

# **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) HANDBOOK 2025-2026**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the School Psychology Program (SPP) at the University of Florida! We are delighted that you have chosen the University of Florida as the institution from which to obtain an advanced graduate degree in health service psychology in the practice area of school psychology. For many of you, this will be your first introduction to graduate studies. Before long, you will notice three main differences between your undergraduate experience and your experience in graduate school.

First, you will notice that academics are taken more seriously in graduate school. Students generally discover that they are among peers with both high ability and a commitment to academics. There is more course content to be mastered within a given period, and more individual study time is required in preparing adequately for course and practicum assignments. In addition, there is an expectation that each student becomes involved in collaborative and independent research.

Second, you will notice that graduate students receive individual attention and support from departmental faculty and staff. A small number of students enter graduate school; hence the student/faculty ratio is smaller. Faculty take a personal interest in their students' academic and professional development. Graduate students are encouraged to meet with faculty members, get to know them, and develop mentoring relationships and research partnerships. School psychology students matriculate through the program with a closely knit cohort of their peers. Students are encouraged to develop professional relationships and friendships both within and across cohorts. In addition, there are numerous opportunities for faculty, staff, and graduate students to socialize in more relaxed and informal settings.

Third, you will notice that organizational skills are crucial in graduate school. You will understand the importance of carefully organizing your daily schedule to efficiently maximize your time. This is particularly true for applied professional training programs such as the SPP. From a student's perspective, there may seem to be an endless stream of important assignments and activities related to course work, practicum, assistantships, and research. There are also deadlines of which to be aware; departmental and university forms to fill out; and rules, regulations, and procedures of which to keep abreast. Students are expected to remain informed of important information that affects their professional preparation and future employment.

Our goal as SPP faculty and department support staff is to enable your time with us to be as successful, rewarding, and productive as possible. Toward this end, we have developed this program handbook that you will be continually referring to throughout your time with us.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

The Doctoral Program Handbook is designed to provide students with information for successful matriculation through their program of studies in the SPP. Please find included in the handbook policies and procedures set forth by the Program, the College of Education, and/or the University of Florida Graduate School. Needed information that is not contained in this Handbook can be provided by faculty advisors, the SPP Director, or may be obtained from one of the following sources:

University of Florida Graduate Catalog  
<https://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/graduate/>

University of Florida Graduate Student Handbook  
<https://graduateschool.ufl.edu/work/handbook/>

You should become well acquainted with all relevant policies and procedures contained in handbooks and catalogs provided by the Program and the University Graduate School. Please save this SPP Handbook as a source of reference throughout your graduate study. Keep in mind that this document is intended as a supplement to regular consultation with the SPP Director and a faculty advisor. The University of Florida SPP Handbook is updated and revised on a regular basis.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The program in School Psychology is located within the School of Special Education, School Psychology and Early Childhood Studies (SESPECS) in the UF College of Education. The program leads to an Education Specialist (EdS) or Doctoral (PhD) degree; with an option for a Masters (MAE or MED) degree to be obtained in route to the PhD.

Upon admission to the SPP, you will be assigned a faculty advisor, who will work closely with you during your first year in the program. Your faculty advisor is responsible for guiding your selection of courses, and along with the SPP Director and Department staff, assisting you with the paperwork and procedures necessary for the administration of your graduate program. Make an effort to get to know your advisor and the entire school psychology faculty as soon as possible. It is expected that you will take the initiative to seek out your faculty advisor when necessary. Schedule meetings with your advisor to discuss your transition to graduate school, program requirements, research interests, and future career goals. Your faculty advisor also will serve as the chair of your doctoral supervisory committee. Should your interests change during your time in the SPP, you may select a new advisor that you are both comfortable with and shares your professional interests and goals.

Communication within the program occurs through various means and is designed to enhance your understanding of course and practicum requirements, program policies, changes that occur in the program, and issues such as licensure and certification that affect your future as a school psychologist. A primary means of communication is use of the program listserv and notices that are sent by the Program Director to specific cohort groups via university email. Each August, prior to the beginning of the fall semester, an “All Program” Meeting is held that all enrolled students are required to attend. Additional program meetings are scheduled at the discretion of the Program Director. Each student has a mailbox in the SESPECS office (1801 Norman Hall), and upon entering UF as a graduate student you will also have an email address assigned. Students are advised to check their mailboxes and UF email accounts on a regular basis (i.e., email should be checked daily). During your graduate study it is important that we maintain an accurate address, telephone number, and university email address for you. These should be given to a staff member in the SESPECS office.

The SPP Committee meets monthly to plan program activities, discuss needs and issues, review student progress, and engage in short-term and long-term planning. This committee also discusses program policies and procedures in relation to the Department, the College of Education, and the University of Florida Graduate School. In addition to SPP faculty, student representatives are members of the committee. Student representatives, elected by the SPP graduate students, meet with the SPP Committee. Students are urged to share ideas and issues with their student representatives to have input into SPP decisions and future planning.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The School Psychology Program (SPP) at the University of Florida (UF) is a doctoral program in health service psychology in the practice area of school psychology. The SPP provides broad and general doctoral education and training that integrates empirical evidence and practice. The SPP is designed to prepare students for practice or further organized training by providing training that is sequential, cumulative, and graded in complexity. Respect for and understanding of cultural and individual differences and diversity are high priorities for the SPP and are reflected throughout all aspects of training. Doctoral training in the SPP consists of 120 graduate credit hours, including a year-long internship, early research experience, and dissertation, and leads to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. The SPP doctoral track is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Florida Department of Education and is approved as a “Nationally Recognized” Program by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) through the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

### **School Psychology Program Philosophy and Goals**

The mission of the SPP is to prepare health service psychology scholars and practitioners whose activities promote the psychological and educational development and well-being of children and youth. The program is grounded in a scientist-practitioner model as reflected in its commitment to a synthesis between science and practice throughout all academic and professional preparation opportunities. Students in the SPP are trained to be practicing scientists who use systematic inquiry to deliver effective psychological services and programs to schools, families, and the community. As scientists, doctoral students develop a solid foundation of content knowledge in core areas of psychology, education, research methods, and professional school psychology. SPP students effectively use this body of evolving knowledge to prevent, assess, and intervene regarding psychological and educational issues impacting children, families, and institutions; and to conduct and evaluate basic and applied research. Program faculty strive to demonstrate that scholarly and applied practice roles are not distinct, and instead are inextricably linked when considering the work of school psychologists across a diverse range of practice settings.

## **Training: Sequential, Cumulative, and Graded in Complexity**

The SPP is committed to preparing future school psychologists to assume professional leadership roles in university, school, clinical, and other community settings. Across these settings, health service psychologists in the practice area of school psychology work to ensure positive educational outcomes for all children and youth and use their professional knowledge and skills to function as change agents. School psychologists help others understand and attain their educational, legal, and individual rights and work to promote change at various levels. To fulfill these critical roles, SPP students develop competencies that sustain their ability to provide a comprehensive range of direct and indirect psychological services to children, youth, their families and educators. This includes competency to use a wide variety of assessment methods; to consult with families, educators and other professionals; to design and implement direct and indirect interventions tailored to individual and group needs; to develop prevention and other intervention programs that promote optimal development; and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and other school psychological services.

To meet these goals, didactic coursework, practicum training, and research are carefully structured to reflect a sequential and hierarchical approach to training, resulting in an accumulation of skills over time that allows students to engage in more complex activities as they advance in the program.

## **Areas of Training Emphasis**

Professional preparation provided by the SPP is consistent with the program mission, with particular emphasis on the following four areas:

*Cognitive-Behavioral Orientation.* While the SPP exposes students to a range of psychological orientations that are evident in school psychology research, scholarship, and professional practice, emphasis is placed on a cognitive-behavioral orientation. This orientation recognizes the interrelationship of thoughts, feelings, and behavior and serves as a foundation for much of the program coursework, practica experiences, and program competencies.

*Schools as Organizations.* The SPP emphasizes schools as a crucial context for educational and psychological development. SPP students develop knowledge, skills, and expertise in understanding children and youth within the schooling process. This development is accomplished through an extensive practicum sequence in school and educational settings, with a goal of using professional knowledge and skills to address needs of individual students and to enhance learning environments and educational opportunities for all students.

*Diversity and Individual Differences.* The SPP promotes awareness and sensitivity to the individual differences and diverse backgrounds of children, youth, families, and educators who are recipients of school psychological services. Through program experiences and faculty mentoring, students develop knowledge and appreciation for diversity and demonstrate respect and the ability to work effectively with others regardless of age, sex, gender identity, race,

ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, or any basis proscribed by law.

*Data-based Decision Making.* An organizing theme for the SPP underscores the view of school psychologists as professionals who rely on data-based decision making in all areas of professional practice and development. Through a process of identifying needs, collecting information, intervening and making decisions, and assessing outcomes, school psychologists demonstrate their problem-solving skills and improve their ability to intervene effectively. The program cultivates this professional perspective through required program experiences, faculty mentoring, supervision, and feedback. This framework is viewed as critical to the development of a school psychologist's knowledge and skills while involved in graduate training and as a guide to future professional development as SPP graduates work to expand and improve their knowledge of scholarship and related professional practices.

### **Competency Areas**

The SPP prepares doctoral students for the profession of health service psychology through a coordinated sequence of coursework; practical experience in applied settings in the context of practica and internship; opportunities to generate new knowledge through research and other forms of scholarship; and personal and professional development through interacting closely with professors, other SPP students, field supervisors, and former program graduates. As a result of these experiences, at the completion of their program, students will demonstrate the following competencies in these areas:

#### *Research*

- Demonstrate the substantially independent ability to formulate research or other scholarly activities (e.g., critical literature reviews, dissertation, efficacy studies, clinical case studies, theoretical papers, program evaluation projects, program development projects) that are of sufficient quality and rigor to have the potential to contribute to the scientific, psychological, or professional knowledge base.
- Conduct research or other scholarly activities.
- Critically evaluate and disseminate research or other scholarly activity via professional publication and presentation at the local (including the host institution), regional, or national level.

#### *Ethical and Legal Standards*

- Be knowledgeable of and act in accordance with each of the following:
  - The current version of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.
  - Relevant laws, regulations, rules, and policies governing health service psychology at the organizational, local, state, regional, and federal levels; and relevant professional standards and guidelines.
- Recognize ethical dilemmas as they arise, and apply ethical decision-making processes in



order to resolve the dilemmas.

- Conduct self in an ethical manner in all professional activities.

#### Individual and Cultural Diversity

- An understanding of how their own personal/cultural history, attitudes, and biases may affect how they understand and interact with people different from themselves.
- Knowledge of the current theoretical and empirical knowledge base as it relates to addressing diversity in all professional activities including research, training, supervision/consultation, and service.
- The ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences in the conduct of professional roles (e.g., research, services, and other professional activities). This includes the ability to apply a framework for working effectively with areas of individual and cultural diversity not previously encountered over the course of their careers. Also included is the ability to work effectively with individuals whose group membership, demographic characteristics, or worldviews are different from their own.
- Demonstrate the requisite knowledge base, ability to articulate an approach to working effectively with diverse individuals and groups, and apply this approach effectively in their professional work.

#### Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors

- Behave in ways that reflect the values and attitudes of psychology, including integrity, deportment, professional identity, accountability, lifelong learning, and concern for the welfare of others.
- Engage in self-reflection regarding one's personal and professional functioning; engage in activities to maintain and improve performance, well-being, and professional effectiveness.
- Actively seek and demonstrate openness and responsiveness to feedback and supervision.
- Respond professionally in increasingly complex situations with a greater degree of independence as they progress across levels of training.

#### Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of individuals, including colleagues, communities, organizations, supervisors, supervisees, and those receiving professional services.
- Produce and comprehend oral, nonverbal, and written communications that are informative and well-integrated; demonstrate a thorough grasp of professional language and concepts.
- Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills and the ability to manage difficult communication well.

#### Assessment

- Demonstrate current knowledge of diagnostic classification systems, functional and

dysfunctional behaviors, including consideration of client strengths and psychopathology.

- Demonstrate understanding of human behavior within its context (e.g., family, social, societal, and cultural).
- Demonstrate the ability to apply the knowledge of functional and dysfunctional behaviors including context to the assessment and/or diagnostic process.
- Select and apply assessment methods that draw from the best available empirical literature and that reflect the science of measurement and psychometrics; collect relevant data using multiple sources and methods appropriate to the identified goals and questions of the assessment as well as relevant diversity characteristics of the service recipient.
- Interpret assessment results, following current research and professional standards and guidelines, to inform case conceptualization, classification, and recommendations, while guarding against decision-making biases, distinguishing the aspects of assessment that are subjective from those that are objective.
- Communicate orally and in written documents the findings and implications of the assessment in an accurate and effective manner sensitive to a range of audiences.

#### Intervention

- Establish and maintain effective relationships with the recipients of psychological services.
- Develop evidence-based intervention plans specific to the service delivery goals.
- Implement interventions informed by the current scientific literature, assessment findings, diversity characteristics, and contextual variables.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply the relevant research literature to clinical decision making.
- Modify and adapt evidence-based approaches effectively when a clear evidence-base is lacking.
- Evaluate intervention effectiveness, and adapt intervention goals and methods consistent with ongoing evaluation.

#### Supervision

- Demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practices

#### Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

- Demonstrate knowledge and respect for the roles and perspectives of other professions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of consultation models and practices.

#### Area of Specialization Competencies

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge and expertise in a specified and coherent academic or professional practice area relevant to psychology, including school psychology.

## PROGRAM RESOURCES

The SPP draws upon four main resources to meet program goals: (a) the UF campus and community, (b) the College of Education, (c) the SPP itself, and (d) students. These resources provide students with the tools and experiences needed to obtain a solid graduate education and specialized preparation for the practice of school psychology. Resources are blended to enhance the general and specific objectives of school psychology students.

### UF Campus and Community

The University of Florida is a public, land-grant research university, one of the most comprehensive in the United States; it encompasses virtually all academic and professional disciplines. It is the oldest and largest of Florida's universities and a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU). Its faculty and staff are dedicated to the common pursuit of the University's threefold mission: education, research, and service. Teaching undergraduate and graduate courses through the doctorate is the fundamental purpose of the University. Research and scholarship are integral to the education process and to expanding humankind's understanding of the natural world, the mind, and the senses. Service is the University's obligation to share the benefits of its knowledge for the public good.

