

Important Changes in the UCA PhD Program in School Psychology



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Date: March 26, 2019
To: Students, Colleagues, and Program Supporters
From: UCA School Psychology Program Faculty
Heather Martens, Program Director
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John Murphy
Joan Simon
Michael Scoles

It is with heavy hearts that we are informing you that the School Psychology track of UCA's PhD in Psychology will be phased out and will no longer accept new students.

Our success

As many of you know, our doctoral program in School Psychology was both the first doctoral program in psychology at UCA and the first School Psychology doctorate (and only) in the state of Arkansas. Our program has accepted students every year since 2000. To date, we successfully graduated 24 high quality professionals who are working in educational and private settings in Arkansas and beyond. We also have many current students who will continue to be supported until they complete their degrees.

In 2006, our program received national accreditation by the American Psychological Association and has consistently maintained this recognition since that time. For almost 20 years, our students have learned about our professional field, practiced their skills under highly qualified supervisors, and have contributed meaningfully to the field in terms of professional presentations, publications, and grant activities. These activities have all centered around improving understanding and delivery of school psychology services to students from birth to 21 years of age. We pride ourselves knowing that we have only admitted the highest quality students and have supported them in every way we were able to help them matriculate through the program's requirements.

Our struggle

The primary issue at hand for our program is the cost/benefit of maintaining a doctoral program of our caliber with a limited number of high quality students. Such maintenance includes, but isn't limited to, recruitment activities, financial support for students, and accreditation requirements from three accrediting bodies.

Our solution

After many discussions and very careful consideration, we have determined that it is best to support our current students through the program and no longer accept new students. It is expected that this plan will phase out our PhD in Psychology - School Psychology track by the year 2024, once all current students have completed the program.

PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING

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Our commitment

As much as ever before, UCA and the Department of Psychology & Counseling are committed to providing high quality School Psychology professionals to the state of Arkansas. The School Psychology faculty will now shift their focus to current doctoral students and the students in our Educational Specialist program. In fact, we hope to increase the number of EdS students in the upcoming years. We are also working with our UCA Graduate School toward an option for previous MS graduates to complete their EdS degree with minimal additional coursework. In addition, our department will maintain all other current undergraduate and graduate programs.

Our thanks

Over the past almost 20 years, our PhD program has been supported by countless professionals in Arkansas and beyond through their professional expertise, supervision skills, and valuable input. We could not have managed successfully for so long without their assistance. We want to recognize you all and thank you for all that you have contributed to our program and our students!