

School Psychology Graduate Program Handbook

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School Psychology Planning Committee

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**Western Carolina University**

**School Psychology Graduate Program**

**Education based on the belief that School Psychologists**

**WCU School Psychology Graduate Program**

**Introduction**

The Department of Psychology welcomes you to graduate study at Western Carolina University. The school psychology graduate program is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and accredited by both the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as well as the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). It is a full-time program that provides a Masters in General Psychology following the completion of 50 credit-hours in the program and a Specialist in School Psychology (SSP) degree following the completion of an additional 21credit-hours for a total of 71 credit-hours. The program requirements include structured coursework, research (thesis or applied research project), and several distinct field experiences. Candidates completing this program and obtaining passing scores on the NTE PRAXIS II exam in School Psychology are eligible for licensure as a school psychologist and for the NCSP (Nationally Certified School Psychologist) credential. We are very pleased that you decided to complete your graduate work at WCU.

**Program Philosophy and Training Models**

The WCU School Psychology Graduate Program is based on a child advocacy model. In this model, the needs of the child are at the center of all activity engaged in by the school psychologist. Candidates are trained to facilitate growth in the development, social-emotional-behavioral well-being, and learning of children and youth. The assessment, counseling, consultation, and intervention training provided by the program has a decidedly ecological and systems-level perspective and focuses on a cognitive-behavioral orientation. Additionally, the program emphasizes the importance of understanding diversity and individual differences when providing services to children and youth with a focus on social justice issues. Students in the SSP program are encouraged to engage in the community and become advocates for the educational needs of all children. Throughout the program, candidates are provided opportunities to apply the knowledge and skills that they are acquiring through their course work through class projects as well as structured practicum and internship experiences. Finally, candidates in this program are encouraged to advance their professional development and the expansion of their knowledge base beyond their formal training at Western Carolina University (i.e., by attending professional conferences, engaging in community involvement, etc.).

**Mission Statement**

The WCU School Psychology graduate program will produce high quality graduates who ***solve problems*** through data-based decision making; ***lead change*** at the individual and systems level; and respectfully and collaboratively ***support others.***

**Student Learning Outcomes**

This program recognizes that School Psychologists may work in a variety of different settings with the most common being school settings where they serve as Specialized Instructional Support Services Personnel. The knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors developed through completion of this program will prepare graduates for employment in any setting. The WCU program has established the following Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The candidates will develop pedagogical background knowledge in psychology and education designed to provide a theoretical and applied orientation to function effectively as a school psychologist in diverse settings.
2. The candidates will be able to administer, interpret, and report on findings from cognitive, academic, behavioral, emotional, adaptive, and neuropsychological assessment instruments and measurements (both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced).
3. The candidates will be able to provide direct student services through the provision of individual and group counseling using empirically-based approaches as well as monitor and evaluate the impact of those services.
4. The candidates will be able to consult with families, teachers, and administrators in providing academic, behavioral, emotional, and social interventions as well as assist in monitoring progress made by children and youth experiencing difficulties over time.
5. The candidates will be able to complete school-based research, use research in all professional and advocacy practices, and share research with others within a school system and/or other areas of pracctice.
6. The candidates will be able to use an understanding of systems-level change in completing needs assessments, implementing systems-level interventions, and evaluating these interventions.
7. The candidates will be able to demonstrate the ability to follow all legal and ethical principles that govern the field of school psychology and will be able to demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors in all school psychology activities and in relation to diverse populations.
8. The candidates will be able to develop crisis prevention plans and respond to situations that require crisis intervention.

**Training Domains**

The WCU School Psychology Graduate Program has adopted the NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists (2010)*, as the model for preparing candidates to be school psychologists. The domains identified within these standards, and listed below, were used in developing the curriculum, field experiences, service learning opportunities, and research requirements of the program. Program level formative and summative assessments have been developed to measure candidate performance across all domains.