These three interlocking elements span all of the University of Florida's academic disciplines and multidisciplinary centers and represent the University's obligation to lead and serve the needs of the nation, all of Florida's citizens, and the public and private educational systems of Florida, by pursuing and disseminating new knowledge while building upon the past. The University of Florida is committed to providing the knowledge, benefits, and services it produces with quality and effectiveness. It aspires to further national and international recognition for its initiatives and achievement in promoting human values and improving the quality of life.

The University of Florida offers degrees in more fields than all but two universities in the world. Students benefit from the numerous cultural and community resources typically generated by a major university. Many of these resources are located on campus and are easily accessible. Of special interest to students in school psychology are the related professional programs located on campus, such as Clinical Health Psychology, which is located in the College of Health Sciences/Shands Medical Center, and Counseling Psychology and Experimental Analysis of Behavior, both of which are located in the Department of Psychology. Other desirable features of the University of Florida include the Brain Institute, the Center for Latin American Studies, Black Studies, and a host of other multi-disciplinary institutes. Gainesville has been voted by *Money Magazine* as one of the most livable cities in the nation.

UF Libraries. The Libraries of the University of Florida form the largest information resource system in the state of Florida. While the collections are extensive, they may be supplemented by drawing upon a variety of library services offered through cooperative library programs. These provide UF's users access to the resources of many other libraries. The libraries of the University of Florida consist of eight libraries. Six are in the system known as the George A. Smathers Libraries of the University of Florida and two (Health Sciences and Legal

Information) are attached to their respective administrative units. All of the libraries serve all of the university's faculty and students, but each has a special mission to be the primary support of specific colleges and degree programs. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of research, scholars may find collections built in one library to serve a specific discipline or constituency to be of great importance to their own research in another discipline. It most likely will be necessary to use more than one library to discover all resources available at the University that are pertinent to a particular research interest. The libraries have built a number of nationally significant research collections primarily in support of graduate research programs.

## **College of Education**

The mission of the College of Education is to prepare exemplary professional practitioners and scholars; to generate, use, and disseminate knowledge about teaching, learning, and human development; and to collaborate with others to solve critical educational and human problems in a diverse global community.

College Schools and Centers. The College of Education provides resources to students in the SPP in a number of ways. The College includes three schools, one of which houses Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies (SESPECS). The College of Education is nationally recognized for its programs in counselor education, special education, education technology, teacher education and other areas of interest to school psychology students. Other resources within the College include the Anita Zucker Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies, the Lastinger Center for Learning, and the Prevention and Intervention Network (PIN) for Youth, Families, Schools & Communities.

P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School. The P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School, established in 1934 as a unit within the College of Education, serves as a vehicle for research, demonstration, and evaluation regarding teaching and learning. The school's primary research goal is to enhance instruction in reading, mathematics, and science using state of the art educational technology. The student body demographically reflects the state of Florida including students in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade from a wide range of ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. School psychology faculty and graduate students provide school psychological services and conduct research projects with P.K. Yonge students, parents, and teachers.

## **School Psychology Program**

Resources within the SPP include the school psychology faculty, the resources shared by our department, and the extensive network of field placements located throughout Florida. Resources within the department include the use of computers, a psychological test library, and a large faculty with a wide variety of research interests. The SPP has developed an extensive array of practicum experiences in public schools, hospitals, adolescent/child psychiatric units, alternative educational settings, P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School, private practice, and other sites on and off campus.

School Psychology Program Faculty. The School Psychology faculty consists of Drs.

Christopher Anthony, John Cooley, Kelly-Ann Gesuelli, Kathrin Maki, Joni Splett, Kathryn Trainor, and Nancy Waldron.

**Dr. Christopher Anthony** is an Associate Professor of School Psychology. He received his Ph.D. in School Psychology from Penn State University in 2016. His major area of scholarly interest focuses on assessing and promoting the socioemotional, behavioral, and attitudinal variables related to student learning and wellbeing. Dr. Anthony serves on advisory committees and teaches Introduction to Psychoeducational Assessment, Social and Developmental School Psychology, and Research and Writing in School Psychology.

**Dr. John Cooley** is an Assistant Professor of School Psychology. Dr. Cooley received his Ph.D. in Clinical Child Psychology, with a minor in Quantitative Psychology, from the University of Kansas in 2018. His major areas of scholarly interest include peer relations (peer victimization, aggression, bullying), school-based mental health screening, and prevention and intervention approaches within school- and community-based settings. Dr. Cooley serves on advisory committees and teaches Developmental Psychopathology and Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions.

**Dr. Kelly-Ann Gesuelli** is an Assistant Professor of School Psychology. Dr. Gesuelli received her Ph.D. in Education, with a specialization in School Psychology from the University of Delaware in 2022. Her major areas of scholarly interest include academic interventions, individual differences in math development, and the design of instructional supports for students with mathematics learning disabilities. Dr. Gesuelli recently joined the faculty and will begin serving on advisory committees in August 2025.

**Dr. Kathrin Maki** is an Associate Professor of School Psychology and Director of the School Psychology Program. Dr. Maki received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Minnesota in 2016. Her major areas of scholarly interest include academic interventions and data-based decision-making within multi-tiered systems of support, and the identification of learning disabilities. Dr. Maki serves on advisory committees and teaches Foundations of Intervention and Academic Assessment and Intervention.

**Dr. Joni Splett** is an Associate Professor of School Psychology and Director of the UF Prevention and Intervention Network (PIN). She received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Missouri in 2012. Her major areas of scholarly interest include school health and mental health services delivered within and across a multi-tiered system of support, universal screening for social-emotional concerns, and social-emotional assessment. Dr. Splett serves on advisory committees and teaches Systems Level Interventions and Issues and Problems in School Psychology.

**Dr. Kathryn Trainor** is a Clinical Assistant Professor of School Psychology and serves as the Practica Coordinator for the SPP. Dr. Trainor received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Florida in 2021. Her major areas of scholarly interests include

comprehensive school mental health systems, prevention science, and teacher well-being. Dr. Trainor teaches Practicum Seminars, Issues and Problems in School Psychology, Systems Level Interventions, and the Seminar on Individual Differences.

**Dr. Nancy Waldron** is a Professor in School Psychology. She received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from Indiana University. Her professional and research interests include school improvement to enhance inclusive education for students with disabilities and school psychology preparation and credentialing. Dr. Waldron serves on advisory committees and teaches School Psychology Consultation.

School Psychology Program Affiliate and Associate Faculty. The SPP has benefited from the contributions of outstanding affiliate faculty that regularly teach courses, supervise practica, and serve on supervisory committees. These individuals have brought their professional experiences into the classroom to benefit student learning and professional development.

**Dr. Elayne Colon** is a graduate of the UF SPP and is the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Services in the UF College of Education.

**Dr. Matt Daley** is a graduate of the UF SPP. He is a licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist. Dr. Daley specializes in providing mental health services to patients with anxiety, depression, and other psychiatric conditions across a variety of settings including hospitals, outpatient clinics, and schools.

**Dr. Garret Evans** is a former Clinical and Psychology faculty member of UF and former director of the National Rural Behavioral Health Center. He currently has a consulting firm, Haile Market Therapy and Behavioral Medicine in Gainesville. Dr. Garret is the recipient of numerous multi-year grants funding psychological services for at-risk youth.

**Dr. Joe McNamara** services as Director of the Division of Medical Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Springhill. He is the recipient of over one million dollars in grant funding to investigate the effect of SSRI-Induced Activation Syndrome in Pediatric OCD and services on graduate dissertation committees.

**Dr. Melissa Munson** is a Psychologist and Assistant Professor with UF Health Psychology. She specializes in assessment and treatment for individuals with autistic, anxiety, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. She supervises medical residents, interns, and practica students. Her publications include validation studies of pediatric measures, as well as effective CBT and trauma treatment protocols for mental health disorders.

**Dr. Regilda Romero** is a Psychologist with UF Health Psychology and the UF Health Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment. She specializes early childhood assessment and treatment for children with ADHD, intellectual disabilities, fetal alcohol syndrome, and anxiety. Dr. Romero supervises fellows, interns, and graduate practica students.

**Dr. Jamie Stormer** is a Psychologist with UF Pediatrics and the FLOAAT Center – Florida OCD, Autism, and Anxiety Treatment Center. Her clinical experience includes assessment and treatment of anxiety, OCD, ADHD, ASD and other mood disorders. Dr. Stormer supervises and teaches school psychology practicum.

## STUDENTS

Students are the most valuable resource of the SPP. They shape the SPP and are shaped by it in the reciprocal process of graduate education. Requirements for admission, opportunities for financial support and information about the graduate student association and joining professional organizations are described below.

### Application/Admission Requirements

Admission to graduate programs in the College of Education is based on a comprehensive, holistic review of all application materials. Holistic review refers to mission-aligned admissions processes that take into consideration applicants' experiences, attributes, and academic metrics as well as the value an applicant would contribute to learning, practice, and teaching. Holistic review allows admissions committees to consider the "whole" applicant, rather than disproportionately focusing on any one factor. The SPP gives strong consideration to the statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, relevant work and/or life experiences, and performance in prior undergraduate and graduate coursework (GPA).

Formal review of applications by the SPP begins in December for admission the following fall semester (that begins in August). Completed applications are due to the SPP by **December 1st**. Applicants are encouraged to submit application materials to the UF Graduate School by mid-November to ensure review, as a limited number of applicants are admitted each year. In a typical year, 12-14 students (EdS and PhD combined) are admitted to the SPP. Approximately half of the students in each entering class are pursuing a doctoral degree. Admission to the SPP is competitive. In recent years, less than 15% of those applying to the SPP have been admitted.

Individuals with undergraduate majors in psychology or education are typically best qualified for admission to the SPP. Relevant professional and life experiences are also considered positively in the application process. The course of study assumes the knowledge of psychology that one would acquire in most undergraduate psychology programs. Students are expected to be familiar with developmental psychology, learning theory, abnormal/personality theory, and statistics/experimental design. Applicants who do not have a background in psychology are encouraged to take these courses prior to admission to the SPP or early in the course of graduate study. Coursework taken to meet such prerequisites is not counted towards the graduate degree. Undergraduate courses taken prior to or during a student's course of study do not satisfy graduation requirements.

*The University of Florida does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religious preference, disability, or sex, in the administration of educational*

*policies, admissions, financial aid, employment, or any other University program or activity.*

## **Financial Support**

Because the SPP is a full-time program, many students are in need of financial support. There are three main sources of financial support for SPP students: scholarships, assistantships (research and teaching), and related work on and off campus. *Graduate School Fellows* represent the highest graduate student award available at the University. Funded at nationally competitive levels, these highly prestigious awards provide 4 years (calendar year) of support for students in all programs and departments of the University awarding a PhD. The first class of the “Alumni 100” Graduate Fellows began in the fall of 1999. The University has steadily increased the number of fellowships available each year. The Alumni Graduate Fellowships focus on identifying and supporting students who seek the PhD degree or selected terminal master’s degrees (e.g., the MFA). To ensure that Alumni Fellows receive every opportunity to succeed, the Alumni Graduate Fellowships provide a full four years of support for qualifying students. In addition, *College Assistantships* (formerly called Provost Initiative Assistantships) consist of 9-month graduate assistantships for 4 years (academic year) of support.

*Graduate School Fellowships* are named in honor of Dr. Linton E. Grinter, who was Dean of the Graduate School, 1952-1969. Each year \$630,000 is awarded to students in the form of *Grinter Fellowships*. The intent of the Grinter Fellowship is to facilitate the recruitment of truly exceptional graduate students to the University of Florida. Currently enrolled UF graduate students are not eligible, except in the particular case in which they will be entering a PhD program for the first time. Grinter Fellowships are not assistantships. No duties may be required of the student (except those duties associated with an assistantship held concurrently). Grinter Fellowship stipends are normally in the \$2,000-\$4,000 range. Additionally, the *McKnight Doctoral Fellowships* are available for students from underrepresented groups enrolled in doctoral programs.

In addition to these sources of support, *teaching and research assistantships* often are available. Doctoral students with excellent academic records generally are considered first for these positions. Most assistantships are available for serving as instructors for undergraduate classes within the College of Education. SPP students compete with other graduate students in the College for departmental assistantships. To be eligible for teaching assistantships, SPP students must have already taken a course (or courses) in the subject area for which they will serve as a teaching assistant. This can be accomplished within the first or second years in the program. SPP students can increase their chances for being selected for teaching assistantships if they display exemplary work in these courses.

Research assistantships are available to students from a number of sources. Individual faculty members often receive grant monies that can support a research assistant. Individual faculty with grants often approach students who demonstrate a consistent record of solid academic performance, dependability, and a strong work ethic. These assistantships frequently support students for more than 1 year. In addition to an hourly wage, tuition waivers for in-state matriculation fees accompany many assistantships. Non-Florida Tuition Waivers are available to eligible out-of-state students with assistantships. For more information on these sources of



financial assistance, contact EduGator Central – the COE Office of Academic and Student Services (1002 Norman Hall) or the SESPECS Graduate Coordinator.

### **School Psychology Graduate Student Association**

The School Psychology Graduate Student Association (SPGSA) is formally recognized by the College of Education and the University of Florida as a forum for students' academic issues and professional development. All students enrolled in the UF-SPP are automatic members of SPGSA. All students are requested to pay a minimal annual membership fee to off-set the expenses of the SPGSA. Responsibilities of SPGSA members are intended and designed to accomplish the following four goals:

- Facilitate greater communication and social interaction among students across years in the UF SPP.
- Establish a behavioral norm among students of academic and professional involvement in school psychology activities.
- Assist faculty in evaluating the effectiveness of the UF SPP in meeting the resources and needs of graduate students.
- Establish a clearinghouse for information and opportunities that will prepare students for the demands of pre- and post-graduate professional work.

Within the SPGSA student representative body, an Executive Board is elected annually by members to conduct administrative duties. The Executive Board consists of the following offices:

- President – Based on input from the entire body of the SPGSA, establishes the agenda for monthly meetings. The President orchestrates and presides over the meetings.
- Vice-President – The Vice-President supervises special projects and presides over ad-hoc meetings.
- Secretary –The Secretary is responsible for the taking and distribution of minutes from SPGSA meetings.
- Treasurer – The Treasurer alerts the SPGSA to any funding available through Student Government and maintains the SPGSA bank account.
- Ambassadors –Two Ambassadors are elected to assist with special projects.

The President of the Executive Board, or a designee, is required to attend all SPP faculty meetings. SPP faculty are not members of the association, and the SPP Director is designated by the University as the faculty advisor to the group.

