

## II. THE MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) PROGRAM

### A. INTRODUCTION

CDPP students who do not enter Bryn Mawr College with an M.A. degree are expected to obtain a Bryn Mawr M.A. en route to the Ph.D. CDPP students who enter BMC with an M.A. degree in human development, psychology, counseling, social work, educational psychology, family therapy, or a similarly related area may elect not to obtain a Bryn Mawr M.A. degree. If they do so elect, *they must still complete* the predissertation research requirement. (See section entitled "Course Waivers" in Section III for additional information for students entering the CDPP with previous graduate level coursework in psychology).

### B. M.A. REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the M.A. degree at Bryn Mawr College are listed below.

- 6 one semester courses (30 credit hours)
- M.A. thesis
- Thesis oral defense

Although Bryn Mawr College requires six courses for the M.A. degree, CDPP students will typically have completed more courses by the time they complete the M.A. degree, which will be at the end of the second year in the program. ***Courses taken prior to matriculating at Bryn Mawr cannot count for the six M.A. courses.***

### C. M.A. CANDIDACY

According to GSAS rules, a student must formally apply to become a candidate for the M.A. degree. A candidacy form, outlining the student's program of work and signed by the candidate's department, must be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences by **December 18**. Candidacy forms may be obtained from GSAS.

### D. TIME FRAME FOR M.A. DEGREE

It is expected that students will complete their M.A. thesis and obtain the M.A. by the end of their second year in the program. **Students will not be allowed to take classes or participate in the third year assessment practicum unless the MA has been completed.** Students who do not complete the predissertation in the second year will be allowed to finish this requirement in the third year, after which they can resume taking classes. For example, if they complete the predissertation by the end of the Fall semester, they can take classes in the Spring Semester.

Students in the CDPG who have not yet attained the M.A. degree and who do not wish to enroll in coursework, to take examinations, or to make any other use of College resources in a given semester may request to take an informal leave of absence by notifying the program director in writing. The GSAS does not consider it appropriate for faculty to advise students who have taken an informal leave. Students who are not enrolled in coursework but who do intend to take examinations or to make other use of College resources (including the library and one's faculty advisor) must register for Continuing Enrollment and pay the Continuing Enrollment fee. Students who wish to extend a leave of absence beyond a single semester must formally request such a leave from the department. Requests for extended leaves will only be granted under unusual circumstances, since extended leaves are not generally compatible with a student's continuing to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.

#### **E. FULL-TIME STATUS**

CDPG students typically take two or three courses per semester and engage in research. Students often work 15-to-20 hours per week in a related job or a practicum. Three courses per semester is considered a full-time load at Bryn Mawr because our graduate courses are 5 credit hours each and students are continuously involved in research. Students taking two courses per term and working part-time in a degree-related practicum or as a BMC TA are considered to be enrolled full-time for purposes of loans.

#### **F. M.A. THESIS/PREDISSERTATION**

The M.A. thesis consists of a formal report in journal article style of the results of psychological research carried out under the supervision of a member of the faculty. Students entering the CDPG with a master's degree must complete a predissertation research project following these same guidelines even though they may elect to not obtain a BMC master's degree.

**Each student must select a research advisor and a research topic by September 15 of the first year in the program.** He or she should then begin to work on the predissertation literature review and proposal. **A draft of the literature review and method for the predissertation is due by December 15 of Year 1. A revision of the literature review, method, and procedure for the predissertation should be completed by February of the first year.** As the completed thesis will be read by a second faculty member ("second reader"), it is advisable to discuss the proposed research with the second reader early in the thesis process. Students, in consultation with their advisor, are responsible for asking a faculty member to be their second

reader.

All students in the CDPD need to submit a proposal for their research to the Bryn Mawr Institutional Review Board (IRB). **The IRB must approve the proposal before research begins.**

Students are expected to carry out data collection in the spring of the first year and/or over the summer before the second year in the program. Following collection and analysis of the data, the student prepares a draft of the thesis that is read by the advisor and the second reader. **A full draft of the thesis should be completed by December 1 of the second year.** Suggestions for revision are made by the advisor and the second reader. The student revises the manuscript based on suggested revisions and prepares a final draft of the predissertation. This final draft serves as the basis for the oral exam. Acceptance or rejection of the thesis in its final form is at the discretion of the student's committee.

Once the written thesis is accepted, the final oral is then scheduled. **The final oral on the M.A. thesis must be held before the end of the second semester in the second year in the program.** The oral examination consists of a one hour discussion devoted to the area of the thesis. The student's M.A. candidacy form must be obtained from the GSAS office prior to the oral examination. When the examination has been completed, the candidacy form is appropriately annotated by the student's M.A. thesis supervisor, signed by both members of the Committee, and returned to GSAS. Students who are not receiving an M.A. degree from Bryn Mawr do not need to obtain a candidacy form, but in all other respects the predissertation process is identical to that followed for the M.A. thesis process.

The committee may request some minor revisions in the thesis at the oral. These revisions must be made and incorporated into the "perfect copy" of the thesis. The "perfect copy" for the predissertation **must be completed by May 12 of the second year.**

Students are expected to follow this timeline and receive the M.A. degree at commencement in May of the second year unless they request special accommodations due to extenuating personal circumstances. In such cases, students must complete the M.A. before they will be allowed to take courses or participate in a practicum.