

Program Assessment Summary

School Psychology

Program Design

The Ed.S in School Psychology provides professional training for future school psychologists. At the completion of the program the candidates receive the Ed.S. degree and the Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Psychology. The Program is part of the Department of Psychology within the College of Science and Mathematics. The Program Coordinator has 40 years of experience in education, including almost 20 years at this institution. She works closely with the faculty in the Psychology Department, the Dean of Science and Mathematics, and the Dean of the Kremen School of Education and other credential program coordinators.

The Program Coordinator serves as the advisor for the students in the program. The program has had NASP/NCATE approval since 1994 and adheres closely to those standards as well as CCTC. NASP/NCATE restricts program enrollment to fulltime faculty to 10:1; therefore we typically accept 10 students per cohort into our three-year program. Students and faculty work together closely, providing a support academic environment. Student grades and practicum experience are monitored closely with field evaluations and individual meetings each semester to discuss practica competencies, thesis status, and general progress in the program.

The Program is available only for fulltime graduate candidates. The structure of the coursework and field experiences is well sequenced. All courses in the program are required, as well as a thesis. Students begin practica the first semester in the program. During the first year in the program they are placed with a field supervisor one day per week; in the second year they spend two days per week in the field. This allows extensive experience and application of coursework. The program coordinator places each student individually each semester with a practicing school psychologist and students are rotated through local districts during their first two years in the program. We have excellent support from the local districts and an Advisory Board of lead school psychologists and PPS directors from Central California. The third year the students engage in an academic year internship.

Course of Study

The curriculum has been carefully designed to meet state and national accreditation standards, as well as local needs. We continually revise individual courses to keep them up-to-date. Recent alumni surveys assessed the utility of the current courses in the program and any areas of need. Based on the results this year we have modified the content of an assessment course and reworked our counseling curriculum.

The curriculum includes 64 units of coursework over the first two years, 4 units of practicum, 12 units for internship, and 3 units of thesis. This is a very intense program; courses are offered once per year and students take them as a cohort. The orientation is research-based with an emphasis on behavioral interventions. The curriculum includes traditional assessment measures, as well as curriculum based. Students are prepared for a Response to Intervention (RTI) model through a course in Instructional Consultation and required academic and behavioral intervention projects throughout the program.

The field experiences include 500 hours of practicum across the first two years (200 hours in Year 1 and 300 hours in Year 2). The internship is a minimum of 1200 hours at two school levels (elementary, middle, or high school).

Coursework is integrated with field experiences. Student conduct observations, assessments, interventions, and counseling on practicum and internship. University supervision is provided through a weekly practicum class for those in years 1 and 2, and an internship class for those in the 3rd year. A great deal of time is given to case studies, feedback on reports and projects, and becoming knowledgeable of school systems. Program faculty and students consider field experience a critical component of the program. Graduates are very well prepared to work independently upon completion of the program. Alumni and employer surveys indicate both are well pleased with the training the students receive.

Assessment of Candidates

The program has established a number of checkpoints to ensure student knowledge, skills and competencies to be effective school psychologists. The program has a strong reputation. We receive many more applications than we can accept, so admission is quite selective. We initially paper screen applicants, then invite those screened in for an interview, on campus if feasible, or via phone. Once accepted students must maintain a 3.0 GPA and high field evaluations throughout the program. School psychology faculty also evaluate each student each semester and provide feedback in individual meetings. If there are concerns a remediation plan is developed. In addition writing skills are assessed during the first year. In the second year students demonstrate competency in functional behavior assessment necessary to become Behavior Intervention Case managers (BICM), and take the PRAXIS exam. They are also required to have a thesis proposal meeting prior to internship. Student work on their portfolio during the program and submit it each spring for evaluation. During internship candidates are evaluated by all field supervisors, an administrator, two teachers, and a parent, as well and the university supervisor. Again interns are given feedback at individual meetings each semester. Our program completion rate is over 97% and all have obtained employment immediately upon graduation, including in these stressful times of reduction.

As students exit they complete a department and Kremen School of Education surveys. Alumni and employer surveys are conducted every other year. In addition, feedback is sought from intern field supervisors during site visits. All are very positive. The

Advisory Board is also regularly asked to note program strengths, needs, and areas for curriculum revision. Therefore the program is constantly evolving, and the program the site team sees when they visit in a couple years will no doubt be slightly different from the one presented in this document.