### **Joining Professional Organizations**

Professionals are expected to demonstrate their commitment to their profession by joining and becoming active in professional associations. Health service psychologists in the practice area of school psychology often hold membership in one or more state, national, and international associations. Many school psychologists in Florida hold membership in the Florida

Association of School Psychology. In addition, many are members of the APA's Division of School Psychology (Division 16) and the NASP. School psychologists interested in the international dimensions of their profession hold membership in the International School Psychology Association (ISPA). Students in the SPP are also members of the School Psychology Graduate Student Association (SPGSA) at UF. All students are required to maintain a membership in APA, NASP, or both throughout the duration of their studies.

Students are encouraged to apply for student membership in one or more of these associations and to attend and make presentations at their annual meetings. Program faculty have or currently hold offices in these associations. Membership application forms for these associations can be obtained from association websites or by contacting program faculty.

## **Record Retention**

Student records (e.g., application materials, annual evaluations, transcripts) will be maintained by the program indefinitely subject to the provisions and guidelines of the University of Florida. The SPP student record retention policy is based on federal and state statutes, professional organization or association requirements, and institutional policies. The University of Florida abides by many different types of retention schedules: those created by the State of Florida (GS1-SL, GS4, GS5, etc.), those created by the federal government, and those created uniquely for the University of Florida (UF).

## **COURSE OF STUDY**

The full-time course of study in the SPP is designed to integrate field experience and academic study. Discipline-specific knowledge serves as a cornerstone for the establishment of identity in and orientation to health service psychology. Thus, all students in accredited programs need to acquire a general knowledge base in the field of psychology, broadly construed, to serve as a foundation for further training in the practice of health service psychology. Through continuous enrollment in practica and internship, rigorous course work, and supervision of field placements, students continuously apply discipline-specific knowledge and skills in field settings and generate practical and relevant questions on issues needing further study. Because of this interwoven sequence of study, part-time study is very difficult. Moreover, non-degree status in the SPP is not permitted.

All students must meet the standards advanced by the Graduate School, College, as well as the SPP. All SPP requirements are congruent with standards from accrediting bodies (i.e., Florida DOE, CAEP, NASP, and APA). Among the most important standards are those governing the formation and composition of committees, final examinations, and program plans. Students should discuss these issues with their advisor early in their graduate career.

The UF Graduate School standards and rules are extensive and binding for all SPP students. Therefore, students must familiarize themselves with the rules in the Graduate Catalog and in the SPP Program Handbook. *This Handbook cannot and does not claim to summarize all relevant rules and regulations.* Students are strongly encouraged to consult the UF Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Student Handbook, and their faculty advisor for additional information.

Some students enter the program with previous course work or experiences that may allow or require alteration of the typical program. Such changes must be negotiated in advance with the student's advisor and other relevant individuals, such as the department chair, assistant dean of graduate studies, and relevant faculty, regarding the acceptability of the proposed changes. A *Planned Program of Study* must be written and approved to finalize any proposed change. This is a formal contract of the course of study and ***should be filed no later than the beginning of the second year of graduate study.***

### **Course Requirements for the PhD Degree in School Psychology**

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS (15) Credits

SPS 6937 Social & Developmental School Psychology	3
CLP 7934 Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior	3
PSB 6099 Survey of Physiological & Comparative Psychology	3
SPS 6195 Developmental Psychopathology	3
SPS 6937 Seminar in Individual Differences	3

#### EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS (6)

TSL 6700 Issues in ESOL	3
SPS 6193 Academic Assessment & Interventions for Diverse Learners	3

#### PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY (12)

SPS 6052 Issues and Problems in School Psychology	3
SPS 6815 Law & Ethics in Psychology	3
SPS 7931 Internship Seminar in School Psychology	6

#### ASSESSMENT (12)

SPS 5000 Introduction to Psychoeducational Assessment	3
SPS 6191 Psychoeducational Assessment I: Cognitive	3
SPS 6192 Psychoeducational Assessment II: Social/Emotional	3
SPS 6197 Psychoeducational Assessment III: Advanced Assessment	3

#### INTERVENTION (12)

SPS 6410 Interventions I: Foundations of Intervention	3
SPS 6707 Interventions II: Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions	3
SPS 6708 Interventions III: Systems Level Interventions for Children and Youth	3
SPS 7205 School Consultation	3

SUPERVISED FIELD EXPERIENCE (26)

SPS 6941 Practicum in School Psychology	6
SPS 6942 School Psychology Practicum II	6
SPS 6945 Advanced Practicum in School Psychology	6
SPS 7949 Internship in School Psychology	8

ACADEMIC SPECIALIZATION AREA (9) 9

*\*Specific courses to be determined in consultation with supervisory committee.*

STATISTICS & RESEARCH METHODS (12)

EDF 6475 Qualitative Foundations of Educational Research	3
EDF 6402 Quantitative Foundations in Educational Research: Inferential Statistics	3
EDF 7405 Advanced Quantitative Foundations of Education Research	3
EDF XXX Selected research methods class*	3

*\*Specific courses to be determined in consultation with supervisory committee.*

RESEARCH & DISSERTATION (16)

SPS 6918 Supervised Research	1
SPS 6938 Research and Writing in School Psychology	3
SPS 7980 Dissertation Research	12

**MINIMUM RESEARCH METHODOLOGY REQUIREMENTS  
FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS**

PhD and EdD students enrolled in on-campus COE programs must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours to meet the college-wide requirement for preparation in research methodology. For all doctoral students, two 3-credit foundations courses are required, and the remaining 6 credits must be selected from the below list of approved courses, with the proviso that the COE Associate Dean overseeing graduate education has the authority to approve substitute and alternative courses. At the direction of Faculty Policy Council (FPC), a periodically appointed ad-hoc committee will review the content of the required 6 hours of foundations courses to ensure they are meeting the needs of the College. In the cases of approved substitutions or alternative courses, students are still expected to complete the minimum 12 credit hour requirement, which can include transfer credits from approved substitute and alternative courses for a portion (but not all) of the 12 credit hours. This policy only covers the minimum 12 credit hours to satisfy the college research requirement. Students should discuss with their advisor and supervisory committee about additional research recommendations or requirements to complete their program plan and the goals set in their Individualized Development Plan (IDP).

## Required Foundations Coursework

EDF 6475-Qualitative Foundations of Educational Research (3 credits)

EDF 6402-Quantitative Foundations in Educational Research: Inferential Statistics (3 credits)

Doctoral students should note that many of the quantitative courses in REM require EDF 6403 (or equivalent) as a prerequisite, and hence, a student interested in continuing quantitative studies beyond EDF 6403 may benefit from completing EDF 6403 to fulfill the required foundations coursework.

See <https://education.ufl.edu/faculty-policy/> for the list of approved research methodology courses.

## Sequence of Study

SPP courses reflect an integrated and sequential program of study, thus they must be taken in a specific sequence. Practica form an integral and essential component of professional training. Because practica in the SPP provide opportunities for students to practice, under supervision, the application of knowledge and specific skills taught in a particular course, specific practicum must be taken each semester in the program. Students are advised to carefully select courses required by the SPP, but not taught by the SPP faculty (e.g., statistics and research methods, specialization courses). The SPP courses are listed below by semester. A minimum of 12 graduate hours is required by the Graduate School for full-time enrollment during the fall and spring semesters for students not on appointment. Doctoral students are awarded the Master of Arts after successfully completing the first two years of core courses in school psychology and a thesis, or the Master's of Education after completing the first two years of core courses in school psychology and completing supervised research that results in submission of a publication quality empirical research paper. Given that the PhD is a terminal degree, students completing the doctoral program are not awarded the Specialist in Education degree (EdS). Please note that non-SPP course offerings may be subject to change.

Students in the PhD track must enroll for 3 credit hours of practicum (SPS 6941, 6942, or 6945) during the fall and spring semesters of their first 3 years in the School Psychology Program. All students accruing supervised practicum hours during the summer – and all PhD students accruing supervised practicum hours in any semester after their third year – must enroll for at least 1 credit hour of practicum. All students who are working in school/clinical settings with primary intention of completing portfolio requirements also must enroll for at least 1 credit hour of practicum during the semester in which they are placed. The number of credit hours that must be taken will depend upon the nature of the practicum experience and requisite supervision and will be determined by the Practicum Coordinator. All practicum and other field placements require a minimum of one day per week in the applied setting.

Note: \*Take in consultation with advisor.

<b><u>First Year</u></b>	<b><u>Credits</u></b>
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
SPS 5000 Introduction to Psychoeducational Assessment	3
SPS 6052 Issues and Problems in School Psychology	3
SPS 6410 Direct Interventions I: Foundations of Intervention	3
SPS 6941 Practicum in School Psychology	3
<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
SPS 6193 Academic Assessment & Interventions for Diverse Learners	3
SPS 6941 Practicum in School Psychology	3
SPS 6937 Social and Developmental School Psychology	3
SPS 6195 Developmental Psychopathology	3
EDF 6402 Quantitative Foundations in Educational Research: Inferential Statistics	3
<b><u>Summer Semester</u></b>	
SPS 6937 Seminar in Individual Differences	3
TSL 6700 Issues in ESOL <b>OR</b>	3
<i>*Take research methodology coursework.</i>	
<b><u>Second Year</u></b>	
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
SPS 6192 Psychoeducational Assessment II: Social/Emotional	3
SPS 6707 Direct Interventions II: Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions	3
SPS 6942 School Psychology Practicum II	3
SPS 6191 Psychoeducational Assessment I: Cognitive	3
<b><u>Spring Semester</u></b>	
SPS 6815 Law & Ethics in Psychology	3
SPS 6708 Direct Interventions III: Systems Level Interventions	3
SPS 7205 School Consultation	3
SPS 6942 School Psychology Practicum II	3
<b><u>Summer Semester</u></b>	
SPS 6938 Research and Writing in School Psychology	3
<i>*Take research methodology and/or specialization area coursework.</i>	
<b><u>Third Year</u></b>	
<b><u>Fall Semester</u></b>	
CLP 7934 Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior	3
<b>OR</b>	
PSB 6099 Survey of Physiological & Comparative Psychology	
SPS 6945 Advanced Practicum in School Psychology	3

Selected course in area of specialization 3

**OR**

Selected course in Research Methodology

Spring Semester

SPS 6197 Psychoeducational Assessment III: Advanced Assessment 3

SPS 6945 Advanced Practicum in School Psychology 3

\*SPS 7980 Dissertation Research

*\*Take research methodology and/or specialization area coursework.*

Summer Semester

Selected course in Research Methodology 3

Selected course in area of specialization 3

\*SPS 6918 Supervised Research 1

**Fourth and/or Fifth Year**

Fall and Spring Semesters

CLP 7934 Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior 3

**OR**

PSB 6099 Survey of Physiological & Comparative Psychology

\*SPS 7980 Dissertation Research

*\*Complete all required coursework, including research methodology and specialization area; complete professional portfolio and orals; advance to candidacy; and develop dissertation proposal.*

**Fifth or Sixth Year**

Fall Semester

SPS 7949 Internship in School Psychology 3

SPS 7931 Internship Seminar in School Psychology 3

Spring Semester

SPS 7949 Internship in School Psychology 3

SPS 7931 Internship Seminar in School Psychology 3

Summer Semester

SPS 7949 Internship in School Psychology 2

***Notes:*** Careful selection of non-SPP courses may shorten the time typically required to complete the program. Keep in mind that SPP courses are offered only once per year and must be taken in the prescribed sequence. Required research methodology courses should be taken as early in the course of study as possible.

## **Transfer of Credit**

No more than 30 credits of a master's degree from another institution will be transferred to a doctoral program. If a student holds a master's degree in a discipline different from the doctoral program, the master's work will not be counted in the program unless the academic unit petitions the Dean of the Graduate School.

All courses beyond the master's degree taken at another university to be applied to the Ph.D. degree must be taken at an institution offering the doctoral degree and must be approved for graduate credit by the Graduate School of the University of Florida. All courses to be transferred must be graduate-level, letter-graded with a grade of B or better and must be demonstrated to relate directly to the degree being sought.

After approval of the SPP Director, all such transfer requests must be made by petition of the supervisory committee no later than the third term of Ph.D. study. The total number of credits (including 30 for a prior master's degree) that may be transferred cannot exceed 45, and in all cases the student must complete the qualifying examination at the University of Florida. In addition, any prior graduate credits earned at UF (e.g., a master's degree in the same or a different discipline) may be transferred into the doctoral program at the discretion of the supervisory committee and by petition to the Graduate School. The petition must show how the prior course work is relevant to the current degree.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **Faculty Advisor & Selection of Supervisory Committee**

By the end of the first year of study, students should select a permanent faculty advisor and chair of their doctoral supervisory committee. The duties of the chair and supervisory committee are to provide advice, check on progress, supervise the preparation of the dissertation, and conduct the final examination. For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), the supervisory committee must consist of at least four (4) graduate faculty members, at least two of whom must be members of the SPP faculty. In addition, the chair or co-chair must be a member of the SPP faculty. Finally, the committee must include one member of the graduate faculty outside the School of Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies (SESPECS).

Selecting a chair is one of the most important decisions made in the early stages of program and dissertation planning. Students work most closely with their chair in developing their area of specialization, selecting courses, and developing a dissertation research idea and methodology. The chair provides expertise in the student's area of research, specific feedback on work, and support. The chair also approves the proposal for and the final version of the dissertation before these documents are submitted to the other members of the student's supervisory committee. This often involves reading and critiquing multiple drafts of each section of the dissertation before final submission.

Before inviting a SPP faculty member to chair the supervisory committee and dissertation, students should carefully consider two major issues: (a) how well they would work



in collaboration with the faculty member, and (b) how much expertise he or she has in their area of professional and research interests. This information can be obtained by meeting individually with prospective faculty members, by reading their published work, and by talking with other faculty members and with students who have worked under the guidance of prospective chairs. After gathering this information, students are advised to meet with the faculty member(s) they are considering. They should ask questions that will help them decide whether he or she would be a good chair for their project, particularly with regard to expectations and roles. Establishing clear, direct communication with a chair is very important. Students should not necessarily expect a faculty member to agree to chair their committee, especially if they do not have a clear area of specialization and research interest.

