperson of the committee) a plan to finish their dissertation. The student will be given a time deadline to submit an acceptable plan (normally 30 days) for completing the dissertation. The plan will be reviewed every six months. Failure to submit an acceptable plan in a timely manner or failure to complete the plan as submitted will result in a recommendation from the counseling psychology faculty that formal due process be invoked and that the student be placed on remediation by their advisory committee for failure to make satisfactory progress toward their degree.

Students who fail to demonstrate competency in any area of those described in this section may be placed on remediation by their doctoral committee (see Policy Statement #6).

IV. All counseling psychology students will take a comprehensive written examination which typically lasts one-half day for each of five consecutive days. Typically, students will have completed most of their coursework prior to taking the examination, will have a committee in place, and will have filed a plan of study. The examination will be constructed by the Counseling Psychology Faculty. Questions involving culture and diversity may be included in any of the five major areas covered by the examination:

- A. Behavioral Science: This section includes human development, social psychology, personality, learning, and abnormal psychology.
- B. Research: This section includes research design and statistics.
- C. Counseling Theory and Practice: This section will include theories of counseling, individual counseling, counseling diverse populations, career counseling and development, and group counseling.
- D. Ethics and Professional Issues in Counseling Psychology: This section includes ethics in psychology and professional issues in psychology in general and counseling psychology in particular.
- E. Measurement and Assessment: This section includes psychometric theory and methods, psychological tests and assessment techniques, and psychological assessment.

Grading of the Doctoral Written Examination

The examination will be graded by the Counseling Psychology Faculty, with two readers grading each of the five sections. Students will receive a grade of “poor” (this constitutes a failing grade), “marginal,” “competent,” or “exemplary” on each section of the examination. In the event that the student receives a “poor” from one reader and a different grade from a second reader, the section will be read by a third reader, whose rating will determine the final outcome.

It is the preference and intention of the Counseling Psychology Faculty that students pass all sections of the examination on their first attempt. However, in the event that some sections are failed, the following procedure applies:

NOTE: In the discussion below, the term “remedial option” does not refer to a formal written

“remediation” plan, but rather to an assignment made by the Doctoral Committee. These assignments may be made verbally or in writing, but in any event, the student is not considered to be “in remediation.”

- (I) If a student fails one section only, the student’s Doctoral Committee designates a remedial option, which may or may not involve rewriting the failed section.
- (II) If a student fails two or more of the five sections, then the appropriate sections must be re-taken. The advisor is responsible for the administration of this retake, but the decision concerning when it is to be administered is made jointly by the advisor and the Counseling Psychology Faculty, with input from the student, and questions are developed by the faculty.
 - (A) If the student fails one section at this administration, the doctoral committee designates a remedial option, which may or may not involve rewriting the failed section.
 - (B) If the student fails two or more sections, the Counseling Psychology Program Faculty will recommend to the student’s Doctoral Committee that the Doctoral Committee give the student a formal remediation plan, which will culminate in the retaking of the failed sections a third time. The remediation plan may also include other assignments such as taking courses or writing papers. The sections will not be administered more than a total of three times (including the first administration of the entire examination).
 - (1) If the student fails one section only during this third administration, the doctoral committee designates a remedial option. The Doctoral Committee has the authority to incorporate the remedial option into an extension of the remediation plan or to remove the student from formal remediation and handle the remedial option more informally.
 - (2) If more than one section is failed a third time, the Counseling Psychology Faculty will make a recommendation to the doctoral committee concerning termination or continuation in the program.

On successful completion of the doctoral written examination, students will take an oral examination to be administered by members of the advisory committee. In the event that the oral examination is failed, the Graduate School’s policy concerning such failure will be followed.

Policy Statement #6: Due Process, Remediation, and Dismissal

If a counseling psychology student has established a doctoral advisory committee, procedures concerning due process and dismissal shall be those established by The Graduate School, and described in the document “Evaluating the Academic Progress of Graduate Students” (copied below), available on the web at <http://www.grad.auburn.edu/cs/dueprocess.html>. At any stage of due process, the Counseling Psychology Faculty may, and generally will, make recommendations to a student’s advisory committee concerning remediation, statements of grievance, and/or dismissal.

