

Graduation FAQ – Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology

What are the graduation requirements for my non-terminal Master's?

The requirements for the non-terminal master's completed as part of the doctoral program are as follows:

- Completion of 48 credits (including PSYCH 718, 722 and 723)
- Achievement of a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher
- Successful completion of both the oral and written components of the Early Research Project

For May graduation, all requirements must be completed by the last Friday in April. For September graduation, all requirements must be completed by the last Friday in August. Students who complete these requirements by the last Friday in April are eligible to walk in the May commencement ceremony to receive their Master's degree. Students opting to submit their ERP manuscript for the August deadline will receive their degree in September and may walk in the following May commencement ceremony.

What is the official title of my degree?

If you matriculated in the Ph.D. program before September 2013, you will receive an M.A.P. – a Master's of Arts in Psychology. If you matriculated in September 2013 or afterwards, you will receive an M.S. – a Master of Science in Psychology degree.

If you have completed the doctoral program, you will receive a Doctor of Philosophy, a Ph.D., in Clinical Psychology. Any elective experiences (in Neuropsychology or Clinical Child Psychology) will not be listed on your diploma or transcripts.

What do I need to complete in order to graduate with my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology?

Ph.D. students have a number of objectives that must be completed before they will be cleared for graduation by the Psychology Department.

- Completion of 72 credits, including all required courses on your Program Evaluation
- Achievement of a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher
- Completion of Early Research Project
- Completion of Clinical Experiences Portfolio
- Successful completion of internship
- Successful dissertation defense and submission of final approved dissertation

What paperwork does the department need in order to clear me for graduation?

In addition to the departmental milestones described above, we do need verification of their completion along with exit information on your departure from the university.

- Formal degree application – please see the registrar’s website for more information: <https://www.suffolk.edu/about/directory/registrars-office> an application can also be submitted via Blackboard.
- Dissertation Defense Certification Form – submitted **after** your final dissertation has been approved by your committee (along with an electronic copy of the final approved dissertation). Final revisions must be signed off on by your committee chair.
- Letter of Internship Completion – submitted to the department by your internship director **after** your internship is completed
- Completion of departmental exit survey – submitted via Qualtrics and is available on Blackboard in the “Forms for Program Graduates” section. This is a requirement for students who are participating in commencement, but it is still recommended for all graduates regardless.
- Completion of National Survey of Earned Doctorates – available on the web at <http://www.sedsurvey.org/Pages/doctoralgraduates.aspx>. Please forward your confirmation to the Program Coordinator when you have completed the survey.

The department also requires that all outstanding paperwork (e.g. signed Yearly Academic Progress letters, dissertation progress reports) must be submitted before you are cleared to graduate.

What are the departmental deadlines for graduation?

Suffolk graduates students three times a year, in January, May, and September. The deadlines vary depending on how the calendar falls, but in general you should have all of the above paperwork and milestones completed as follows:

- January graduation: defend dissertation by the first Friday in December; all paperwork completed by the third Friday in December
- May graduation: defend dissertation by the second Friday in April; all paperwork completed by the last Friday in April
- September graduation: defend dissertation by the third Friday in June; all paperwork completed by the last Friday in August (students wanting to defend after the June deadline and still be eligible for September graduation must petition the Department Chair)

The Program Administrator will email you in advance of each graduation cycle with the exact dates of these deadlines. Students are encouraged to submit their materials well in advance of the deadlines.

What happens once I submit all of my paperwork and complete my dissertation and internship?

The Program Administrator creates a folder containing your program evaluation (listing all of your courses and completed academic requirements), survey confirmations, internship completion letter, and dissertation completion certification. This folder is reviewed and approved by the Director of Clinical Training and the Department Chair. Once all signatures have been collected, the Registrar's Office is notified that a student is approved to graduate.

Can I walk in commencement if I haven't finished my internship yet?

Suffolk holds one commencement ceremony in mid-May, but many students' internships run until the summer. Students are able to walk in the May ceremony as a "September petitioner" if they have completed all of their other requirements as listed above by the required departmental deadline. This includes successful completion of the dissertation. Students who have completed all requirements except the internship and are planning to walk in the May ceremony must have their internship director write a letter indicating that they are in good standing in their program and will complete on time. This letter should be sent directly to the Director of Clinical Training; an emailed letter will suffice. If you walk in the May ceremony as a September petitioner, your official degree will not be conferred or received until September.

Students who receive their degree in September but did not walk in the previous May ceremony and students who receive their degrees in January will be eligible to walk in the following May ceremony if they choose.

My internship finishes after the paperwork deadline for Suffolk! What do I do?

We understand that some internships run until late August and this may fall after the last Friday in August when all paperwork is due. Students should complete all of their other requirements by that deadline and ensure that their internship director submits confirmation of student completion of internship as soon as the official completion date is reached. A letter of good standing mailed before the end date will **not** be accepted in lieu of a letter of internship completion. However, the department will accept electronic versions of letters if they are scanned documents containing the internship director's signature. We will also accept an email from the internship director after the internship is completed indicating that a paper copy of the letter of completion is in the mail.

Is there anything else I have to do to be able to graduate?

Suffolk University **requires** you to complete exit loan counseling. This is organized through the Financial Aid Office. Please ensure that you are up to date on all other Suffolk requirements (i.e. returning books to Sawyer Library). The Psychology Department only tracks our internal milestones as listed above.

How long do I get to keep my email address after I graduate?

As of the writing of this FAQ (September 2019), current practice is for Suffolk emails to be maintained indefinitely, but if an account has not been logged into after one year it will be disabled. Alumni with suffolk.edu email addresses will be notified if this changes.

We also encourage graduating students to keep the department up to date with their current contact information so we can keep in touch about your licensure plans, post-graduate employment, and department news.