After obtaining a commitment from a faculty member to chair the committee and dissertation, students then discuss prospective committee members with them before issuing invitations. The chair may have specific recommendations for the committee. In addition, it is important for students to know the time frame of the project. Faculty members may go on leave of absence or on sabbatical. *Some faculty members may choose not to be available while on sabbatical or during the summer months and thus may be unwilling to meet with students or to attend proposal meetings and defenses during this period.* Replacing a committee member can be difficult, if not impossible, especially in the later stages of a project. Students are not allowed to replace committee members in the semester in which they intend to graduate. ***Students must email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu) to have their advisor/chair added to GIMS by the end of their first year in the program. The other SPP member of the supervisory must be added to GIMS (email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu)) by the end of the second year.***

## Specialization Area

Ph.D. preparation can be distinguished from EdS preparation in the greater breadth and depth of coursework. Students in the Ph.D. track are required to complete a minimum of nine (9) credit hours in an area of specialization. This coursework usually is taken during the student's third and/or fourth year in the SPP.

An area of specialization is equivalent to a “minor” in other professional preparation programs. The area of specialization represents the successful completion of coursework that would enable the Ph.D. candidate to develop expertise in a specified and coherent academic area selected in consultation with their advisor. The specialization area must be relevant to theory, research, and practice in health service psychology.

Many students have found it helpful to design an area of specialization by first identifying their professional goals after obtaining the Ph.D. For example, students who wish to pursue academic careers may design an area of specialization that would enable them to master the knowledge base in their anticipated research area. Students who are interested in pursuing clinical careers may design an area of specialization that would enable them to master the knowledge base pertaining to a particular subpopulation with which they envision working.

Courses that comprise the area of specialization may be taken from a variety of departments at UF. These courses must be graduate-level courses. Some graduate-level specialization classes are offered within the SPP or other programs within SESPECS. Other

specialization area courses have been taken in other programs within the College of Education (e.g., Teaching and Learning, Counselor Education, Educational Leadership). Other classes may be taken outside the College of Education (e.g., Psychology). It is crucial that students meet regularly with their faculty advisor during the process of designing a specialization area. Advisors are particularly useful for helping students to design specialization areas that are not too narrow (which results in a paucity of available courses) and not too broad (resulting in a lack of focus). Listed below are examples of specialization areas designed by recent Ph.D. candidates: Advanced Quantitative Research Methods, Counseling Theories and Methods, Research and Practice in Youth Mental Health, Research and Practice in Academic Intervention, Pediatric Psychology, Early Childhood Assessment/Intervention, Family Involvement in Education, Reading Disabilities, Response to Intervention.

### **Continuous Enrollment**

The SPP, and the UF Graduate School, require continuous enrollment in the program until the completion of the doctoral degree. If a student fails to enroll in appropriate course work for two successive semesters they will be dismissed from the program. Reapplication through the regular admission process, where the student is treated as a new applicant, is then required for readmission. However, a student may request a leave of absence for a period lasting no longer than one year. These requests, submitted in writing to the Program Director, must be approved by the SPP faculty. Requests are usually granted if the student is in good standing and has good and sufficient reasons for the leave of absence.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

In the SPP, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S are passing grades. In 5000-level courses and above, C+ and C grades count toward a graduate degree if an equal number of credit hours in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with grades of B+, A- and A. Only grades of B- or higher in core courses in the School Psychology Program are required to meet program requirements. If a student earns a grade of D or lower in a core School Psychology course, the student must repeat the course. If the student earns a grade of C in a core School Psychology course, with the permission of the course instructor and Program Director, the student may be allowed to remediate the learning goals and objectives that were not met in lieu of repeating the course. Grade points are not designated for S and U grades; these grades are not used in calculating the GPA. Grades of S (Satisfactory) and U (Unsatisfactory) are the only grades awarded in courses numbered 6918 (Supervised Research), 6941, 6942, 6945 (School Psychology Practicum), 7979 (Advanced Research), and 7980 (Doctoral Research). Additional courses for which S and U grades apply are noted in the program offerings. Students must receive a grade of S in all courses graded S/U before they will be allowed to begin the internship. Grades of I (Incomplete) must be removed no later than the end of the semester following the semester in which the grade of I was assigned. Grades of "I" carry no quality points and lower the overall GPA. *ALL GRADES OF I, X, D, E, or U MUST BE REMOVED PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE INTERNSHIP AND THE AWARDING OF A GRADUATE DEGREE.* In

In addition to satisfactory progress in academic coursework, students must meet expectations in each area of training competency (see pp. 8-10). Overall progress in each competency area will be evaluated during the annual student review at the end of each academic year. Students who are not making adequate academic progress in academic coursework and all areas of training competency may be placed on a performance improvement plan or academic probation depending on the extent of inadequate academic progress and student needs. The student's advisor, program director, and/or graduate coordinator and school director will document the performance improvement plan or academic probation terms and goals with a written letter that will be placed in the student's program file.

Any graduate student may be denied further registration in the University or in a graduate program such as the SPP should scholastic performance or progress toward completion of the planned program become unsatisfactory to the SPP, College, or Dean of the Graduate School. Failure to maintain a B average (3.00) in all graduate coursework is, by definition, unsatisfactory. Students failing to maintain a B average (3.00) in graduate coursework required by the SPP for two consecutive semesters will not be allowed to continue in the program.

## **Grievance Procedures**

If a student in the SPP believes that he or she has been subject to improper demands or procedures, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Program Director by filing a grievance. A grievance should only be filed after first trying to resolve the situation with the individual(s) involved. A grievance is defined as, "dissatisfaction occurring when a student thinks that any condition affecting him or her is unjust or inequitable or creates unnecessary hardship. Areas in which student grievances may arise include scientific misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination, employment-related concerns, and academic matters" (see UF Handbook for Graduate Students). Upon receipt of the written grievance, a meeting will be scheduled with the Program Director to discuss the nature of the complaint. The student and the program director may elect to have one or more individuals present at the meeting.

During the meeting, information will be gathered regarding the nature of the complaint. After the problem has been identified, alternative actions will be explored for the purpose of resolving the complaint. If successful, parties involved in the complaint will be informed of the outcomes of the meeting and steps taken to monitor actions plans until completion.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting with the Program Director, they may appeal any decision or proposed action to the Director of the School (SESPECS). The Program Director will forward all information relevant to the grievance onto the School Director. At this point, the grievance procedures of the University of Florida will be followed as specified in the UF Handbook for Graduate Students (<https://graduateschool.ufl.edu/work/handbook/>).

## **Listserv Policy**

The School Psychology Program (SPP) Listserv is a service provided by SPP to facilitate communication between students, faculty, and staff. We encourage everyone to use the listserv to share information or ask questions that is relevant to the SPP. While listservs make

communication easily, they also provide opportunities for abuse, annoyance, and violations of privacy. As such, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Posts are not allowed that are intended or may be reasonably seen as an attempt to injure, harm, or libel other individuals or organizations. Listserv members are expected to exercise both common sense and courtesy in messages transmitted over the listserv. Defamatory, harassing, sexist, racist, obscene, libelous and other offensive communications are not acceptable postings to the listserv. Ad hominem attacks are specifically prohibited.
2. Messages and responses to messages that are of a personal nature and intended for a specific individual should be addressed directly and only to the individual who made the original post, not to the entire listserv. (Users should note that hitting the “reply” button will send a message back to the entire listserv.)
3. Members should ensure that messages posted to this list are appropriate for this list, i.e., they engage professional issues or concerns related to the SPP.
4. This listserv should not be used for conducting any illegal activity. Personal or private business, soliciting research subjects, or commercial activity should not be posted without the expressed or written permission by the SPP. Commercial activities include, but are not limited to, promotional announcements, product-related press releases, and advertising.
5. Please beware of sharing private e-mails through the listserv, which may happen inadvertently through the “forward” or “reply” functions of e-mail. Similarly, please do not forward e-mails from the listserv to other individuals who are not on the listserv without written consent.

Repeat violations of listserv guidelines may, at the discretion of the SPP, result in the violator being banned temporarily or permanently from further participation on the listserv.

## **EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS**

### **Assessment & Evaluation System**

The UF School Psychology Program (SPP) uses a comprehensive, multi-method, multi-source process to assess candidate learning and professional development to ensure that all candidates acquire and integrate the knowledge and skills needed to be effective school psychologists prior to graduation. The following sections describe major assessment components of the program. Program faculty reserve the right to alter the exact components of each method to correspond with program goals and requirements, as well as requirements from accreditation bodies. Candidates will be given sufficient notice of any changes to properly prepare and complete each component.

The major components of the SPP Assessment and Evaluation System are presented and described below.

### **Year I and Year II**

Course-embedded assessments – conducted in courses and practicum and may include exams, critical reviews of the literature, reports integrating multiple domains of functioning and data sources, presentations, videos, simulations, and case studies.

Practicum performance appraisal – evaluation forms completed by field-based supervisors and faculty based on observed competencies to assess knowledge and professional competencies, professional behaviors, and interpersonal characteristics.

Annual Student Evaluation – a summary of candidate progress in the program that includes completion of evaluation forms by faculty, assistantship supervisors, practicum field-based supervisors, and a candidate self-evaluation.

Certification Examination – obtain a passing score on all sections Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) including General Knowledge, Professional Education, and Subject Area in School Psychology; and the ETS-Praxis II Exam in School Psychology. *Completion of a Master's degree or higher from an accredited postsecondary institution recognized by the Florida Department of Education will satisfy the General Knowledge (GK) Test requirement.* Submit scores on Canvas and email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu).

### **Year III and Year IV**

Course-embedded assessments – conducted in courses and practicum and may include exams, critical reviews of the literature, reports integrating multiple domains of functioning and data sources, presentations, videos, simulations, and case studies.

Practicum Performance Appraisal – evaluation forms completed by field-based supervisors and faculty based on observed competencies to assess knowledge and professional competencies, professional behavior, and interpersonal characteristics.

Portfolio – a collection of evidence to document attainment of program goals and competencies and demonstrate preparation for entry-level professional practice in school psychology. The portfolio is completed during spring of Year III in the doctoral program.

Qualifying Examination – written and oral examination of candidate competency in areas consistent with program goals and objectives. The completed portfolio will constitute the first part of the written examination. The oral examination will be conducted by the candidate's supervisory committee and will involve a review of components of the portfolio. The second part consists of the dissertation proposal defense. *The chair of the committee (advisor) must be added to GIMS by the end of the first year; the other SPP member must be added to GIMS by the end of the second year; the additional two committee members must be added to GIMS by the summer after the third year (email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu)).*

Annual Student Evaluation - A summary of candidate progress in the program that includes completion of evaluation forms by faculty, assistantship supervisors, practicum field-based supervisors, and a candidate self-evaluation.

### **Year V and Year VI**

Annual Student Evaluation – A summary of candidate progress in the program that includes completion of evaluation forms by faculty, assistantship supervisors, and a candidate self-evaluation.

Intern performance appraisal – an evaluation completed by field-based supervisors based on observed competency to assess knowledge and professional competencies, professional behaviors, and interpersonal characteristics.

Dissertation – completion of an independent research study under the advisement of a doctoral supervisory committee.

### **Annual Student Evaluation**

At the end of each academic year, students receive an annual evaluation of their professional development and progress. Information for this evaluation is collected from a diverse range of individuals. Information considered in the annual review process includes:

- Academic Performance forms completed by all SPP faculty who have had substantial contact with the student over the course of the year. This results in 3-5 completed evaluations for each student. For advanced doctoral students who are not completing core school psychology courses, an academic performance evaluation must be completed by at least one instructor they have completed a course with over the past two semesters.
- An Annual Student Progress form completed by an Employer/Supervisor typically connected to a student's teaching or research assistantship. If this supervisor happens to be a school psychology faculty member, students will be encouraged to solicit one evaluation from a course instructor, research mentor, or employer outside of the program.
- Practicum Evaluation Forms completed for the fall and spring semesters based on observed competency by an on-site supervising psychologist.
- Review of graduate transcripts to provide information about overall GPA and courses completed in the past year.
- Completion of a self-evaluation using the academic performance, employment, and practicum evaluation forms. Students also submit an annual activity report that summarizes coursework, practicum experiences, research experiences, and dates for completion of program requirements.

The SPP faculty meet as a group to review the evaluation forms and discuss each student's progress. The Director of the SPP, in conjunction with the student's advisor, then completes a written summary of the discussion. A formal letter of evaluation is completed by the SPP Director and forwarded to each student. Faculty members meet individually with their advisees to discuss the faculty's evaluations, along with the student's self-evaluation. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss academic and professional progress as well as future plans and goals. The meeting also is intended to provide students with an opportunity to provide feedback to faculty regarding the annual evaluation and the SPP in general. The signature of the student is required to indicate receipt of the letter. If the student wants to contest any portion of the evaluation letter, they have the option of submit a written statement to the Program Director identifying any disagreement or concerns they have with the evaluation. The annual evaluation letter and any student dissent statement are kept in the student's program file.

## **Portfolio Examination**

A portfolio is a systematic and organized collection of evidence concerning a candidate's knowledge and professional competencies. The portfolio is used to demonstrate that candidates possess the specific professional competencies that are expected in the SPP. Portfolio defenses consist of two separate examinations. This first is the Clinical Portfolio Examination, which focuses on the clinical roles of SPP students and the evidence of their impact or effectiveness in these roles. This examination is typically held in May of Year III. The second, the Research and Scholarship Portfolio Examination (i.e., dissertation proposal), focuses on the research and scholarship roles of SPP students and the evidence of their impact or effectiveness in these roles as well as their preparedness to conduct dissertation research. This examination is typically held no later than November of Year IV. The content of each portfolio examination, which will include samples of work that have been completed during the program, as well as work created specifically for the portfolio, are listed below.

### **I. Clinical Portfolio Examination**

Current Vita – A revised, up-to-date curriculum vita that includes education, professional positions, practicum experiences, professional memberships, awards or recognitions, conference presentations, and publications.

Statement of Theoretical Orientation (~500 words) – Describe your theoretical orientation and how this influences your approach to case conceptualization and intervention. You may use de-identified case material to illustrate your points if you choose.

Diversity Statement (~500 words) – Describe your experience and training in work with diverse populations. Your discussion should display explicitly the manner in which multicultural/diversity issues influence your clinical practice and case conceptualization.

Comprehensive Psychological Evaluation – Psychological reports can address a range of academic and behavioral concerns. Psychological reports should include a reason for referral, background information, range of assessment procedures appropriate to the referral concern, interpretation of assessment data, and recommendations.

The required comprehensive evaluation is to be completed during advanced practicum (Year III). The comprehensive evaluation must address academic concerns, as well as emotional/behavioral concerns. The report must be accompanied by a reflection paper that discusses the comprehensiveness of the evaluation and connections to the professional literature and research (approximately 5 single-spaced pages).