If a doctoral advisory committee has **not** been established, then the policy described above shall be operative, except that the Counseling Psychology Faculty shall assume all roles ascribed to the doctoral

advisory committee in the document.

Consistent with the policy published by the Graduate School, and consistent with the Program's philosophy, students may be removed from the program for either failing to meet academic standards or for failing to progress satisfactorily in professional or personal development. (see Policy Statement #5—Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Students, for examples of dimensions along which student behavior may be evaluated; also see published statement by the Graduate School below).

EVALUATING THE ACADEMIC PROGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS
<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/cs/dueprocess.html>

(As outlined by the Graduate School of Auburn University)

Each graduate student's progress toward a degree is monitored by the student's advisory committee, and issues of professional and personal development may be considered. While failure to maintain academic standards merits automatic dismissal, a student also may be dropped from the Graduate School if progress is unsatisfactory in other areas.

In such cases, the advisory committee will prepare a statement of grievance and discuss it in a meeting with the student. The statement must have the unanimous support of all members of the committee. The student will be warned that corrective measures must be taken within a specified time to avoid action that might result in dismissal. The committee determines the period allowed for correction. Copies of the statement of grievance and summary of the meeting will be provided the student, the department head, the academic dean, and the graduate dean.

If the deficiency is not corrected within the time allowed by the committee, a statement reiterating the grievance and recommending dismissal should be sent to the graduate dean with copies to the student, the department head, and the academic dean.

The graduate dean will give the student an opportunity to respond and will make a final determination. The student and the advisory committee will be notified.

The action taken will not appear on the student's official transcript, and release of information is restricted under the University's policy on the confidentiality of student records.

Policy Statement #7: Respect for Diversity

Because counseling psychology is a part of the social sciences, it is inevitably bound in values and the desire by all individuals for an interpersonal environment of safety and respect. Because counseling psychologists often work with individuals who have been “marginalized” in one way or another, it is imperative that those who aspire to the Ph.D. in counseling psychology hold tolerance to be among their most central values. Tolerance for, and the valuing of, diversity is expected of all students who are accepted into the program. In particular, the program expects that students will be respectful and supportive of individuals (including, but not limited to clients, classmates, and faculty) who are different from themselves in terms of sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, religious preference, or disability. Standards for student behavior exceed the idea of “non-discrimination.” When students encounter classmates who are of a different ethnicity, who have a different sexual orientation or different religious values, etc., it is the assumption of the program that students will work to help create a climate of safety and trust for all concerned. The program recognizes that few individuals (whether they be faculty or students) are completely free from all forms of prejudices. Furthermore, it is expected that there will be a range of attitudes and values concerning controversial issues. Nonetheless, enrollment in the program is seen as a commitment to the social value of tolerance and to the process of self examination so that such prejudices may be evaluated in the light of both scientific data and the traditions of cooperation and mutual respect which, when used, have well served the human community. Prospective students who have reservations about their ability to show such tolerance in all the areas listed above should understand that the program, while committed to supporting the positive personal development of **all** enrolled students, will not support behaviors which are judged by the faculty to be highly intolerant. Although the program will take no action to abridge one's constitutional right of free speech, tolerance for the values of others is a factor which may be used to evaluate students.

Students will, in the course of their training, inevitably encounter clients who are from different cultures, who hold different values from them, who are of different sexual orientations, etc. Students are required to honor not merely the Ethics Code of the American Psychological Association (APA; see Policy #1), but also to be familiar with and to abide by the various Guidelines published by the APA, which address issues of diversity.

Policy Statement #8: Policy on Discrimination and Harassment

It is the policy of the Counseling Psychology Program that students not be treated differently or unfairly as a function of sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, religious preference, or disability. The Counseling Psychology Faculty also strongly emphasizes its commitment to students to protect them from sexual harassment. In particular, if you believe that an individual, especially one holding power over you (whether at a practicum site or at the university) has discriminated against you or has used sexual language or behavior in a way that is upsetting to you, you are encouraged to report this fact to any of the following: your advisor, the Director of the Program, the Department Head, or if enrolled in practicum, your university supervisor. If you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue with any of the above, you also have the option of talking with any faculty member in whom you have greater trust, or contacting Auburn University Human Resources.