The following domains represent the knowledge and the skills that candidates in this program are expected to obtain by completion of the program (see below for more detail regarding how Domains are addressed in the coursework for this program):

1. **Practices That Permeate All Aspects of Service Delivery**

Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability

Consultation and Collaboration

1. **Direct and Indirect Services**

Student Level Services

Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports

Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions

System Level Services

School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools

Family, School, and Community Collaboration

1. **Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery**

Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations

Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

**Program Entrance Requirements**

Applicants are selected for admittance to the program based on a review of all data available including GRE scores, Undergraduate Transcripts, Curriculum Vita (CV), Letters of Reference (at least three), Personal Statement, and Faculty Interviews. All applicants fully accepted into the program must have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 for the last 60 hours of coursework and a GRE General Test (combined Verbal and Quantitative) score above 285. It is preferred that the combined Verbal and Quantitative GRE scores be 300 or higher. Applicants with lower GPA and/or GRE scores are accepted conditionally if there is other evidence of potential for high-level academic performance. This other evidence is obtained through the applicant’s Letters of Reference, Personal Statement, and Faculty Interviews. Applicants accepted conditionally will be considered for full acceptance following the first semester in the program based on academic and professional performance. No Graduate Assistantship would be offered to a candidate admitted conditionally.

The following guidelines are used in determining acceptance into the program:

**Unless other information is extremely strong, *applicants will not be accepted* under any of the following conditions:**

* Total GRE score (Verbal and Quantitative combined) below 285
* Writing GRE score below 3.0
* GPA below 2.5

***Conditional Admittance* (not eligible for a Graduate Assistantship) will be considered under the following conditions:**

* **GPA between 2.5 and 3.0 if the following two conditions are met:**
  + GRE score is above 290
  + GPA improves for last 60 hours of undergraduate work
* **GRE between 285 and 289 if the following two conditions are met:**
  + GPA must be at least 3.5
  + Writing GRE score must be at least 3.0

Candidates entering the program are advised to purchase Liability Insurance to cover the work they will be doing in various public settings including the WCU Psychological Assessment Clinic and local school systems. Student level Liability Insurance is available through the National Association of School Psychologists at the following weblink: <http://www.nasponline.org/membership-and-community/professional-liability-insurance>

Candidates entering the program are also reminded that prior to working in any school setting, there is a good chance that the school system will require the completion of a ***Background Check***. Resources will be provided through the program so that each candidate can obtain their own Background Check prior to entering the schools. This will not be a requirement for entrance into the program or for participation in any of the program’s activities; however, candidates entering the program should be aware that any serious offense or conviction that shows up on a Background Check could prevent that candidate from working in a school setting. In addition, even minor offenses may result in a school system investigating the status of that candidate more closely and may also require that the candidate go before the state ethics board prior to being provided with a state license in School Psychology. Information about obtaining your Background Check can be found in the Psychology Department Graduate Candidate Blackboard Organization.

**Degree Requirements**

**Course Work:** The Specialist in School Psychology (SSP) degree is awarded following the completion of 71 credit hours of course work. A Masters (MA) degree in General psychology will also be awarded based on the completion of 50 credit hours within the 71 credit hours. Students who have completed the credit hours needed for the MA will be eligible to apply for the WCU PsyD combined clinical and school psychology graduate program in Health Service Psychology. While completing this coursework, candidates are enrolled as full-time residential candidates. The program includes courses in professional school psychology; academic & behavioral assessment; academic & behavioral intervention; consultation; counseling skills; statistics and research; psychological foundations; educational foundations; practicum; internship. (***See Appendix A for the Program Course Schedule)***

**Grades:** Based on WCU graduate school requirements, candidates who accumulate three

grades of C or any grade of F will automatically be dismissed from the program. Candidates must have a 3.0 or higher Grade Point Average (GPA) to graduate from the SSP program. Maintenance of a 3.0 is also required for Graduate Assistantship assignments. The program director will review grades with students during the advisement period each semester as well as at the end of each semester. Candidates with any grade below a B will be provided with guidance regarding how to improve their performance, which could include the development of an Action Plan. In addition, candidates must obtain a grade of B or higher for both practicum experiences (field- and clinic-based) completed during their 2nd year in the program before being considered for enrollment in internship hours in their 3rd year.