Intervention Case Studies – Complete two intervention case studies (one academic, one behavioral) that demonstrate the professional skills necessary to deliver effective services that result in positive, measurable outcomes for the student. The case studies must address the following areas: background and context of the problem, a description and analysis of the problem, goals for intervention, a specific description of the intervention, collaboration efforts with school, family, and/or community-based individuals, outcome data, and a discussion of the results of the intervention.

The academic intervention case study may be completed during Year II. The required behavior intervention case study must be completed during advanced practicum in Year III. The completed case study must include a direct or indirect intervention (academic *and* counseling or behavioral intervention). Case studies should demonstrate that the interventions resulted in measurable, positive impact on children, youth, and/or families. The case study must be accompanied by a reflection paper (~5 pages single-spaced) that demonstrates how the interventions are theoretically grounded, as well as how they connect to the professional literature and research. Although both the academic and behavioral/counseling intervention cases must be completed, during the portfolio examination, students may choose to present *either* the academic **OR** counseling/behavioral intervention case.

## II. Research and Scholarship Portfolio Examination

Publication Quality Empirical Research Study (PQERS) – Completion of an empirical research project individually or substantive contribution with colleagues or faculty on a collaborative project. The final product must be of publishable quality, with evidence provided for submission for peer review. Candidates may also choose, in lieu of the above described PQERS, to complete a master's Thesis that meets department and university requirements and is accepted by the Graduate School. The PQERS, or master's thesis, should typically be completed by the end of year 2 in the program.

Presentation at a National, or International Conference – Substantive contribution to a presentation delivered at a state, national, or international conference. Evidence provided should include a conference program with listing of presentation, outline of the



presentation, and sample handouts or other materials used during the presentation.

Dissertation Proposal – The thesis/dissertation proposal provides an overview of the student’s proposed plan of work, including the general scope of the dissertation project, basic research questions, research methodology, and the overall significance of the study.

Evidence of Teaching (Optional) – If a candidate has served as a Teaching Assistant (TA) during the program, evidence of teaching competence should be presented. Evidence may include student evaluation forms from one or two courses, as well as sample course materials such as syllabi, assignments, and selected student products.

### **Guidelines for Completion of Portfolio Products**

To assist candidates in the preparation of the portfolio, specific guidelines are provided regarding the organization of the portfolio, as well as specific products that require more detailed instructions. These guidelines should serve as a starting point for candidates and faculty advisors as they work to develop a portfolio that appropriately reflects the competencies of the SPP and the individual knowledge, skills, and experiences of the candidate.

#### General Organization of the Portfolio

The portfolio is submitted to faculty for review by creating a folder in Student Learning and Licensure and uploading files for each component of the portfolio. Candidates should follow these general guidelines with regard to the portfolio:

- Each file should be clearly named for each portfolio component
- Layout/ presentation quality of each product should be clear and easy to read
- Products should be free of spelling/grammatical errors and instructor comments
- All identifying information regarding clients should be removed from each product
- In consultation with your faculty advisor, select the best exemplars of your work

#### Intervention Case Studies

The purpose of the Intervention Case Studies is to demonstrate that candidates possess the knowledge and professional skills to collaborate with families, school, and community-based professionals in designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions that effectively respond to the educational and mental health needs of children and adolescents. The candidate is able to integrate knowledge and skills in delivering a comprehensive range of services that result in measurable positive outcomes for children and adolescents.

The case studies must focus on direct ([a] academic *and* [b] behavioral intervention or counseling) or indirect (consultation) intervention that the candidate was responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating. Case studies must involve academic and behavioral/social concerns and may reflect interventions conducted in a home, school, or community setting. Candidates should consult with a faculty advisor to determine the cases that are best suited for inclusion in the portfolio. Although both the academic and

behavioral/counseling intervention cases must be completed, during the portfolio examination, students may choose to present *either* the academic **OR** counseling/behavioral intervention case.

It is expected that case studies included in the Portfolio demonstrate measurable, positive outcomes for children, youth, or families who are the recipients of intervention services.

The intervention case study report should be approximately 5 pages single-spaced in length and address the following areas:

1. Background and Context of the Problem
  - Problem is identified in observable, measurable terms
  - Present and expected level of performance is described
  - Baseline data is provided
2. Description and Analysis of the Problem
  - Assessment procedures are described
  - Hypotheses are discussed
  - Specific goals for the intervention are presented
3. Intervention Design & Implementation
  - Description of the intervention
  - Description of phases/steps in implementation of intervention
  - Discussion of factors that effected the design and implementation of the intervention
  - Discussion of collaboration efforts with family, school, and/or community-based individuals
  - Include a sample of all relevant intervention materials
4. Evaluation and Outcome of the Intervention
  - Description of the intervention
  - Provide outcome data and discussion of results
  - Include a graphic presentation of data
  - Discussion of progress toward established goals
  - Discussion of future needs for intervention/support

The scoring rubric for the case studies is presented in Appendix A. Examples of effect size measurement are presented in Appendix B.

### Reflection Papers

The psychological evaluation and intervention case study included in the professional portfolio must be accompanied by a *5-page single-spaced* reflection paper. The purpose of each paper is to consider the actions and decisions made during the assessment and/or intervention process. The papers should demonstrate an understanding of a theoretical orientation and reliance on empirically-based research and the professional literature. Additionally, each candidate should demonstrate their ability to critique their own professional decisions and

practices and thus demonstrate continuing professional growth and development.

#### Comprehensive Psychological Evaluation

For the evaluation included in the portfolio, address the following issues and questions in the reflection paper. Use the questions (or parts of the questions) as headings to organize your reflection paper.

1. Based on the referral question, what was the purpose of this evaluation (diagnosis, program planning, intervention development, eligibility determination)?
2. How did the referral question guide the assessment process? To what extent did the techniques selected adequately address the referral question and child's needs? What would you do differently in terms of selection of techniques?
3. What legal and/or ethical considerations affected the selection of the measures and techniques used in the evaluation? For example, issues related to special education services and supports and/or issues related to the reliability and validity.
4. Discuss theoretical or empirical bases used in the interpretation of findings. To what extent are the conclusions in the report supported on these bases?
5. Discuss the link between assessment and possible interventions. To what extent does this report provide evidence for the development and evaluation of intervention strategies? If you find the report inadequate in this regard, how would you change the assessment process to improve the link between assessment and intervention?

#### Intervention Case Studies

For the case studies included in the professional portfolio, address the following issues and questions in the reflection paper. Use the questions (or parts of the questions) as headings to organize your reflection paper.

1. Identify and discuss the primary theoretical orientation(s) or model(s) that were selected to guide the intervention process. Provide a rationale for the selected theoretical orientation(s) or model(s). How did the selected orientation(s) or model(s) affect the methods, decisions, and outcomes of this intervention?
2. Identify the type of interventions used as either direct (academic and behavioral intervention, counseling) or indirect (consultation) and explain the rationale for this selection. What are the benefits and limitations of the selected types of intervention given the primary concerns in the case? Upon reflection, would you choose different types of intervention for cases like this in the future? Why or why not?
3. Discuss the empirical bases for the selected interventions. What other interventions did you consider? Provide a rationale for why the selected interventions were appropriate or not based on the assessment data, the needs of the client, and the professional literature.
4. To what extent did the interventions result in "measurable positive changes for the client?" Was the change sufficient? What are the primary factors that contributed to this positive or negative change?

#### Publication Quality Empirical Research Study (PQERS)

The purpose of the PQERS is to provide candidates with guided experience in conducting

research in the early stages of a doctoral program. As an early research experience candidates are encouraged to work collaboratively with faculty and/or colleagues to engage in all steps of the research process. These steps include:

1. Literature review and conceptualization of research questions
2. Data collection
3. Data management
4. Data analysis
5. Interpretation of results
6. Manuscript preparation

For a manuscript to be included in the portfolio a candidate must contribute to the work in a substantive way as evidenced by participating in some stage of the data collection and/or analysis, as well as contributing to the preparation of the manuscript. It is expected that contribution to the research study and manuscript preparation will be recognized by the candidate being listed as a co-author. No specific order of authorship is required, though confirmation of the candidate's contribution to the research project and manuscript preparation will be provided by the faculty member or co-author.

Given that the purpose of this assignment is to prepare the candidate for independent research, the candidate's supervisory committee may choose to specify other requirements as appropriate to the candidate's abilities, preparation, as well as specific research and career goals.

The portfolio entry should include a copy of the manuscript, evidence of submission to a journal for publication (i.e., a letter from the journal editor confirming receipt of the manuscript), and completion of a SPP form that includes a statement from the faculty member or co-author describing the candidate's specific contributions to the research project and manuscript preparation. **Upon completing the PQERS, students must clear all incomplete (i.e., I) grades from their transcript before graduating with their master's degree.**

### Portfolio Review Process

The portfolio review process is designed to meet the following goals:

- To provide candidates with a systematic and instructional opportunity to: (1) assess their own competencies and progress in the program, (2) demonstrate competencies consistent with program goals and expected outcomes, and (3) reflect on areas in need of further preparation and training.
- To provide a mechanism for faculty to evaluate candidate progress in the program and determine readiness for internship and initial professional practice in school psychology.
- To meet university and program requirements for completion of a Qualifying Examination to continue work toward a Ph.D. degree.

Portfolio reviews will be conducted for all candidates in the school psychology program each spring as part of the annual student evaluation process. The portfolio examination will be

conducted by the candidate's supervisory committee and will serve as the Qualifying Examination for the Ph.D. degree. A review of the entire contents of the portfolio will be completed by at least the SPP members of the supervisory committee (although all members can review and attend the examination), followed by an oral examination conducted by the committee. *The chair of the committee (advisor) must be added to GIMS by the end of the first year; the other SPP member must be added to GIMS by the end of the second year; the additional two committee members must be added to GIMS by the summer after the third year (email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu)).*

## **Qualifying Examination**

### **Graduate School Requirements for Qualifying Examinations**

The qualifying exam is required of all PhD candidates. The student must be registered in the term in which the qualifying exam is given. The examination, prepared and evaluated by the full supervisory committee, is both written and oral and covers the major and minor subjects. The chair and external member of the supervisory committee must be physically present with the student at the oral portion. If a student fails the qualifying exam, the Graduate Coordinator must be notified. No more than one reexamination may be requested, but it must be recommended by the supervisory committee and approved by the Graduate Coordinator. At least one semester of additional preparation is required before re-examination. A minimum of two semesters must elapse between the oral portion of the qualifying exam and graduation. The semester in which the qualifying exam is passed is counted, provided that the exam occurs before the midpoint of the term.

### **Purpose of Qualifying Examinations**

The examination is intended to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate, both orally and in writing, their depth and breadth of knowledge and their ability to clearly articulate it. The qualifying examination in the SPP consists of the two parts of the comprehensive portfolio examination. To pass the qualifying examination and be admitted to Candidacy for the Ph.D. degree, students must pass both portions of the portfolio examination (clinical portfolio and dissertation proposal). After admission to doctoral candidacy, there must be two semesters between advancement candidacy and degree completion.

## **State & National School Psychology Examinations**

Successful completion of state and national school psychology examinations are required by the SPP, the UF College of Education, and the State of Florida to obtain a degree in school psychology. All students in state-approved educator preparation programs at the University of Florida must pass all pertinent sections of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE). To obtain a degree in School Psychology, there are three sections of the FTCE to complete: General Knowledge, Professional Education, and Subject Area Exam in School

Psychology. Students must receive a passing score on all sections of the FTCE, as established by state guidelines, prior to graduation. This requirement applies to all students graduating from the UF SPP, including individuals who intern or intend to seek a position outside Florida. GRE test administrations conducted on or after July 1, 2015 may be used as an acceptable means of demonstrating knowledge.

Minimum GRE Passing Scores by FTCE General Knowledge (GK) Area:

GK SUBTEST/GRE SUBTEST	GRE SCORE
GK Writing (Essay)/GRE Analytical Writing	A combined score of 4 out of 6.
GK English Language Skills/GRE Verbal Reasoning	A scaled score of 151.
GK Reading/GRE Verbal Reasoning	A scaled score of 151.
GK Mathematics/GRE Quantitative Reasoning	A scaled score of 147.

Per House Bill 1159 (2021), effective July 1, 2021, completion of a master's degree or higher from an accredited postsecondary institution recognized by the Department of Education will satisfy the General Knowledge (GK) Test requirement.

Additionally, the SPP requires that all students pass the PRAXIS II exam in School Psychology that is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The passing score is consistent with the standards set by the National School Psychology Certification Board to become a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) and the State of Florida to become a Licensed School Psychologist. ***Students should take these exams as early in the program as possible. In addition, students MUST take and pass all required state and national examinations prior to beginning internship.*** Submit scores on Canvas and email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu). Additional questions about examinations and licensure requirements can be directed to the SPP program director or EduGator Central - the COE Office of Academic and Student Services in 1002 Norman Hall.

## DISSERTATION

The doctoral dissertation is required for partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Philosophy degree. It reflects an original, scholarly contribution to the research literature relevant to school psychology. Sometimes (but not always) Ph.D. students use their publication quality research paper or master's thesis as a "pilot study" in an area before conducting a more in-depth and methodologically sound study that will eventually result in a doctoral dissertation. Students work closely with the chair of their supervisory committee to formulate ideas for the dissertation. A dissertation proposal is completed which generally includes an introduction, literature review, statement of the problem, and proposed methodology. The exact requirements for the proposal are determined by the chair of the supervisory committee. When completed, a dissertation proposal meeting is scheduled with the supervisory committee. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the committee is in agreement with the choice of topic, depth of literature review, and design of the study. Once the dissertation proposal is approved by the supervisory committee, the

student may proceed with data collection and analysis.

Based on a review of doctoral dissertations approved by the College of Education, the following list highlights the distinguishing features of both quantitative and qualitative doctoral dissertations:

### **Quantitative Dissertations**

1. A conflict between two existing theories or a conflict between a well-known theory and a body of empirical research is identified. There is a direct logical link between specific questions addressed and the theory. The study is expressly designed to provide some evidence for resolving conflict between theories or for testing the theory in a new situation. The hypotheses are derived directly from this theoretical position.
2. Questions or hypotheses that guide the data analysis must be generated around variables that play prominent roles in the “guiding theory.”
3. Sample is selected from multiple sites when the phenomenon studied is likely to be affected by the institutional context in which it occurs (i.e., campus, school, or class atmosphere).
4. If a treatment or intervention is studied, this treatment is well-documented in literature, and if modified, the modifications are such that they can be replicated by others.
5. One or more outcome variables are measured by standardized instruments, or procedures well-documented in research literature (This enhances the significance of the study and its appeal to national audience).
6. In studies of educational interventions, strong quasi experimental or experimental designs are employed to permit strong causal inferences. If this is not possible in a particular field setting, the researcher chooses another setting.
7. Methods of analysis are commensurate with those currently used in leading scholarly research journals in education. Analyses of the types taught in the statistics courses required for the PhD track are typically employed (e.g., factorial ANOVA multiple regression, factor analysis, etc.)
8. The target audience is a national community of researchers/scholars who study this same topic and who tend to publish their works in scientific journals (The language and format are conducive to preparation of an article for such a journal).
9. Discussion of the findings emphasizes the theory or theories that provided the impetus for the study.