When a problem is reported, the Counseling Psychology Faculty affirms its commitment to giving students maximum control over the extent and type of action which they wish to pursue. The chief exception to this rule is if the report also includes information about harassment or other mistreatment of clients or minors. In this case, the faculty may be forced to act when provided with evidence. Furthermore, under certain conditions, responsible faculty members may be legally obligated to report issues of potential discrimination. Nonetheless, the faculty will, whenever possible, honor requests that

information be kept confidential. It is important to remember that in cases involving harassment or discrimination, several small incidents may, in combination, make a much stronger case. Therefore, both for your own sake as well as for the welfare of your peers, we ask that you report any such incidents. Even if you are absolutely sure you do not wish to pursue a complaint, we would very much appreciate your informing us. As indicated above, we will work with you to ensure your safety and wishes. The typical pattern of abusers is to offend more than one person over a period of time. Unfortunately, students may not personally know of others who have been harassed, and therefore may feel isolated. If all incidents are reported, the faculty is in a much better position to take definitive action, perhaps even in cases where you wondered if there was sufficient cause to move forward with a complaint. People who abuse others count on silence to guarantee their ability to continue their abuse. We encourage you to help us prevent this from occurring.

In addition to this Program Policy, the University has policies concerning discrimination and sexual harassment. The Program's policy is in addition to, and not intended to replace, University policies. (See the Auburn University publication, the *Tiger Cub Handbook*.)

Policy Statement #9: Filing Academic Grievances

The Tiger Cub, which is the Student Handbook for Auburn University students, details the process for filing academic grievances against faculty members and administrators. The particular section of the Tiger Cub which addresses this process is Section Two:

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/section2.pdf>

Policy Statement #10: Guidelines for the Exemption of Courses

I. The Philosophy

The Counseling Psychology Faculty at Auburn University places high priority on students completing a strong and comprehensive curriculum as part of their training. The program publishes a list of required courses (see Policy #14 and the list posted to the web). Students who have previously completed courses elsewhere may be eligible to exempt required courses in the Auburn program. The student is not required to substitute an Auburn University course for an exempted course. The Graduate School maintains requirements for a minimum number of hours (to be completed at Auburn University) required for all Ph.D. students at Auburn., but this minimum typically falls far below the number of hours typically completed by Counseling Psychology students at Auburn University, even by students exempting a number of courses.

The emphasis in the exemption process will be not merely on whether the student has had a similar course but on insuring that the student performed well (not less than a grade of 'B') in a course which provided the student with a solid graduate-level background in the area under consideration. Practicum may **not** be exempted.

II. The Process

If a student wishes to exempt a course on the basis of having completed a similar course elsewhere, the student should first discuss this request with his or her advisor. The Counseling Psychology Program Director may also be consulted informally at this stage; however, it is the advisor who is central to the process. If the advisor is supportive of the exemption application, the student will complete the Course Exemption Request Form and return it to the advisor. If the advisor approves the course substitution, the form is forwarded to the Program Director for final

approval or disapproval. The Program Director will then make a judgment as to whether the course may be exempted. If either the advisor or the Program Director is in doubt as to whether the course should be exempted, he/she may consult with another faculty member with expertise in the subject matter under discussion. The decision may be arrived at through a number of possible mechanisms, including the following:

1. Considering the quality of the institutional department where the course was taken.
2. Discussing with the student the content of the course as it was taken elsewhere.
3. Examining course syllabi, textbook(s), and other materials relating to the course as it was taken elsewhere.
4. Discussing the credentials of the faculty member who taught the course elsewhere.
5. Consultation with other faculty as appropriate.
6. Written and/or oral exam.

III. The Criteria

In considering whether a course will be exempted, the following general guidelines will be applied:

1. It is preferable that the course have been taken in a department that offers the doctoral degree. In any event, courses should clearly be identified as graduate ones; courses which are cross listed as graduate AND undergraduate may not be used.
2. Ordinarily, the course should not have been taken more than five years prior to the student's enrollment in the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University.
3. The student received a grade of not less than "B" in the course taken elsewhere. Courses which students have taken on a "pass-fail" basis at another institution may not be exempted.

