Psychology Department Senior Thesis Grading Rubric

In grading the first semester paper, the following scale applies:

- **4.0** work for the first semester indicates a paper that has gone above and beyond a summary of the relevant literature in terms of scope, synthesis and integration. In addition to reflecting a nearly flawless paper that provides a coherent rationale for the experiment to be undertaken, this grade can also represent exceptional or original independent contributions, or individual effort that has gone beyond what is normally expected. A grade of 4.0 is not commonly awarded during the first semester.

- **3.7** work for the first semester indicates an extremely thorough, coherently organized, and generally well-written summary of the literature that identifies all of the seminal work that has led up to the current study. In addition, this grade reflects that the rationale for the current study is abundantly clear and the procedures to be used are well-described. There may be improvements that can be made to this paper, but there are no major areas of deficiency.

- A grade of **3.3** for the first semester reflects a good to very good paper that needs improvement in one or more areas. The literature review may need to be more thorough, or the literature better summarized or integrated. The writing may be choppy or difficult to follow in some areas. There may be conceptual gaps that lead to an incomplete rationale for the study to be undertaken.

- **3.0** work for the first semester indicates that although the paper is good, there are several areas in which improvement can be made. For example, the literature review may have been too scant or poorly integrated. That is, the paper may have included summaries of appropriate studies without integrating how those studies support an important point or how they relate to the study that you are undertaking. The literature review may not have been thorough enough or may have relied too heavily on non-primary sources. In general, the reader may have had a difficult time understanding how the literature review culminates in the problem to be addressed in the current study.

- A grade less than **3.0** for the first semester work indicates that the paper is deficient in terms of our expectations for thesis-caliber work.

In grading the second semester paper, we evaluate the extent to which your paper has improved and addressed any problems identified in your first semester thesis, as well as evaluating the scholarship of the Results and Discussion sections.