### **Qualitative Dissertations**

1. Guiding questions for the study are formulated in association with theoretical constructs. For example, the main purpose of the study may be testing application of a particular theory or competing theories. Failure to be able to meaningfully apply the chosen theory to the data collected would result in discontinuation of the study. If new theory is developed, its need is justified by pointing out inadequacies in previous theories.

2. The literature review is focused heavily on the theory and empirical studies in which researchers have tested that theory, perhaps in different settings with different samples.
3. Questions or hypotheses that guide the data analyses must be generated around variables that play prominent roles in the “guiding theory.”
4. Primary target audience for the study is the community of scholars who do research on the theory chosen to guide the study.
5. Data will be analyzed and reported around themes that have direct bearing on the theoretical focus of the study.
6. Organization and presentation of results are primarily related to underlying theoretical constructs, rather than the surface structure of documents reviewed or data collection instruments.
7. Data are analyzed using methods learned in the PhD qualitative track. For example, ethnography, historiography, or educational criticism methods are more common; case study methods that do not permit in-depth analysis are unusual; however, other single-case design studies may be appropriate.
8. Discussion of results must include a section on how the present findings extend the body of knowledge, supporting or failing to support the guiding theory.

Guidelines for writing the dissertation are provided by the UF Graduate School.

### **Dissertation Credits**

A combination of SPS7979 and SPS7980 credits can be taken to meet the SPP’s 12 credit dissertation requirement. However, SPS7980 credits are preferred, and students must be enrolled in a minimum of 3 SPS 7980 credits if defending the dissertation in fall or spring and 2 SPS 7980 credits if defending in the summer. SPS7979 credits may be used in preparation for the dissertation proposal defense. SPS7980 enrollment occurs after the dissertation proposal has been successfully defended. All enrollment decisions for SPS 7979 or SPS 7980 must be approved by the advisor.

### **Dissertation Defense**

After submission of the dissertation and the completion of all other prescribed work for the degree, the candidate will complete a final oral examination by the supervisory committee. At least four faculty members, including all supervisory committee members, must be present with the candidate at the oral portion of this examination. At the time of the defense, all committee members sign the signature pages and the Final Examination form. These may be retained by the supervisory chair until acceptable completion of corrections. Satisfactory performance on this examination and adherence to all Graduate School regulations outlined above complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree. SPP candidates are encouraged to complete dissertation requirements, including final defense, in advance of completing internship. *Candidates must register for a minimum number of dissertation credits (3 credits in Fall or Spring, 2 credits in Summer) during the semester that the defense is completed.* Specific



questions regarding final semester registration should be directed to the SPP Director. *Students are encouraged to complete their final dissertation defense face-to-face on UF's campus. However, if students are not able to complete their dissertation defense on campus, they can complete the defense virtually (e.g., via Zoom) with permission from their supervisory committee.*

## INTERNSHIP

### University Perspective

Internships are the culmination of a student's professional training. A successful internship is an interactive, dynamic experience in which the intern applies knowledge and skills gleaned from coursework to real settings. Successful internships develop abilities (i.e., the appropriate application of knowledge and skill) for problem identification, hypothesis generation, intervention, and determination of outcomes. Internships should not merely consist of exposure to the “real world” or be a source of inexpensive labor for hosting sites. The most important part of the internship is the growth and development of the intern.

Internships are taken at the end of the student's program of professional preparation. Students must complete all required coursework prior to the beginning of the internship. Courses with grades of I, X, D, E, or U are considered incomplete. Students must advance to candidacy for the doctoral degree (complete portfolio requirements and oral exam) ***pass all required state and national examinations prior to beginning internship.*** Students are encouraged to complete dissertation requirements before they begin an internship. Fourteen hours of credit (8 internship credit hours and 6 seminar credit hours) is awarded for the internship, and students are required to be continuously enrolled for internship credit throughout the entire internship contract period.

### Field Perspective

Internships typically consist of a full-time experience in a public school or clinical setting for the course of one year. Guidelines and requirements put forward by the National Association of School Psychologists and the American Psychological Association are followed by the program. The UF SPP requires that PhD interns must work a minimum of 2000 hours for an internship. PhD graduates are thus prepared to seek the generic Psychologist License upon completion of post-degree supervision requirements. Half-time placements over a 2-year period, work during summer months in a school setting, and other deviations from a full-time, school-year internship are made only when the characteristics of the student (e.g., experienced school psychologist) and of the placement (e.g., year-round school) argue in favor of meaningful changes. Internship sites in non-school settings (i.e., hospitals, clinics, or private practice) must have a minimum of two licensed psychologists on staff available for supervision at all times. ***All interns are required to meet the terms and conditions stipulated in their internship contract (e.g., start and end dates).***

The SPP encourages students, with the assistance of faculty, to investigate a wide range of internship possibilities at least one year before the internship begins. Every effort is made to honor student preferences for the location of the internship. Occasionally, however, it is in the

best interest of the students to be placed in internship sites that are not the top choice. ***All internship placements must be approved by the school psychology faculty prior to acceptance of an internship offer.*** Ultimately, the final decision as to an internship site for each student rests with the UF school psychology faculty. Additionally, for non-APPIC sites, UF must establish a memorandum of agreement (MOU) with the internship site prior to students completing internships at the site. The program also must establish a School Psychology Internship Agreement with the site.

Occasionally, students desire to complete the internship at a location outside the state of Florida. This is permitted under three conditions: (1) the internship meets both APA/NASP and SPP standards, (2) the interns agree to participate in *university-based* supervision, and (3) the internship is approved by UF school psychology faculty.

## Host Concerns

Hosting sites are expected to provide a minimum of two hours of supervision per week per intern. This supervision should be regularly-scheduled, formal “set aside” time for supervision, reflection, and development of appropriate competencies. This is not meant to be a time when the intern is taught routines, district policies, etc. The later activities should take place on a daily basis during the internship time. Host supervisors must be credentialed and have a minimum of three years of experience in their current place of employment. In some cases (e.g., doctoral interns), other requirements may be needed (e.g., licensure as a psychologist). These must be negotiated in advance with the intern, the host, and the university. Host supervisors may not supervise more than two interns at a time.

All internships are governed by a written contract. It is the responsibility of the faculty internship coordinator to explain the contract and negotiate its approval with site supervisors. Other plans, contracts, etc. required by the host district must be reviewed by the university internship coordinator to approve the internship placement. To ensure all parties are informed of internship activities, it is expected that all parties (intern, host, and university) will receive copies of all documents, letters, etc., pertaining to the internship.

### Host supervisors are expected to provide the following:

1. Four hours per week of supervision, 2 hours face-to-face;
2. A salary commensurate with the duties and actions of the intern;
3. Material resources needed to perform the duties associated with the internship (e.g., office space, telephone, secretarial support, test materials);
4. Support for developmental activities of the intern (e.g., funds with availability for in-service activities and professional conventions);
5. Written contractual agreement specifying these features (i.e., period of appointment and terms of compensation (if applicable), schedule of appointment/calendar, provision for professional development, expense reimbursement, appropriate work environment, release time for supervision, and commitment to internships as a training experience);
6. Bi-annual evaluation by the site supervisor of the intern’s progress (using forms created by the university).

In return for these services, hosts receive from the UF:

1. The skills, abilities, and human resources of the intern;
2. A tuition waiver for any Florida public university campus for each semester that they serve as a supervisor;
3. Input and contact from university trainers that naturally stems from the activities associated with supervision of an intern.

**Intern Concerns**

Interns are responsible for identifying an internship site, negotiating the terms of the internship, and meeting the demands of the internship as represented in the internship plan and other formal agreements among the university, host, and intern. Although this is a significant responsibility for interns, they are assisted in this process by the SPP faculty member providing university-based supervision of interns and the SPP Director. In a sense, the identification and negotiation process is a supported, supervised “dry run” for the search for employment that follows the internship. *Note: Interns must educate themselves regarding University, Program, and host site requirements and meet these requirements.*

Most interns have little difficulty meeting the diverse and at times competing demands of the university and site host, but an active, vigilant, and informed stance regarding these issues is the best insurance against problems with missed deadlines, misunderstandings, and other unnecessary difficulties.

The internship plan must be individually negotiated to reflect the needs of each individual intern and the intern’s host. However, internship plans must have certain features if they are to meet the training needs of the university.

General guidelines for plans include the following:

1. An expected breakdown of intern activities, including:
  - a. 75-80% (30-35 hrs/wk) in required job activities;
  - b. 10-15% (4-6 hrs/wk) for university responsibilities, such as time off to travel to UF for exams, dissertation completion;
  - c. 5-10% (2-4 hrs/wk) in professional development activities, such as supervision, in-service activities, professional workshops, etc.
2. A delineation of work hours (times to begin, end, and working days).
3. A graded course of activities to move the intern from a passive learner to an active psychologist with full responsibilities for at least one school or segment of a “full load.”
4. Clear acknowledgment that the intern, university, and site host will honor and are bound by NASP/NCATE and APA standards for internship and professional conduct.

The SPP provides contracts that interns must use to develop internship plans. Signatures are required from appropriate parties to ensure all individuals understand and agree to the internship plan.

Important: Students in the SPP *must accept personal responsibility for any injuries they may sustain while performing any required practicum and internship placements*. Neither the school, school district, nor the University of Florida provides workers' compensation for students while they are engaged in field experience, practica, or internships required by the SPP. Therefore, *we strongly encourage all students to maintain health insurance* to cover any injury they might sustain while participating in a required field placement in an educational setting. Should a student be injured while in a required field setting, he or she will not be covered by workers' compensation insurance.

## University Supervision

The SPP provides supervision of internships via direct contact with interns in individual and group settings, indirect supervision of interns through field supervisors, and regular contacts (by phone, email, and/or visits) with site hosts. More frequent contact may be necessary or desirable, and host-initiated contact is always welcomed. University supervisors may not supervise more than 10 interns at any one time.

## Applying for Internships

The internship experience represents the culmination of the student's applied professional preparation in the SPP. Doctoral students obtain internships in either public school settings or clinical settings (e.g., hospitals). The following are responses to the most commonly asked questions concerning the internship application process.

### When should I begin thinking seriously about applying for internships?

Many students worry about where they will intern, almost from the beginning of their first semester in the program. This is partly due to a natural habit of conscientious planning for the future, tinged with unwarranted fears that an internship will be unavailable if early plans are not made. Most internships begin in August. The internship application process follows a natural progression in school psychology programs, and there is no need to worry about this earlier than is necessary. A description of the internship application procedure follows.

Doctoral students are strongly encouraged to consider an APA-approved internship, whether it be school- or clinic-based. PhD students desiring APA-approved internships should begin seriously considering locations about one year before the internship begins (summer semester after their third or fourth year). Many clinic-based doctoral internships sites are members of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC), which publishes guidelines for the application process. A directory of APPIC internships can be found online at <http://www.appic.org/directory/>. Preparation for application to an APA-approved clinic-based internship site should begin with a review of the APPIC Directory. (Please note that not all APA-accredited internships participate in APPIC.) The applicant then contacts the internship site to request an application, as well as additional information about the training opportunities. Applications generally are due between November 1st and December 15th of the year before the internship begins. Selected applicants are invited for interviews during January. All sites notify

their selected applicants according to a specific day determined by APPIC. This schedule includes applicants submitting a rank order list of preferred internship sites, notification regarding whether they have been selected by a ranked site, and identification of the internship site on “Match Day.” The match process occurs in February each year.

For doctoral students who are considering an internship in a public school system, the process typically begins in December or January for selection of an internship site to begin the following academic year. School districts in Florida have recently moved to coordinating the interview and selection dates for school psychology interns across the state. Applicants to school-based internships are encouraged to make initial contacts with preferred districts in December, submit application material in January, and complete interviews in January and February. Notification of selected interns typically occurs in March.

#### How would I know what internships are available?

Some school districts email official announcements of internship openings to school psychology programs well in advance of the starting date for the internship. The SPP Director and Internship Coordinator disseminate these announcements as soon as they are received on the program listserv.

Some students prefer to contact school districts or other internship sites directly to inquire about internship positions and request application materials. This practice is commonplace and is expected by contact persons at internship sites. The program has a directory of phone numbers for psychological service directors in school districts across all Florida counties; this information is generally available on the website for the Florida Association of School Psychologists.

Students gain information about the availability of internships in both formal and informal ways. The *APPIC Directory* is an excellent source for doctoral students seeking clinic-based APA-approved sites. In addition, the Joint Committee on Internships for the APA Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) publish an annual *Directory of Internships for Doctoral Students in School Psychology* that is disseminated free of charge to school psychology programs. This reference includes both school and clinic-based sites across the nation. The SPP Director has a copy of both directories and would be happy to lend them to students on an as-needed basis. In addition, a list of addresses for APA-approved doctoral internship sites is published each year in the *American Psychologist*.

#### How will I pay for my tuition during the internship year?

The Florida legislature has made it possible for students in school psychology programs to have their tuition fees waived for internship credit hours during all semesters of their internship year, provided that the internship is (a) full-time in a public school system in the state of Florida and (b) supervised by a school psychologist certified by the Department of Education. This policy does not extend to internships in other sites in Florida or to internships in other states. It also does not extend to credits for courses beyond SPS 7949 (8 credit hours) and the associated internship seminar, SPS 7931 (6 credit hours). In the summer before the internship year, the SPP Director submits names of interns to school staff, who in turn submit this list to the financial services office. The financial services office processes the fee waivers.

### Do internships pay?

There is much latitude in what internship sites offer financially. Some sites cannot offer any financial compensation. However, this does not present a hardship to some students who elect to live with (and are financially supported by) family while working in these settings. Other settings offer payment based on an hourly rate or based on the number of psychoeducational evaluations that are completed by the intern (e.g., case-by-case basis). Most settings will offer stipends ranging from \$20,000 to \$40,000 for no less than a 10 month per year contract. Some districts include fringe benefits with this stipend (e.g., travel reimbursement, sick days, health/dental insurance), while others do not.

