

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

The School Psychology program at Fairfield University is a 63-credit program approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The tripartite model of school psychology espoused by the program includes consultation, assessment, and direct and indirect intervention. The program is shaped by the beliefs that school psychologists are best prepared when they are instilled with a scientist/practitioner problem-solving orientation, encouraged to think reflectively, motivated to intervene at the primary prevention level, inspired to be proactive agents of change, and taught to respect diversity and advocate for social justice. There is a special emphasis on self-care to insure optimal learning and practice in the field. Throughout the program, candidates develop and integrate who they are as individuals with their emerging professional identity. Candidates evolve as professionals through classroom experiences and opportunities to apply their growing knowledge and skills in school and mental health settings. The program culminates in an internship experience, consisting of 1200+ hours. Throughout the program, candidates develop portfolios documenting their personal and professional growth, which assist them in finding employment. To be endorsed for state certification, a student must complete both the Master of Arts (MA) degree and Sixth Year Certificate (SYC) requirements. Upon completing the MA, students must submit a formal application for entry into the SYC program. Those wishing to enter the program initially at the SYC level must hold a master's degree in a related field, have a GPA of at least 3.50, and must complete a minimum of 30 credits at Fairfield University.

Admission to the School Psychology Program

Application deadlines are listed online. Applicants may contact the Office of Graduate Admission at gradadmis@fairfield.edu for further information.

Those applicants who have a successful initial application review, are invited to campus for an in-person group interview. When applicants are admitted, each candidate is expected to meet with their assigned faculty advisor to outline a planned program of study before beginning coursework. Candidates must complete requirements for both the MA degree and SYC program to be eligible for Connecticut State Certification as a school psychologist.

PREPaRE Workshops

All students are trained in the national evidenced-based crisis management program, PREPaRE, while in the SYC program during Practicum or Internship.

School Psychologist Certification

A candidate who successfully completes all program requirements meets the Connecticut Certification requirements. When the entire program has been completed (63 credits), and the Sixth Year Certificate program is posted, the candidate must apply for an endorsement from the School of Education and Human Development for Connecticut's Initial Educator's Certificate in School Psychology,

In view of the essential responsibility of the program to assure the protection of the healthy development of children and youth served by school psychologists, the faculty reserve the right to discontinue the program of any candidate, at any time.

In keeping with the Academic Policies of Fairfield University Graduate Programs, a candidate whose GPA falls below 3.0 in a semester, receives a B- in a course will be placed on academic probation. Practica and Internship candidates are also expected to demonstrate the NASP Professional Work Characteristics (Section 4.5, Standards for the Credentialing of School Psychologists, 2020). A candidate may be denied recommendation of certification for not demonstrating the NASP Professional Work Characteristics. All candidates are evaluated by faculty each year regarding their dispositions and personal work characteristics through formal measures. A Dispositional Assessment can be found in the School Psychology Student Handbook.

Programs

- Master of Arts in School Psychology
- Sixth Year Certificate in School Psychology

Courses

PSYG 5430 Foundations of Ethical, Legal, and Professional Practice

3 Credits

Among the first courses that should be taken in the School Psychology program, this course presents a realistic view of school psychology, permitting participants to interview school psychologists and other school personnel in the field about the role of the school psychologist. It serves as a vehicle to affect the future of school psychology by empowering future school psychologists, and it introduces the issues primary to the profession and practice of school psychology. Topics include special education law, professional ethics, the history of school psychology, a tripartite model of service delivery, the "scientific practitioner" approach, consultation, child development and system theory as a basis for practice, advocacy for and education about the school psychologist's role, and an introduction to federal and state educational systems within which the profession operates.

PSYG 5433 Applied Statistics for School Psychologists

3 Credits

The statistics course is designed to teach school psychology students applied techniques to use in service of completing their e-Portfolios for NASP accreditation and their practical work in schools as school psychologists.