The responsibility for initiating the exemption process rests with the student. All requests for exemptions must be initiated not later than the beginning of the second semester of study at Auburn University. The student's advisor should ensure that completed Course Exemption Request Forms are filed in the student's departmental folder. As of the date of these policy revisions (July, 2007), the most recent Course Exemption Request Form is dated 2/07.

Policy Statement #11: Doctoral Classification

Students admitted to the doctoral program in Counseling Psychology will be classified as a '9' — a doctoral-level student. This is true for both students admitted with a Master's degree, as well as those who enter without having previously earned a Master's degree.

Policy Statement #12: Composition of Doctoral Committee

(Also, see Policy #16–Advisors.) It is preferable that students form an Advisory Committee and submit a

plan of study in their first year of graduate work. The Advisory Committee **must** be formed prior to the taking of the oral portion of the comprehensive examination. Because students are assigned a faculty advisor upon entry into the program, because such assignments are not made with comprehensive input from the student, and because students often change the focus of their research interests while in graduate school, the faculty affirms its commitment to allowing students to change advisors should they prefer to do so at any reasonable time. Such changes depend on the availability of a qualified person to become the new advisor. The following are the requirements for the make-up of the Doctoral Committee:

1. The student's Doctoral Committee will be made up of at least three members, one of whom will be the student's advisor. At least one member of the committee must be a member of the Counseling Psychology Faculty.
2. The chairperson of the committee (i.e., normally the student's advisor) will ordinarily be a member of the Counseling Psychology Faculty. The Committee may be chaired by a person who is not a member of the Counseling Psychology Faculty if the student's dissertation interests are closely related to those of a well-qualified person (not a member of the Counseling Psychology Faculty) available to supervise the work. If students wish to consider a person who is not a member of the Counseling Psychology Faculty as their dissertation chairperson, this possibility should first be discussed with the student's advisor or the Director of Counseling Psychology Training.
3. Two members of the committee must be faculty members in the Department of Counselor Education, Counseling psychology, and School Psychology.
4. Additional members of the committee may come from either the Department or another academic department. If the student wishes to have a person on the committee who does not hold a regular tenure-track position at Auburn University, this individual must be added as a fourth or fifth person on the committee. The Counseling Psychology Faculty generally discourages students from having committee members who are not members of the Auburn Faculty.
5. If a committee chairperson leaves the university prior to the student's having his or her final defense, the Counseling Psychology Faculty, as well as the Department Head, must approve continuation in that role.

Policy Statement #13: Internship

The internship experience is designed to be an opportunity for the student to work as a service provider while under supervision and represents one of the final steps in the student's training. Generally, the internship is a one-year full-time experience usually beginning in the summer or fall, and **it almost always requires geographic re-location on the part of the student**. It is the responsibility of students, in consultation with their advisors and the Director of Training, to apply for and select an internship which has high training standards and **which will offer training consistent with the student's professional goals**. Students are strongly encouraged to apply for and accept APA-accredited internships. It is important to understand that certain agencies will not hire psychologists who have not completed an APA-accredited internship. Furthermore, some states may make it relatively difficult to obtain a psychology license if the applicant did not complete such an internship. Because there may be long-term financial and professional consequences to internship site placement, students should consult with their advisor and with the Director of the Counseling Psychology Program prior to applying for or accepting an internship which is not APA-accredited. If an internship is not APA-accredited, as a minimum it must be a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC).

Approximately one year prior to the anticipated beginning of the internship, students should begin collecting information from sites in which they may be interested. Potential internship sites may be identified by examining the American Psychologist (which annually lists internship sites accredited by the American Psychological Association), and by consulting the APPIC Directory (information concerning APPIC sites is available in hardcopy as well as on-line). Faculty are also able to assist students in identifying potential internship sites. Many internship sites maintain websites which may be consulted. Counseling Psychology students from Auburn who have previously completed an internship are excellent sources of information. The APPIC website (www.appic.org) lists many resources helpful in the application process, including listservs to which the student may subscribe.