### What happens before, during, and after an interview?

Students are required to first obtain approval from the SPP faculty before submitting application materials to a prospective internship site. Students may not request an interview from sites that are not approved by the SPP faculty. *Prior to submitting application materials, students must complete the “Request to Apply for Internship” Form which can be obtained from the program Canvas site.* This form asks for information about completion of program requirements, as well as the list of preferred internship sites. To encourage discussions between students and faculty about the selection of appropriate internship sites, the form must be signed by the student’s faculty advisor, SPP Director, and the coordinator of internship. Once this form is signed, and the list of potential internship sites is approved by all individuals, the student can proceed to submit application materials and schedule interviews.

Before the Interview. Most internship sites require students to submit any or all of the following information: (1) a cover letter, (2) completed application (available from the site), (3) two to three letters of recommendation, (4) a resume, (5) samples of written reports, and (6) transcripts of undergraduate/graduate coursework.

Good cover letters include a clear statement expressing interest in completing an internship at that site. This letter should include a brief description of your specific interests, goals, and expectations for the internship. Ask your advisor or other students to review what you have written before sending it. The school psychology faculty are usually the persons from whom students request recommendation letters. Faculty usually send these letters directly to the internship site.

In our experience, prospective sites are most interested in the evaluation procedures in which students are proficient, the types of prior experiences the student has had in practica, and the kinds of special competencies that students may possess. Students should save their best reports written in assessment classes, make any necessary corrections (if necessary), and delete or fictionalize names to protect the student's anonymity. Specific products from the student’s Professional Portfolio will also be appropriate for this purpose. Official copies of transcripts should be requested from the appropriate institution and not scanned copies.

During the interview. Thoughts of interviewing for an internship may cause some

students to feel anxious, insecure, and incompetent. Employers recognize that the internship is a learning experience, and they do not expect you to be a “fully formed” professional. Keep in mind that the internship site needs an intern just as badly as you need an internship. Be warm, personable, emphasize your strengths, and display a positive attitude as to your willingness to develop any weaknesses you have. Since they should have reviewed your application materials already, their primary interest is in getting to know you as a person and seeing if there will be a good “fit” between your needs/interests, their needs, and what they have to offer.

You must be on-time for the interview. You should wear a comfortable suit or dress clothes that are professionally appropriate. Carry an attractive portfolio or brief case in which you can store (1) a pencil, pen, and notepad on which to write; (2) additional copies of your vita and written reports; (3) other information you received about the internship site, and (4) other materials that may be given to you by the interviewers.

To be mentally prepared for the interview, it is helpful to anticipate typical questions that may be asked of you:

- a. What is the theoretical orientation of your graduate program? (Usually asked by sites that are unfamiliar with the UF SPP).
- b. Describe your practicum experiences.
- c. What kinds of experiences are you looking for in this internship?
- d. You may be asked “scenario” questions (e.g., how would you consult with a teacher who is having a problem with a young student who is throwing tantrums? How would you evaluate a student suspected of having ADHD?).
- e. How would you describe your strengths and weaknesses?
- f. Are you interviewing at any other sites?
- g. What questions do you have about the internship?

After the interview. Thank the interviewers for the opportunity to interview at their site. Do not be afraid to ask the interviewers when they will be making their decision. Make sure that they have your email address and phone number where you can be reached.

If the site selects you as an intern, the following procedures are followed. First, the SPP faculty must approve the internship. Students should not verbally accept an internship until after they have consulted with the Internship Coordinator. Second, the program sends a written contract to the internship site that specifies the length and conditions of the internship, general responsibilities, supervision requirements, and other matters (if applicable). A copy of this contract is given to you, and the other copy is kept by the SPP. Third, many internship sites have their own employment contracts that may be signed in addition to the UFSPP contract. Students should consult with the Internship Coordinator if questions arise about any terms of employment for the internship. Internships should be approved – and internship contracts signed by all involved parties – by the end of the spring semester as SPP faculty are not required to be on campus during the summer. Failure to obtain an acceptable internship by the end of spring may delay the start of an internship.

#### Who ultimately decides where I do my internship?

The SPP has a strong commitment to students completing the internship of their choice,

where they feel they will be happy, productive, and supported in developing their professional skills and talents. It is our experience that factors which make internship locations desirable for students are a function of (1) opportunities for professional growth, (2) a suitable match between a student's qualities and those of the internship site, (3) opportunities to fulfill personal and social needs, (4) constraints imposed by family responsibilities, and (5) financial considerations. Assuming that a site accepts you for an internship, every effort is made by the SPP to pair students with their first choices for internship sites.

However, internship sites differ widely with respect to the quality of supervision and the availability of opportunities to develop important skills. In most cases, students' first choices of an internship site will coincide with a high-quality internship experience. In situations in which this is not the case, it is necessary for the SPP faculty to require students to complete internships in locations that may not be their first choices. Students are encouraged to discuss with SPP faculty the specific characteristics that high quality internship sites must possess. In summary, while students are allowed wide latitude in selecting possible internship sites, the final approval for placement ultimately rests with the SPP faculty. All internships must be approved in advance by the internship coordinator and the SPP Director.

#### What if I want to do an internship in a school district in another state?

Due to the limited pool of APA-approved clinic/school-based doctoral internships within Florida, doctoral students commonly consider internships outside of Florida. In these circumstances, the SPP is more flexible in approving these internships. Internships within school districts are not required to be APA-approved for doctoral students. Since school-based internship sites are plentiful within Florida, the SPP encourages interns to select a site within the state. Nevertheless, we recognize that there may be circumstances that necessitate an out-of-state school-based internship for students.

The SPP will approve an out-of-state school-based internship only under the following conditions: (1) the host school district agrees to the terms, conditions, and training philosophy of APA, NASP and the SPP (as determined by the program director and internship coordinator), and (2) the student will participate in university-based supervision (in addition to the site-based supervision) as determined by the UF SPP. All three conditions must be met in order for an out-of-state school-based internship to be approved.

#### How is my performance evaluated in an internship?

The SPP evaluates student performance in their internship by both formal and informal methods. Toward the end of the fall semester (e.g., November), site supervisors will be contacted to complete an on-line formal intern evaluation. This same procedure will be followed again toward the end of the spring semester (e.g., April). This information, along with other information, will be used to assign a letter grade for SPS 7949 in all semesters.

Students also are required to communicate with and on occasion travel to UF to meet with their university-based supervisor on designated days throughout the internship year in order to complete requirements for SPS 7931 (out-of-state interns will participate in this experience through on-line course experiences). Attendance and participation in these meetings will be used to assign a grade for SPS 7931.



Informally, the on-site supervisor and SPP faculty may communicate evaluation information by email (in addition to the formal evaluation described above). This information also will be considered in assigning grades to SPS 7949 and SPS 7931.

## **CREDENTIALING AND LICENSURE**

A degree in school psychology is an integral part of obtaining credentials in the field of psychology and can provide many career opportunities. Credentials can be divided into three categories (certification, license, and diplomate) with each having different requirements and privileges.

Certification involves an application process that requires fingerprinting, criminal records review, verification of employment, passing entry exams, and demonstration of state professional competencies. Some states also offer additional certification as a Clinical Educator to meet requirements for supervision of interns and colleagues. This certification requires completion of a state mandated training program and a competency measure. National certification as a school psychologist can be obtained through the National Association of School Psychologists. This certification provides recognition for professional standards and achievement and requires an application process, verification of supervision, and a passing score on a national exam (ETS-Praxis II in School Psychology). As a graduate of a NASP approved school psychology program, applicants complete a streamlined application process.

Licensure can be obtained as a school psychologist with a PhD degree in school psychology, verification of supervised experience (often 2-3 years), and successfully passing a state mandated exam. Licensure as a psychologist is obtained with a PhD in school psychology or other psychology majors from an APA accredited program, verification of licensed supervision, and successful completion of state law and national EPPP exams. Some states may also require an oral examination. Licensure is required for private practice as a psychologist and can permit insurance billing, and billable supervision. In addition, some employers grant greater opportunity for advancement and supervision responsibilities with licensure. Additional recognition for expertise among APA licensed psychologists can be obtained through the Diplomate and Fellow status. This recognition is conferred by the American Board of Professional Psychology and involves an application process, verification of five years' experience, review of publications/reports, and an oral exam.

Some employers provide income supplements to persons with advanced credentials (i.e., certifications/licensure), especially if the clinician has additional responsibilities (e.g., supervision). Obtaining additional credentials can afford greater competitive advantage when seeking employment, more diverse career opportunities (e.g., school /clinical settings, private practice, academia), and increased expertise. A detailed review of the credentialing process is noted in the Appendix based on the State of Florida requirements. Please note that this process is subject to change and may vary from state to state.

## **CORE ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

The University of Florida's Educator Preparation Programs are committed to preparing high-quality educators who possess the skills and abilities required for professional practice. We are dedicated to preparing these candidates for the complexities of educational environments. Certain core essential requirements ("Requirements") must be met during clinical experiences and throughout the duration of the program. Candidates in the University of Florida's Educator Preparation Programs must perform the Requirements in a manner that does not negatively impact the operation of the placement location, and that supports the learning of the students with whom these candidates are working. In addition to meeting the academic expectations of the requirements, candidates must also be able to perform these Requirements independently. The Requirements described below are the minimum standards that allow candidates to perform at a level that is generally acceptable in their fields. Candidates unable to meet these Requirements will be unable to complete the program and are encouraged to pursue alternate career pathways.

Communication: Skills and abilities required for effective oral and written communication, and interaction with others.

In all field and clinical experiences candidates must be able to:

- Provide and follow written and verbal instructions delivered through a variety of modalities
- Adhere to administrative protocols, including timely communications regarding lateness or absence
- Consult/communicate with instructors, colleagues, supervisors, caregivers, administrators, community stakeholders and students in a professional and timely manner
- Apply effective active listening techniques, effectively provide and receive information and sensitively respond to others in written and oral formats
- Recognize and respond to nonverbal cues and communication, and interpret social cues
- Compose well-written, complete lesson plans that meet district/university standards for use in instruction
- Acknowledge and demonstrate respect for individual differences, values, and opinions
- Modulate communication to support effective working relationships.

Sensory and Motor: Sensory and physical abilities sufficient to execute, perceive, assess, and monitor, and support classroom instruction, and maintain student safety.

In all field and clinical experiences, candidates must be able to:

- Physically maneuver in a variety of school settings including, but not limited to, the classroom, media center, cafeteria, gymnasium, hallways and recreational areas
- Efficiently manipulate a variety of equipment for instruction and management of classroom activities;
- Effectively interpret and respond to requests and instructions from instructors, colleagues, supervisors, caregivers, administrators, students and other stakeholders;

- Adequately respond to all safety procedures (fire alarms, tornado drills and emergency signals) and take appropriate actions;
- Effectively monitor the environment in a variety of school settings to ensure student safety.

**Behavioral and Social:** Social and emotional abilities necessary to interact with others, respect professional boundaries, and maintain ethical conduct consistent with those who work with and are role models for young people.

In all field and clinical experiences candidates must be able to:

- Exercise sound judgement and maintain professional ethical standards to manage professional responsibilities promptly and safely, including maintaining student confidentiality;
- Acknowledge and respect diverse cultural values and opinions, and treat others - including students, colleagues, caregivers, and supervisors - with courtesy, integrity, and maturity;
- Display flexibility and the ability to adapt to changing environments and situations, while maintaining composure;
- Demonstrate a professional demeanor, even under stress; manage the uncertainties and frequent interruptions that are inherent to educational settings with poise.
- Demonstrate the ability to work independently and collaboratively with others;
- Self-reflect and modify behavior in response to constructive feedback;
- Maintain professional demeanor (e.g., control emotions, be punctual, dress professionally, maintain professional relationships with students)
- Be present during entirety of the sites' contract hours;
- Complete and deliver materials and products (e.g., lesson plans, routine paperwork) as required by the site in a timely way.
- Maintain professionalism when in online environments (e.g., on social media and in email communications)

**Recommended Timeline  
School Psychology PhD Degree**

- 1) Complete all required SPP coursework during the first three years in the program.
  - a) Complete specialization coursework during third and fourth year in the program.
- 2) Select a faculty advisor for supervision of your thesis or publication quality empirical research study (PQERS) and your supervisory committee by the end of spring semester of your first year.
  - a) Email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu) to officially designate your advisor in the Graduate Information Management System (GIMS).
- 3) Begin work on your PQERS by the summer after your first year.
  - a) Complete PQERS by the summer after your second year in the program.
  - b) Graduate with MEd degree semester in which you submit the PQERS for publication and it is approved by your faculty advisor.
- 4) Complete all required examinations (e.g., FCTE) after year 2 in the program.
- 5) Complete Planned Program of Study form by the beginning of the third year. The form can be accessed on the program Canvas site.
  - a) Email to [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu) to add Planned Program of Study form to DocuSign to send to supervisory committee members
- 6) Select doctoral committee to oversee portfolio and dissertation in the third year.
  - a) Doctoral committee must consist of 4 faculty members. Two must be SPP faculty (including the chair, unless dissertation advisor is outside the program then a SPP must agree to be a co-chair). One person must be from outside the School Psychology Program. *The supervisory committee (at least the SPP members) must be added to Graduate Information Management System (GIMS; email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu)) by fall of the third year. Additional members should be added by summer after third year.*
  - b) Email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu) to officially designate your committee in the Graduate Information Management System (GIMS).
- 7) Submit specialization/research methods form (beginning of year 4)
- 8) Complete doctoral qualifying examination by completing and defending both parts of the qualifying examination (i.e., portfolio and dissertation proposal) by the end of fall of Year 4. Complete paperwork to be “Admitted to Candidacy” for the doctoral degree and register for dissertation research hours.
  - a) Working portfolio will be reviewed by your advisor during Year 3.
  - b) Work closely with advisor on dissertation proposal.

- 9) Submit “Request to Apply for Internship” form to advisor, the program director, and internship coordinator in the fall of Year 4. The form can be accessed on the program Canvas site.
  - a) Must have completed portfolio/qualifying examination, been admitted to candidacy, and have dissertation proposal approved by doctoral supervisory committee prior to submitting an internship application.
  - b) Apply to internship sites the fall prior to internship year for APPIC sites.
  - c) Apply in early spring prior to internship year if applying for non-APPIC sites.
- 10) Data collected and completing final writing stages of dissertation during Year 4 prior to beginning internship.
- 11) Defend dissertation prior to beginning internship at start of Year.
- 12) Complete internship during Year 5.
- 13) Graduate at the end of internship at the end of Year 5.