PSYG 5434 Multicultural Issues in School Psychology

3 Credits

In this class you will examine multicultural issues in school psychology in order to provide the most effective and culturally sensitive services to individuals and families. Diversity in children, families, schools, and communities, including factors related to abilities, disabilities, child development, religion, culture and cultural identity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, and other diverse characteristics and the impact they have on development and learning will be discussed. You will recognize that equitable practices for diverse student populations, respect for diversity in development and learning, and advocacy for social justice are foundational to effective service delivery. While equality ensures that all children have the same access to general and special educational opportunities, equity ensures that each student receives what they need to benefit from these opportunities. 3 Credits.

PSYG 5436 Psychopathology and Classification I**3 Credits**

This course introduces candidates to advanced child and adolescent psychopathology. It provides the necessary foundation for undertaking subsequent courses or supervised practical training focused on the actual practice of formulating diagnoses and treating children and adolescents who are experiencing mental disorders. The course includes in-depth exposure to and discussion of the DSM-V and current research in psychopathology, and emphasizes understanding and identifying mental disorder symptoms and syndromes.

PSYG 5437 Psychopathology and Classification II**3 Credits**

This course introduces candidates to advanced adult psychopathology. It provides the necessary foundation for undertaking subsequent courses or supervised practical training focused on the actual practice of formulating diagnoses and treating people who are experiencing mental disorders. The course includes in-depth exposure to and discussion of the DSM-V and current research in psychopathology, and emphasizes understanding and identifying mental disorder symptoms and syndromes.

PSYG 5438 Treatment Models**3 Credits**

In this course, candidates learn to develop treatment plans for children and adolescents in schools. Various psychotherapy models bridge the gap between theory and practice. Case studies serve as the primary learning vehicle. Given that children and adolescents frequently demonstrate emotional difficulties in the school setting, the course highlights theoretically informed therapeutic interventions that are pragmatic for use in the school setting, and emphasizes the importance of recognizing individual differences (cognitive, cultural, etc.) when designing interventions.

PSYG 5446 Advanced Foundations of Development and Learning: From Theory to Practice**3 Credits**

This course is designed to help emerging school-based clinical practitioners enhance their knowledge of the various domains of developmental psychology and the role of the school psychologist and/or educator in promoting and supporting development through the lifespan. Candidates will examine human development from the prenatal period through adolescence with an emphasis on the socio-cultural context and resiliency science. Candidates will increase their facility in examining case data from a developmental lens and infusing of the principals of positive psychological science to promote development and psychological wellness. Competence in developing clinically robust developmental questions is also a central feature of this course.

PSYG 5448 Foundations in Equity-Based Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**3 Credits**

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a service delivery paradigm currently used by school districts to provide a continuum of evidence-based multi-tiered supports to address students' academic, behavioral, and socioemotional vitality. This course will provide candidates with foundational knowledge in implementing and evaluating MTSS with an emphasis on equity and accessibility in service delivery. Through the use select texts and course assignments, candidates will gain facility in designing MTSS structures and leading support learning and interventions through an inclusive framework and equity-driven implementation lens.

PSYG 5900 Special Topics (Shell)**1-3 Credits**

The special topic course varies in content, as needed, in order to provide timely opportunity to explore time sensitive, new and emerging topics and foci on a one-time basis, or to offer a pilot section of a new course in development. Each special topic course will have a unique focus, clearly identified in the course title. Candidates may take a special topic course more than once, as long as the course content and foci are distinctly identified.

PSYG 5900A Applied Statistics for School Psychologists**3 Credits**

The statistics course is designed to teach students applied techniques to use in service of completing their e-Portfolios for NASP accreditation and their practical work in schools as school psychologists.

PSYG 6449 Introduction to Clinical Child Neuropsychology**3 Credits**

Prerequisites: PSYG 6538, PSYG 6540.

This course introduces candidates to brain structure, development, and function as the child grows to adulthood. Discussion topics include cognitive, academic, and behavioral sequelae of commonly encountered neuropathologies of childhood and adolescence, with case illustrations. Because of the emphasis placed on educational outcomes of neuropathology, the course addresses dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and non-verbal learning disability.

PSYG 6534 Advanced Foundations of Learning & Development**3 Credits**

This course considers, in detail, the conditions of human learning found in the principal schools of psychology on the contemporary scene. Candidates investigate other theories for individual reports. Crosslisted with EDUC 6534.

