

Specialist-level Program Competencies & Objectives

Graduates will demonstrate effective knowledge and skills in the following eight core competencies. These competencies represent an integration of standards and domains of school psychology training and practice from the American Psychological Association and the National Association of School Psychologists.

Objectives are listed for each competency, along with the courses and applied experiences that most directly support the objectives.

1. **Data-based decision making and accountability practices in all professional activities and interactions.**

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to define problem areas, strengths, and needs at the individual, group, and systems level through systematic assessment
- to empirically measure outcomes of decisions and interventions
- to use scientific knowledge and research in making decisions and in selecting, developing, and evaluating professional actions and interventions

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6313 Psycho-educational Assessment I
- P6314 Psychopathology
- P6335 Identification and Remediation of Learning Problems
- P6375 Professional School Psychology
- P6376 Psycho-educational Assessment II
- P7310 Behavioral and Emotional Assessment of Children'
- P8305 Psycho-educational Intervention I
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

2. **Interpersonal communication, collaboration, and consultation within and between school and family.**

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to listen and understand the perspectives of others in professional relationships at the individual, group, and systems level
- to effectively communicate orally and in writing
- to conduct problem-solving consultations with parents, teachers, administrators, and others
- to facilitate collaboration and partnerships among key constituent groups (e.g., facilitation of home/school/community partnerships)

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6355 Multicultural Issues in Psychology and Counseling (elective)
- P6373 Individual and Organizational Consultation
- P6375 Professional School Psychology
- P6393 Marriage and Family Therapy (elective)
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

3. Interventions and instructional support / mental health services to develop children's academic, social, and life skills.

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to implement wellness and prevention programs in order to enhance children's cognitive/academic skills and social skills at the individual, group, and systems level
- to implement a broad array of empirically based interventions in order to correct and improve children's cognitive/academic and social skills
- to provide therapeutic counseling services for students experiencing learning and adjustment problems

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6314 Psychopathology
- P6315 Applied Behavior Analysis
- P6335 Identification and Remediation of Learning Problems
- P6354 Theories of Psychotherapy and Counseling
- P6356 Group Psychotherapy and Counseling (elective)
- P6370 Advanced Developmental Psychology
- P6393 Marriage and Family Therapy (elective)
- P7325 Physiological Psychology
- P8305 Psycho-educational Intervention I
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

4. School-wide preventative and responsive services to promote learning.

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to understand the structure, operation, and influence of key systems in the lives of children and adolescents including school, family, and peer systems
- to provide systems-level programmatic consultation and intervention services including assistance to large agencies serving children and youth (e.g., State Department of Education), school districts, and families

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6335 Identification and Remediation of Learning Problems
- P6355 Multicultural Issues in Psychology and Counseling (elective)
- P6373 Individual and Organizational Consultation
- P6375 Professional School Psychology
- P6393 Marriage and Family Therapy (elective)
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

5. Diversity in development and learning.

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to understand the unique and complex array of cultural influences on individual development, including racial, ethnic, gender, and linguistic factors
- to work effectively with individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds by considering unique culture-related challenges, strengths, and resources throughout the problem-solving process.

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6354 Theories of Psychotherapy and Counseling
- P6355 Multicultural Issues in Psychology and Counseling (elective)
- P6370 Advanced Developmental Psychology
- P6393 Marriage and Family Therapy (elective)
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

6. Research and program evaluation.

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to understand research design and statistics in order to effectively evaluate empirical studies in the professional literature
- to conduct research from initial design through evaluation in order to contribute to school psychology's empirical knowledge base
- to conduct research on the effectiveness of one's own work
- to conduct program evaluation research

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6315 Applied Behavior Analysis
- P6330 Advanced Psychological Statistics
- P6331 Research Design
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

7. Legal, ethical, and professional practices.

Objectives in this area include (but are not limited to) the following:

- to understand all appropriate legal, ethical, and professional standards pertaining to the practice of school psychology to adhere to the legal, ethical, and professional standards of school psychology in field experiences such as practicum and internship and other professional practice contexts
- to understand major factors impacting the profession of school psychology and to advocate for the profession in order to preserve and protect the welfare of children and others
- to promote and ensure appropriate and high quality services for children and other clients in one's own practice and in the practice of others
- to take responsibility for continuing professional development as professional school psychologists

Curricular Support for this competency area includes (but is not limited to):

- P6375 Professional School Psychology
- P6398 Legal and Ethical Issues in Psychology and Counseling
- P6332/3 School Psychology Practicum
- P6342 Internship (in School Psychology)

These domains represent a cohesive set of competencies deemed essential to the effective and comprehensive practice of school psychology in any setting. Although listed separately, they overlap considerably in training and practice and cut across a variety of service functions (e.g., assessment, prevention/intervention, consultation, research / evaluation) and service

levels/contexts (e.g., child, family, organizational, community). Students are also expected to have knowledge of information technology relevant to all areas of competency and to use technology in ways that safeguard or enhance the quality of services. Some examples of ways in which students use their technology skills in the program include: email usage, Internet searches, ERIC or Psych INFO searches, PowerPoint presentations, word processing for assignments and reports, statistical programs, and test scoring programs.

The program is responsive to anticipated needs of the future in that graduates will be prepared to address the increasingly diverse and complex social, cultural, and psychological needs of youth. Recent changes in these needs have led to new and sophisticated trends in the delivery of school psychological services to children, adolescents and their caregivers (e.g., parents, teachers). Graduates will be qualified to contribute substantially to the following needs and service trends:

- provision of behavioral and academic interventions in the schools, where they can be delivered most immediately and effectively
- primary and secondary prevention services, in addition to tertiary prevention services
- provision of culturally responsive curriculum and other helping services to school-aged students and others of all backgrounds
- inclusion of all persons with disabilities into school and society
- increased emphasis on early detection and intervention for preschool children with significant behavioral, cognitive, physical, and psychological challenges the need for research and dissemination pertaining to wellness and remedial programs for children and youth

The emphasis of the School Psychology Program is on prevention and intervention services within the context of data-based decision making. While preparing students to deal effectively with pathology and difficulties at the individual and systems level, the program also prepares students to identify and utilize strengths and resources of individuals and systems in accordance with a wellness/positive psychology model. A description of the curricula is provided later in the handbook.

The faculty of the Department of Psychology and Counseling are dedicated to working with students in a close mentoring relationship in order to prepare students for professional practice. They encourage students to pursue outside experiences and professional interactions (e.g., student membership in professional organizations and presentations at regional and national conferences). In particular, faculty in the school psychology program and in the Department of Psychology and Counseling are dedicated to working with students from diverse and multicultural backgrounds and are particularly interested in promoting the achievements of students from under-represented populations. Information regarding the graduate faculty is provided at the end of the handbook.