GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR POST-GRADUATE STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY
240 UNIVERSITY CREDIT POINTS; Ph.D.

or

120 UNIVERSITY CREDIT POINTS; Licentiate

The program of post-graduate studies at the Department of Psychology has been affirmed by the Board of the Social Sciences Faculty of Stockholm University, 2012-06-19 revised 2014-02-04.

1. Subject description

Psychology as a science involves a systematic exploration of human experiences and behaviors. In psychology, humans are held to be both biological beings, engendered by and subject to evolutionary forces, and social and cultural beings, who seek meaning and interpret themselves and their situation in the world. Psychology is marked by this double perspective on humans.

Psychology as a scientific discipline is now over 100 years old. In Sweden - and internationally – this subject has developed an advanced theoretical and methodological thinking and produced directly applicable knowledge in areas that are essential to human well-being and development, such as physical environment, employment, education and training, mental and physical health, disability, aging, etc.

(From The Swedish National Committee for Psychological Sciences, Royal Academy of Sciences, http://sncfp.psychology.su.se/amnet/index.html)

2. Educational Objectives

The overall objective of the graduate degree program is to develop the knowledge and proficiency that is required to independently conduct psychological research and to contribute to the scientific development in the field of psychology through the completion of a scientific dissertation.

The purpose of the education is for the student to acquire knowledge about planning, leading, and implementing a research project. The education should allow for possibilities of meeting the international scientific community; for example, by attending scientific conferences and studying abroad. The student should also develop communicative and pedagogical skills in order to be able to express him-/herself orally and in writing within and outside the academic community.

The specific objectives of the education, which are required in order to be awarded a degree in psychology, are given below. On the whole, the requirements that are specified by the Higher Education Ordinance, Diploma Requirements are the requirements of the Ph.D. and Licentiate degrees.

2.1. Ph.D. Degree

For the Ph.D. Degree, the graduate student should:
Knowledge and Understanding

- demonstrate a broad and systematic understanding of the psychological research area, as well as a deeper understanding and up-to-date specialist knowledge in a defined part of the field of study
- demonstrate an understanding and a familiarity of scientific methods within psychological research, both general psychological methods and more specific methods concerning the student’s research area

Proficiency and aptitude

- demonstrate an ability to make proper and appropriate scientific analysis and synthesis, as well as critically review new and complex ideas, theories, hypotheses, and situations
- demonstrate scientifically critical thinking, independence, and creativity to identify and formulate hypotheses, as well as plan and follow through a research project and other appropriate assignments within a time frame, including being able to scrutinize one’s own work
- Be able to demonstrate a contribution to the scientific community with the dissertation
- Be able to demonstrate an ability to present and discuss scientific results with authority in both the national and international scientific community and general public
- Be able to demonstrate an ability, not only within the scientific community and education, to contribute to the development of the community and support others’ learning and in other advanced professional contexts

Judgement and Approach

- Be able to demonstrate intellectual independence and scientific integrity, as well as being able to make proper, appropriate, and ethical scientific assessments relating to research
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding and insight of the potentials and the limitations of psychological research, including its roll and effects in society and people’s responsibility for conducting research

2.2. Licentiate Degree

For the Licentiate Degree, the graduate student should:

Knowledge and Understanding

- Be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding within one’s field of research, including current specialist knowledge in a defined part of the field and a deeper knowledge of scientific methods, in general, and of methods in the specific field of research, in particular.
Proficiency and aptitude

- Be able to demonstrate an ability to identify and formulate hypotheses, critically, independently and creatively, and proceeding with scientific precision; to plan and carry out a limited research project and other advanced tasks, using appropriate methods within specified time limits, so as to contribute to the development of knowledge, as well as being able to evaluate this work
- Be able to demonstrate an ability to clearly present and discuss research and research, orally and in writing, results in both the national and international scholarly community and the society in general
- Be able to demonstrate an ability to identify the need for future research and have the responsibility in developing within the scientific field

Judgement and Approach

- Be able to demonstrate an ability to make proper, appropriate, and ethical scientific decisions about one’s own research
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding and insight for the potential and the limitations of science, its role in society, and people’s responsibility for how it is used
- Be able to demonstrate an ability to identify the need for future research and have the responsibility in further developing within the scientific community

3. Prerequisites and Eligibility

3.1 Fundamental prerequisites

The fundamental prerequisites as required by Department of Upper Level Education, 7 Chapter § 39, are the following:

- Completion of an upper level degree (e.g., Master Degree)
- Completion of 240 higher education credits, including at least 60 higher education credits at a second level (master level), or
- The equivalent level of education from a national or international college/university

3.2. Eligibility

Acceptance into the post-graduate program in psychology requires the following:

- A minimum of 90 college/university credits in psychology at an undergraduate or upper level, or the equivalent. 15 of these credits must include a written composition, such as a bachelor or master thesis, or
– The equivalent level of education from a national or international college/university and
– Sufficient understanding of the English language for understanding and communication within the scientific literature

4. Admission

Admission to post-graduate studies at the Department of Psychology occurs at least annually, in the spring semester (1 April), and may occur also in the fall semester (1 November). Information is given on the Department website, http://www.psychology.su.se/english. By the appropriate deadline, applicants should send in: (a) a research plan for post-graduate studies; (b) a written composition, which may include undergraduate thesis, masters thesis, and any previously published article; and (c) additional educational and occupational qualifications that may be applicable. The applicant should have already contacted a principle supervisor, whose name should be included in the application. Further information regarding the application process can be found at the department’s homepage, http://www.psychology.su.se/english. The Chair of the Department makes admission decisions as delegated by the Departmental board.