PSYG 6535 Collaborative Consultation**3 Credits**

Prerequisites: PSYG 5430, PSYG 6548.

Designed to give candidates knowledge and consultation skills, this course presents consultation as a collaborative problem-solving process that is empowering and prevention-oriented. The course focuses on mental health consultation as described by Gerald Caplan. Candidates learn the major models of consultation, the generic stages of consultation, and four levels of consultation service. The course also addresses practice issues, such as consultee resistance, consultee perspective, and consultant self-awareness. The course includes a practicum component in which candidates consult with a teacher at a school site once a week for approximately 10 weeks.

PSYG 6537 Psychoeducational Assessment I: Behavioral**Approaches****3 Credits**

Designed for school psychology candidates, this course is the first in a four-course sequence in the psycho-educational evaluation of school-aged children. It covers the key concepts and procedures used in the behavioral assessment of individuals with a dual emphasis on functional behavioral assessment and progress monitoring within a response-to-intervention model. Topics covered include direct observation procedures, indirect assessment procedures, data collection and progress monitoring, functional analysis, reinforcer assessment, social validity assessment, direct behavior ratings, inter-observer reliability, and linking assessment results to behavior intervention and support plans. Applications at all three tiers of a response-to-intervention model will be discussed. This course is also the first course in the three course program: Advanced Training in Applied Behavior Analysis.

PSYG 6538 Psychoeducational Assessment II: Standardized Approaches**3 Credits****Fee:** \$90 SEHD Lab Fee**Corequisite:** PSYG 6540.**Prerequisite:** Completion of all MA degree requirements.

For school psychology candidates, this course is designed to advance their knowledge and skills of standardized assessment instruments commonly used by school psychologists in practice. This course will include review of psychometric constructs relevant to the measurement of intelligence and achievement, review of cross-battery assessment, (c) practice in the administration and scoring of standardized measures of intelligence, achievement and behavior, and (d) practice in the interpretation of test scores, (e) practice in the preparation of written reports summarizing test results, (f) exploration of multicultural issues related to assessment, and (g) review of the application of intelligence testing in school and clinical settings.

PSYG 6540 Psychoeducational Assessment III: Clinical Approaches**3 Credits****Fee:** \$90 SEHD Lab Fee**Corequisite:** PSYG 6538.**Prerequisite:** Completion of all MA degree requirements.

This course provides an introduction to clinical approaches to assessment for candidates in the school psychology program. A variety of assessment techniques will be presented and critically reviewed, including clinical interview, clinical observation, and projective techniques commonly used by school psychologists to assess students in school settings. Candidates will gain practice in the administration and interpretation of clinical assessments as well as basic report-writing.

PSYG 6544 Psychoeducational Assessment IV: Integrated Assessment**3 Credits****Prerequisites:** PSYG 6538, PSYG 6540.

For school psychology majors only, this is the fourth and final course in the advanced study of applied psychoeducational assessment. Designed for graduate candidates who are in the final stages of preparing for on-site professional assessment, this course focuses on continuing instruction in the administration and interpretation of various assessment techniques, emphasizing cognitive measures, academic assessment, academic achievement tests, and projective techniques, as well as psychological report-writing that integrates all assessment data into clear, accurate, written psychological reports. The course also stresses cultural and ethical competence in order to meet the need to synthesize and integrate assessment data into comprehensive, non-biased psychological evaluations of children and youth. Candidates administer comprehensive psychoeducational batteries within a school or agency in preparation for their internship in school psychology.

PSYG 6545 Advanced Seminar in Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Assessment**3 Credits**

This course is an extension of PSYG 6544 with emphasis on the assessment of English Learners and learners with diverse cultural backgrounds. Advanced issues in administration, scoring, theoretical interpretation, psychometric and qualitative characteristics, and comparative analysis of both contemporary cognitive and academic ability test batteries with individuals who are culturally and linguistically diverse form the major components of this course. Emphasis is placed on an integrated approach to assessment, report writing, and interpreting data from cognitive and achievement batteries with current, research-based methods that represent best practices in nondiscriminatory assessment and intervention. Candidates examine the historical perspective and theoretical understanding of critical issues in multicultural education and psychology. The course addresses the role of the bilingual school psychologists working with culturally and linguistically diverse students as well as the impact of cultural factors on the assessment process of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Candidates will gain knowledge on differentiating learning disorders from the process of second language acquisition through the use of non-biased assessment including testing in the child's native language, bilingual testing, and adaptation of standardized instruments and techniques.