Once materials have been received, students should examine the materials and make decisions concerning where to apply. Application deadlines range from October to January, although most are in November and December. Application formats vary somewhat, but there are standard APPIC forms which are used by the majority of sites. Members of the Counseling Psychology Faculty will assist students by giving feedback, when requested, on vitae preparation, etc. Students must make internship application through APPIC, which uses a computer matching system. Their deadline for registering is generally around December 1 of each year. Internship applicants learn whether they have been matched, and if so with which site, in February.

The Director of Training is required to complete an Internship Readiness Form (which must be submitted to each site to which the student is applying) for all internship applicants. If there is any question about whether a particular student should be endorsed for internship, the Director may consult with the Counseling Psychology Faculty, who in turn may make recommendations about the student's readiness (or not) for internship.

Internship sites vary in their application process, but many choose a limited number of applicants to whom they offer an interview. Students should make every effort to interview at all sites where they are offered an interview and in which they are seriously interested.

It should be emphasized that internships are very competitive, and there is no guarantee that a student will receive an offer from a particular site, nor in fact can the program guarantee that all students will be offered an internship. Students are encouraged to send out a number of applications and to consult with their advisor and the Director of Training concerning the number of applications to send out. At Auburn University, the typical student sends out 10–15 applications.

The internship may not begin until after the student has successfully completed (1) all coursework, (2) the doctoral written examination (at times called “prelims” or the “comprehensive examination”); and (3) the general oral examination. Students are strongly encouraged to finish their dissertation, or as a minimum, have their proposal accepted, before leaving for internship.

While preparing in the fall to apply for internship for the following year, students must enroll in COUN8400B, which is a course designed to assist them in preparing high-quality internship application materials. Due to the extremely competitive national application process, students must invest substantial time and effort in internship application.

While on internship, students will enroll in COUN 8930 (Internship). This is a non-credit course which requires a very minimum payment. **It is the student's responsibility to register for this course each semester while on internship.** The Office of Financial Aid is willing to certify that a student is a full-time student while on internship. Therefore, students who have successfully defended their dissertation prior to going on internship may enroll in only this non-credit course (0 semester hours) and, as indicated above, pay a very minimum fee. Even though this is a non-credit course, it is graded S/U. Typically grades will be based on reports from the internship site; however, the final responsibility for assigning the

grade rests with the faculty member who is the instructor of record for the course.

Policy Statement #14: Taking Courses At Other Universities After Admission To The Program

(Reference is made to Policy Statement #9, which outlines the procedure to follow to obtain credit for graduate work completed **prior** to entering the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University. The policy described below refers to situations in which students wish to take a graduate course for credit at another university **after** they have entered the doctoral program at Auburn.)

Counseling Psychology doctoral students must take a sequence of required courses at Auburn University. This means, among other things, that once students have begun their graduate work at Auburn University, all courses which are required should be taken at Auburn University (Auburn, Alabama). In order to respond to individual student concerns and needs, students, with the consent of their committee (or advisor if no committee has been assigned) may, when considering the list of required courses in the Auburn curriculum, take one acceptable course substitution at another university (that is, may take a substantially equivalent course at another university). The substitution must be for a comparable course and the course that is being used as a substitute must be clearly designated as a graduate-level course. That is, courses which are classified as undergraduate AND graduate-level are not appropriate. The advisor will examine a syllabus and other materials as deemed necessary and will consider the instructor of the course and the university and academic department in ascertaining whether there is substantial equivalency between the two courses. The course being used as a substitute in the context of this policy may not be an independent study. The substitution option does not apply to practicum or prepracticum. This policy is not meant to encourage substitutions. The required list of courses is constructed with a number of concerns in mind, including licensure. Although the program cannot ensure that students will be eligible for licensure in all states, and although advisors will not approve any substitution which in their view might make licensure problematic, substitutions may in fact produce a slight increase in the probability of a licensure problem. Students should discuss these potential risks with their advisor and/or the Director of Training prior to making a substitution. If the course under consideration is the biological basis of behavior course, the cognitive basis of behavior course, or the social basis of behavior course, substitution must be approved by the entire Counseling Psychology Faculty. Students who have a committee in place at the time they are considering pursuing this option must have the approval of their committee. Students are strongly encouraged not to use this option until and unless there are compelling reasons for the substitution. The advisor or student should inform the Director of Training of a substitution made under this policy. Students who complete such a course must ensure that a transcript or grade report is placed in their departmental file in order to document the fact that a satisfactory grade has been earned. Grades below a "B" will not be accepted.