***Meet regularly with your faculty advisor  
to develop an individual degree plan.***

## Appendix A

a) Assignment: Complete two case studies (one academic, one behavioral) that demonstrates the professional skills necessary to deliver effective services that results in positive, measurable outcomes for the student. Below is the scoring rubric used to evaluate each case study.

### Section 1: Problem Identification

	Needs Improvement = 0	Effective = 1	Very Effective = 2
1.1	<input type="checkbox"/> The student's behavior is identified but not operationally defined	<input type="checkbox"/> The student's behavior is operationally defined	<input type="checkbox"/> The student's behavior is defined in the context of appropriate grade and/or peer expectations, e.g., local norms
1.2	<input type="checkbox"/> The problem is not collaboratively defined	<input type="checkbox"/> The problem is collaboratively defined	
1.3	<input type="checkbox"/> The behavior is not operationally defined in terms of both current and desired levels of performance	<input type="checkbox"/> The behavior is operationally defined or quantified in terms of both current and desired levels of performance	<input type="checkbox"/> The discrepancy between current and desired level of performance is explained
1.4	<input type="checkbox"/> A baseline for the student behavior is not established or has insufficient data	<input type="checkbox"/> A baseline for the student behavior is established using sufficient data	<input type="checkbox"/> Baseline includes the student behavior and peer/grade norms and expectations with computed trend lines
1.5	<input type="checkbox"/> The student behavior is not identified as a skill and/or performance deficit	<input type="checkbox"/> The student behavior is identified as a skill and/or performance deficit	
1.6	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians and teachers are not involved in the problem-identification process	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians and teachers are involved in the problem-identification process	

#### Rating for 1.0: Problem Identification

#### Comments

☐ Very Effective

☐ Effective

☐ Needs Improvement

☐ Insufficient Information

**Section 2: Problem Analysis**

	Needs Improvement = 0	Effective = 1	Very Effective = 2
2.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypotheses are not developed, hypotheses are developed in only one area and/or hypotheses are not measurable	<input type="checkbox"/> One or more hypotheses are developed to identify the functions that the behavior serves and/or the conditions under which the behavior is occurring or has developed in two or more of the following areas: child factors, curriculum, peers, teacher, classroom, home	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypotheses are generated through collaboration with teacher and/or parent
2.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate data are not collected to confirm or reject the hypotheses	<input type="checkbox"/> There is evidence that appropriate data are collected to confirm or reject the proposed hypotheses. Appropriate data include one or more of the following: record review, interview, observation, testing, and self-report	<input type="checkbox"/> There are multiple sources of data that converge on each proposed hypothesis
2.3	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypotheses do not reflect an awareness of issues related to diversity (e.g., physical, social, linguistic, cultural)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hypotheses reflect an awareness of issues of diversity (e.g., physical, social, linguistic, cultural)	

**Rating for 2.0: Problem Analysis**

**Comments**

☐ Very Effective

☐ Effective

☐ Needs Improvement

☐ Insufficient Information

**Section 3: Intervention**

	Needs Improvement = 0	Effective = 1	
3.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention is not linked to observable, measurable goal statement(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention is linked to observable, measurable goal statement(s)	
3.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) selection is not based on data from problem analysis and hypothesis testing	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) selection is based on data from problem analysis and hypothesis testing	
3.3	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) is not evidence-based (e.g., research literature, functional analysis, single case design analysis)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) is evidence-based (e.g., research literature, functional analysis, single case design analysis)	
3.4	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) is not developed collaboratively	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) is developed collaboratively	
3.5	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) does not reflect sensitivity to individual differences, resources, classroom practices, and other system issues. Acceptability of intervention is not verified	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention(s) reflects sensitivity to individual differences, resources, classroom practices, and other system issues. Acceptability of intervention is verified	
3.6	<input type="checkbox"/> Logistics of setting, time, resources and personnel are not included in the intervention plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Logistics of setting, time, resources and personnel are included in the intervention plan	
3.7	<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment integrity is not monitored	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention is monitored and data are provided to ensure that it is implemented as designed	

**Rating for 3.0: Intervention**

**Comments**

- ☐ Very Effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Insufficient Information



**Section 4: Evaluation**

	Needs Improvement = 0	Effective = 1	Very Effective = 2
4.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data are not demonstrated on a chart	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data are demonstrated on a chart	<input type="checkbox"/> Charting includes student performance trend lines, and/or goal lines
4.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention is not demonstrated to be effective through data comparison	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data are demonstrated to be effective when compared to baseline data	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data are demonstrated to be effective when compared to data generated from multiple sources/settings
4.3	<input type="checkbox"/> Data are not used to inform further problem solving and decision making	<input type="checkbox"/> Data are used to inform further problem solving and decision making (i.e., continuation of intervention, modification of intervention, maintenance of intervention)	<input type="checkbox"/> Response to intervention data are used to inform problem solving and decision making. Single case design was specified (e.g., changing criterion, parametric, component analysis, multiple baseline, alternating treatment)
4.4	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for transfer/generalizing outcomes to other settings are not addressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for transfer/generalizing outcomes to other settings are addressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for transfer/generalizing outcomes to other settings are documented as effective
4.5	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness of intervention is not shared or communicated	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness of intervention is shared through collaboration with parents, teachers, and other personnel	<input type="checkbox"/> Modifications for future interventions are considered based upon collaborative examination of effectiveness data
4.6	<input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions for follow-up are not developed	<input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions for follow-up are developed (e.g., continued progress monitoring, transition planning)	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for follow-up are developed and implemented

**Rating for 4.0: Evaluation**

- ☐ Very Effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Needs Improvement
- ☐ Insufficient Information

**Overall Rating of Comprehensive Case Study**

	Needs Improvement = 0	Effective = 1	Very Effective = 2

## **Appendix B**

For each case study, positive impact of both the academic and behavioral interventions must be evaluated as part of the case study. The following is a *non-exhaustive* list of techniques that are sufficient to demonstrate evidence of measurable positive impact.

1. Goal attainment scaling
2. Percent of all non-overlapping data
3. Slope of progress
4. Effect size
5. Comparisons of pre and post data
6. Progress monitoring data
7. Individual or group data
8. Improvement rate difference

FALL SEMESTER 2025							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Aug.					Registration	Drop/Add	
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Drop/Add					
Sept.	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	Holiday					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Oct.	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Nov.	28	29	30				
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Dec.	12	13	14	15	16	Homecoming	17
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	
Jan.							1
							2
							3
Feb.							4
							5
							6
Mar.							7
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Apr.							10
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May							13
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June							16
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July							19
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Aug.							22
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Sept.							25
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Oct.							28
							29
							30
Nov.							31
Dec.							

SPRING SEMESTER 2026							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Jan.					Holiday		
					1	2	3
					Registration		
Feb.	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Mar.	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Apr.	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31				
May							
June							
July							
Aug.							
Sept.							
Oct.							
Nov.							
Dec.							

SUMMER SEMESTER 2026							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
May						Registration	
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Drop/Add					
June	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
July	31						
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Aug.	14	15	16	17	18	Holiday	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31		
Sept.							
Oct.							
Nov.							
Dec.							

## UF Travel

UF GO is single portal for travel creation (airfare, car rental, lodging). The portal is within a system called Concur and is supported by the World Travel Services agency. For more complex travel, you have the option to contact World Travel Services directly. World Travel will not be matching any prices you find from other sites. The idea is for UF to realize the efficiencies of working with one portal (less of your time and administrative staff time) and eventually realize volume discounts by leveraging travel volume data.

Register and take the UF training course [UGO100 – Introduction to UF GO](#) (<15 minutes)

**\*\*NOTE – Airfare, Hotel & Rental Cars MUST be booked through UF GO!! The only exception to booking a hotel outside of Concur is to book at one of the conference hotels (you must provide a list of the conference hotels).**

Please email [sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu) for travel information, **PRIOR** to making any travel arrangements!

## Important Links

UF Institutional Review Board (The Behavioral/Non-Medical IRB – IRB02):

<https://irb.ufl.edu/irb02.html>

UF Travel:

<https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/toolkits-resource-center/financial-toolkits/travel-and-expense/ufgo/>

Active Shooter Brochure:

<https://police.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/resources/brochures/Active-Shooter-Guidelines-PDF-Version.pdf>

GatorSAFE app:

<https://police.ufl.edu/support-services/community-services-division/gatorsafe-app/>

UF Emergency Management:

<https://emergency.ufl.edu/>

Dining on campus:

<https://dineoncampus.com/uf/>

SESPECS faculty, staff and student website:

<https://education.ufl.edu/sespecs/the-team/>

SESPECS staff email (to be used for all staff requests):

[sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu](mailto:sespecsstaff@coe.ufl.edu)

## University of Florida Health & Safety Resources

Disability Resource Center	352-392-8565 accessuf@ufsa.ufl.edu	<a href="https://disability.ufl.edu/">https://disability.ufl.edu/</a>
Field & Fork Pantry		<a href="https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/">https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/</a>
Gatorwell Health Promotion Services	352-273-4450	<a href="https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/">https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/</a>
Recreational Sports		<a href="https://recsports.ufl.edu/">https://recsports.ufl.edu/</a>
Student Health Care Center	CALL FIRST in order to be seen: 352-392-1161	<a href="https://shcc.ufl.edu/">https://shcc.ufl.edu/</a>
UF Alert		<a href="https://ufalert.ufl.edu/">https://ufalert.ufl.edu/</a>
UF Counseling & Wellness Center	352-392-1575	<a href="https://counseling.ufl.edu/">https://counseling.ufl.edu/</a>
UFPD Office of Victim Services	352-392-5648 ovs@mail.ufl.edu	<a href="https://police.ufl.edu/about/divisions/office-of-victim-services/">https://police.ufl.edu/about/divisions/office-of-victim-services/</a>
UMatter We Care	352-294-CARE (2273) umatter@ufl.edu	<a href="https://umatter.ufl.edu/">https://umatter.ufl.edu/</a>
University Police Department	Emergency: 911 Non-emergent calls and assistance: 352-392-1111	<a href="https://police.ufl.edu/">https://police.ufl.edu/</a>

## Alachua County Health & Safety Resources

Alachua County Crisis Center	352-264-6789	<a href="https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/CrisisCenter/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx">https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/CrisisCenter/Pages/CrisisCenter.aspx</a>
Alachua County Sheriff's Office	Emergency: 911  Non-emergent calls and assistance: 352-955-1818	<a href="https://acso.us/">https://acso.us/</a>
Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center	352-264-6789	<a href="https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/VictimServices/Pages/VictimServices.aspx">https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/VictimServices/Pages/VictimServices.aspx</a>
AlertAlachua		<a href="https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/EM/Pages/AlertAlachua.aspx">https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/EM/Pages/AlertAlachua.aspx</a>
Gainesville Police Department	Emergency: 911  Non-emergent calls and assistance: 352-955-1818 Front Desk: 352-393-7600	<a href="https://www.gainesvillepd.org/">https://www.gainesvillepd.org/</a>
Peaceful Paths Domestic Abuse Network	Emergency: 911  Helpline: 352-377-8255	<a href="https://www.peacefulpaths.org/">https://www.peacefulpaths.org/</a>

## How to Protect Yourself in A Parking Garage

Utilizing parking garages is often a necessity on campus. Following these safety techniques could be your best defense.

- Look around your vehicle for any suspicious activity. If you see someone loitering around your vehicle, walk past until they leave.
- Don't park next to a van's sliding door.
- Change from high heels to low flats or even sneakers when leaving work. They are better to run in.
- At night, leave your office or building in the company of others. Don't leave alone after dark. If possible, have someone from your building security escort you, or call for police assistance.
- Approach your vehicle with your keys already in your hand.
- Do a quick scan of your vehicle's interior before unlocking the door. Be sure to look in the back seat.
- Keep your doors locked and your windows shut.
- Be suspicious of anyone approaching your vehicle, whether passing out leaflets or asking for donations. Always leave the car windows up.
- If you must leave a key with a parking attendant, leave only your vehicle's ignition key. Do not leave anything attached to it with your name and address.

*For further information on this or other safety topics please visit <https://police.ufl.edu/resources/> or contact the University of Florida Police Department's Community Services Division or 352-392-1409.*



# Fire Alarm/Building Evacuation

## When the Building Fire Alarm System Sounds:

- Immediately begin to evacuate the area.
- If accessible, grab important personal items such as keys, purse, wallet and cellphone.
- If circumstances permit, secure your area by closing and locking doors if you would normally do so when leaving for the day.
- Ensure all stairwell doors in your means of egress are also closed.
- As you are evacuating, inform co-workers, students and visitors that they must evacuate immediately.
- If the corridor is filled with smoke, stay low and crawl out. If it is too much smoke or too hot return to your office. Call 911 and inform them you are still in the building, provide them floor and room number. Wait for assistance.
- Once out of the building meet in the pre-designated area.
- Your unit's pre-designated areas should be at least 100' from the building. The area should not block egress from the building or access to the building by emergency personnel or vehicles.
- Attempt to determine if all occupants in your area have evacuated.

## Do Not:

- Do not stop to investigate if the alarm is real or false. Always evacuate.
- Do not use the elevator to evacuate the building.
- Do not wait to shut down your computer; however, it is recommended to lock your computer if immediately accessible.
- Do not return to your work area to retrieve personal belongings.
- Do not attempt to extinguish the fire with a portable fire extinguisher unless you have been trained in its use and the fire is small.
- DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON, until the all clear signal is given.
- As you evacuate the building it is not your responsibility to insure other occupants evacuate. Your own safety is the highest priority.
- Do not open windows or leave doors open to assist with ventilation. Firefighters will ventilate the building if necessary.

## To Report a Fire

If you discover a fire in a University of Florida building:

- Pull the fire alarm and call 911.  
TIP – Fire alarm pull stations are normally located near each exit. If the building is not equipped with a fire alarm system, notify other occupants as you exit the building.
- Remain calm while talking to the operator. Be prepared to answer several questions as to location, size of fire, your name, number of persons in building (if known) and any injuries. Remain on the line until the operator is finished.

*Link to UF Emergency Management Take Action:*

<https://www.ehs.ufl.edu/emergencies/fire-alarm-building-evacuation/>

*Source: UF Environmental Health & Safety*