PSYG 6546 Practicum in Bilingual & Culturally Responsive Assessment**3 Credits**

This course is one of three in the Concentration in Bilingual & Culturally Responsive Assessment. It is taken in Spring concurrent with PSYG 6546. This course provides supervision for the assessment assignments completed in the practicum field placement. Pragmatic concerns in administration, scoring, theoretical interpretation, psychometric and qualitative characteristics, and comparative analysis of both contemporary cognitive and academic ability test batteries with individuals who are culturally and linguistically diverse form the major components of this course. Emphasis is placed on an integrated approach to assessment, report writing, and interpreting data from cognitive and achievement batteries with current, research-based methods that represent best practices in nondiscriminatory assessment and intervention.

PSYG 6548 Psychotherapeutic Techniques**3 Credits****Prerequisites:** PSYG 5430, PSYG 5438, PSYG 5446.

This course provides a foundation in psychotherapeutic techniques. Topics include the purposes and rationale for such techniques, selection of appropriate methodologies, and ethical considerations, and practice skills.

PSYG 6951 Practicum I: Assessment and Group Process**3 Credits****Corequisite:** PSYG 6544.

This course provides support and university supervision for candidates in their semester long school-based practicum. This course primarily provides opportunities to gain practice and facility in testing and report writing. Additionally, the course focuses on teaching group counseling and provides in-class opportunity to experientially learn group process from the perspective of a group member, as well as group facilitator. Candidates also learn to develop lesson plans and conduct whole class lessons. Enrollment by permission only.

PSYG 6952 Practicum II: Counseling and Group Process 3 Credits**Prerequisite:** PSYG 6951.

This course provides support and university supervision for candidates in their eight-week long mental health practicum. The primary purpose of this course is to provide opportunities to gain practice and facility in individual and group counseling, behavior modification, and interviewing in a mental health setting. Candidates typically work with challenging cases, which enables them to act as better liaisons to acute care facilities when in the schools. Additionally, the course provides students an in-class opportunity to experientially learn group process from the perspective of a group member, as well as group facilitator. Candidates take this course the summer before their internship.

PSYG 6981 Internship in School Psychology I 3 Credits

This course provides weekly supervision and support at the University for candidates during the fall semester of the school psychology internship. This internship allows candidates to integrate the skills they have acquired in the program, build confidence using those skills, and develop a sense of professional identity. The course stresses a tripartite approach to school psychology, with equal emphasis on assessment, direct intervention, and consultation. Enrollment by approval of the program coordinator.

PSYG 6981P Internship in School Psychology I 3 Credits

See PSYG 6981.

PSYG 6982 Internship in School Psychology II 3 Credits**Prerequisite:** PSYG 6981.

This course provides weekly supervision and support at the university for candidates during the spring semester of the school psychology internship. This internship allows candidates to integrate the skills they have acquired in the program, build confidence using those skills, and develop a sense of professional identity. The course stresses a tripartite approach to school psychology, with equal emphasis on assessment, direct intervention, and consultation.

PSYG 6982P Internship in School Psychology II 3 Credits

See PSYG 6982.

PSYG 6990 Independent Study 3 Credits

Candidates conduct individual projects in consultation with a faculty member from the Department of Psychological and Educational Consultation. Enrollment by approval of faculty advisor.

PSYG 6999 Comprehensive Examination in School Psychology 0 Credits

The comprehensive examination in school psychology requires candidates to demonstrate understanding and mastery of a broad body of relevant knowledge in psychology, as well as the ability to synthesize this knowledge in the creation of sophisticated essays. Before candidates take the comprehensive examination, they must have completed, or be in the process of completing, 24 credits.