Students should keep in mind that it is a **University** policy that if a graduate course is failed (a grade of "D" or "F") at Auburn University, it must be retaken at Auburn University. Therefore, one cannot substitute a course taken at another university for any course failed at Auburn University.

Policy Statement #15: Required Courses

The Program Faculty publishes a list of courses which are required of all students in the Counseling Psychology Program. These courses may vary by training track selected, but all students must complete the courses (either by substitution or by taking the specific Auburn University course) within their training track. Furthermore, subject to administrative constraints, the program will also publish the sequence in which the courses should be taken. Although the student's advisory committee has the final responsibility for deciding whether a course will be required or not, the Counseling Psychology Faculty

acknowledges by mutual agreement that courses published by the Program are required when published as such. Based on changes within the profession, departmental resources, and overall program goals, the Program Faculty will from time to time make changes in the list of required courses. Students will normally be afforded the opportunity to create or maintain a plan of study consistent with the requirements operative during their first semester of study. However, they will also be allowed to make changes in their previous plan of study to make it consistent with new requirements should they desire to do so.

Policy Statement #16: Practicum

For policies and procedures concerning practicum, see the document entitled “Counseling Psychology at Auburn University: Practicum Guidelines.” Students are required to abide by these guidelines.

Policy Statement #17: Advisors

Each student will be assigned an advisor upon entry into the program (also see Policy #11–Composition of Doctoral Committee). Students may select another available advisor if they believe that it would be in their best professional interests to do so and if this change is supported by the anticipated new advisor. The most typical reason for changing advisors is that another faculty member’s research interests more closely parallel those of the student. We encourage students with small disagreements with their advisors to resolve these disagreements within the context of the advisor-advisee relationship. However, students may change advisors for any number of reasons and should generally feel free to do so. The Chairperson of the Doctoral Committee also serves as the Advisor except in unusual circumstances.

Policy Statement #18: Use of Independent Studies to Substitute for Required Courses

Students may not substitute an independent study for a required course. Any exceptions to this policy will be extremely rare and must be justified by extraordinary circumstances and compelling argument. Exceptions must be approved by the entire Counseling Psychology Faculty.

Policy Statement #19: Participation in the Program’s Student Organization

Students are required to be a member of the Program’s counseling psychology student organization. The organization meets once each month during the academic year. Although students are allowed two “unexcused” absences during the year, they are encouraged to attend all meetings. The meetings are relatively brief (typically lasting one hour) and are scheduled so as to avoid conflicts with classes. They serve as a venue for students to express concerns, to have input into the structure and process of the program, and to have questions answered about the program. They also serve as a mechanism for the distribution of information about the program and about on-going professional issues.

Policy Statement #20: Problems with Competency (Previously “Impairment”)

Although the Counseling Psychology Faculty has responsibility to evaluate students, students themselves are strongly encouraged to self monitor and to seek help **early** for any personal, professional, or ethical problems they notice in themselves (also see Policy #1–Ethics). Furthermore, students are encouraged to assist fellow students who appear to be significantly impacted by personal or professional problems. Such

assistance may take the form of speaking directly with the fellow student or consulting with a member of the faculty. Students may consult the Director of the Program or other faculty members for a referral when students desire psychotherapy.

Policy Statement #21: University Policies and Rules

It is the responsibility of all counseling psychology graduate students to be familiar with and to abide by the policies and rules of Auburn University. These policies and rules may be found in various publications and announcements by the University; however, in particular students must be familiar with the policies of the Graduate School which can be found at: <http://www.grad.auburn.edu/general/policies.html#Dissertation%20Outside%20Reader> Policies may also be included in larger university documents such as the Graduate Bulletin (http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin_07-08/). Students must also be familiar with the Tiger Cub Handbook (<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/index.php>), which is the Official Auburn University Handbook.