5. Selection Process

According to HF 7 Chapter, the selection process of the applicants should take into consideration the applicant’s ability to be actively engaged throughout the duration of the educational program. In part, this decision is based upon the (5.1) Research Plan that accompanies the application, as well as any (5.2) a previous thesis/publication, and (5.3) education, occupational, and other merits. The applications are reviewed by three impartial faculty members.

5.1. Research Plan

In the Research Plan the applicant should describe the research project for the dissertation. The Plan is judged on a quantitative scale, from unacceptable to exceptional, based upon the following:

– Familiarity with previous and current research
– Hypothesis is congruent with current research
– Adequate scientific methods and data analyses
– Realistic plan that can be completed within the post-graduate study time

5.2. Previously written composition

A previously written Bachelor thesis, Master thesis, or publication in psychology is assessed on a quantitative scale from unacceptable to exceptional, which is based upon the following criteria:

– Displaying a thought-through hypothesis
– Displaying methodological and scientific skills
– Displaying theoretical/conceptual anchoring
5.3. **Additional resume (e.g., educational, occupational, quantity and quality of additional scientific production)**

Additional educational, occupational, and scientific merits are also measured on a quantitative scale. References should accompany the application. References are contacted in order to assess the applicant’s communication and work skills.

6. **Structure and Content of Post-Graduate Studies**

Upon completion of the post-graduate studies, the individual is awarded a Ph.D. or a Licentiate Degree. A Ph.D. consists of 240 upper-level points, 150 of which are for thesis work and 90 points of course work. A Licentiate Degree consists of 120 points in total. The post-graduate studies consist of course work, which is examined after-hand, and of research that should lead to a scientific dissertation.

The post-graduate student is expected to participate in seminars, presenting one’s research, as well as contributing to the community of the department as a whole. Obligatory half-time seminars are held by the PhD students two years after admission, adjusted for departmental work (e.g., teaching) and deviation from full-time work.

6.1. **Post-Graduate Requirements**

The requirements for the program include 90 credit points of course work, which includes obligatory and electives. At least 30 credit points should be from methodological courses and at least 30 credit points should be from subject-specific courses. The choice of courses is decided upon with the principle supervisor and reported in the individual study-plan (see below).

6.2. **Supervision, including study- and work-direction**

Each post-graduate student is required to have at least two supervisors, one principle supervisor and one assistant supervisor. The main supervisor should be employed at the Department of Psychology, Stockholm University and have at least docent (associate professor) competency. At least one of the supervisors must have completed specific supervising training or been deemed by the Faculty of Social Sciences to have the equivalent competency. The student has the right to supervision that has been decided in the individual study plan (see below). The student has the right to change supervisors, if so desired.

Study and work guidance will be an element of the program.

6.3. **Individual study plan**

Each post-graduate student will lay out an individual study plan upon admission. The study plan is designed together with the student’s supervisor.
The study plan is to be followed up once every year. Upon each renewal, detailed information should be included regarding the progress of the dissertation. The student, supervisor, and Chair of the department should give written consent that each party has taken part in the plan and eventual changes that are made.

Upon admission, the student is required to give information regarding how financing of the student’s studies (usually equalling four years of full-time studies) will be covered. Financing is reported in the financial plan.

7. Course Requirements and transfer of credits

Course requirements include both obligatory and elective courses. Together with the applicant’s supervisor, elective courses are chosen so as to expand upon one’s knowledge of the chosen field of study. Examination can be either written, oral, or both, which will be given as a pass or incomplete.

A list of the chosen courses should appear in the individual study plan. If the applicant wishes to transfer credits from another college/university, these credits, with specifications, should also appear in the applicant’s individual study plan.

8. Thesis and Defence of Doctoral/Licentiate Thesis

8.1. Thesis

The central purpose of postgraduate studies is the authorship of a scientific dissertation with the aim of conducting research that aids in the progression of scientific development within one’s area of choice. The student is expected to report on the progress of one’s studies by participating in seminars and/or conferences within the department or outside the department.

The dissertation should be written in congruence with the rules that have been developed by the Higher Education Ordinance for a Ph.D., which is presented at a public defence of the doctoral thesis. Both the dissertation and the defence are determined as passing or non-passing by a grading committee.

A typical dissertation at the Department of Psychology usually includes the following:

- A collection of scientific articles that are preceded by a summary of the articles
- Is written in English according to appropriate documentation style as a whole or in part to be published in international scientific journals

The dissertation can also be written as a monograph.

A Licentiate Degree is equivalent to approximately half of the Ph.D. and consists of scientific compositions with an integrated summary, alternatively as a monograph.

8.2. Defence of Thesis
The Ph.D. dissertation is to be defended at a public defence, specified as either passing or non-passing. The grading committee takes into consideration the contents of the dissertation as well as the defence itself. The opponent and grading committee is to be approved by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Regulations for deciding the grading committee members and other information can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, as well as in the instructions that have been issued by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Course credits are to be completed at the time of the defence.

8.3. Licentiate seminar

For the licentiate seminar, refer to current guidelines for licentiate seminars.

9. Degree

A post-graduate student who fulfils the Ph.D. degree or Licentiate degree requirements must submit an application for the diploma to the university.

10. Additional Information

For further information, please refer to legal provisions and educational guidelines for Stockholm University, Social Sciences Faculty, and the Department of Psychology. Information regarding current guidelines from the Social Sciences Faculty can be found at http://www.samfak.su.se and current information from the the Department of Psychology can be found at http://www.psychology.su.se