**Research:** The development of research skills is an important component of the school

psychology graduate program. School psychologists need to understand research and statistics so that they can access information from the research literature, share research findings with personnel in schools or other agencies, as well as conduct and/or assist others in completing and interpreting research at the school and agency level. These are important skills whether the candidate plans to ultimately work in a school or agency setting or whether they plan to eventually complete a doctoral degree in the field at a later date.

* All of the candidates in the school psychology graduate program are required to take two Research courses during their first year in the program including:
  + - * PSY 651 Advanced Research Methods and Statistics I
      * PSY 652 Advanced Research Methods and Statistics II
* In addition, all 1st year students will participate in occasional hour-long research seminars led by the school psychology faculty. Participation in these seminars will include opportunities to attend various research presentations on campus, online, and at regional and national school psychology conferences.
* Additional training related to applied school-based research will be provided in PSY 695: Advanced Professional Issues at the end of students’ 2nd year in the program.
* Opportunities to complete research literature reviews will also be included in several courses within the program. Other courses will require students to be able to identify research-based academic or behavioral interventions and practices. Finally, students will be given opportunities to share research information with others through coursework, Practica, and Internship experiences.
* Finally, all school psychology graduate candidates are required to demonstrate their research skills by completing one out of two research options:
* Thesis (PSY 699)
* Applied Internship Research Project (PSY 680)

***(See Appendix D: Research Requirements and Guidelines)***

**Practica:** Candidates must meet coursework requirements and demonstrate appropriate

professional behaviors prior to being allowed to enroll in practica placements during their 2nd

year in the program. Any candidate demonstrating difficulties with course work and/or

professional behaviors may be provided with an Action Plan prior to beginning their practica

work outlining further expectations for improvement of academic and/or professional behaviors

when completing their practicum experiences.

The practicum experiences are divided into an internal clinic placement and an

external field-based placement. Each of these placements last one semester. The **internal clinic practicum placement** is worth 3-credit hours and involves working in the McKee Psychological Assessment Clinic housed within the psychology department. For the internal placement, candidates are supervised by a psychology department faculty member who is either a Licensed Psychologist or who provides supervision in collaboration with a Licensed Psychologist. During this practicum, candidates are provided with individual supervision (1 hour per week) from their university supervisor and are provided with additional supervision from the clinic director. Candidates in this practicum placement complete 4 to 5 comprehensive assessments depending on candidate involvement in other practicum-related activities. Internal placements are closely supervised, including direct supervision of feedback sessions with families and review of videotaped interactions with clients (and their families).

The **external field-based practicum placement** is worth 3-credit hours and involves working in a school system that is distinct from the university. During this practicum, candidates are provided with individual supervision (1 hour per week) from a licensed school psychologist and group supervision from a university supervisor (1 hour per week). The requirements for the external placement involve a minimum of 2 full days per week working in the agency/school system in which they are placed. The external placement requires candidates to complete a minimum of 4 assessment cases, a minimum of 1 behavioral or academic consultation/intervention case, and a minimum of 2 counseling cases (1 individual and 1 group). In addition, the practicum candidates present cases to their fellow candidates, and participate in discussions on various topics with their fellow classmates.

Candidates will be evaluated on their practicum performance through field-based and university supervisor evaluations; site visits; evaluations of psychological reports, case study reports, and counseling reports; and an overall practicum portfolio evaluation. Failure to meet any of the requirements for these evaluations will result in the candidate failing their Practicum experience and being withdrawn from the program. Candidates must earn a B or better in both practicum experiences in order to be considered for internship. Candidates earning a C in either practicum experience may be required to complete additional course work and/or practicum work prior to being given permission to begin internship and an Action Plan will be developed for their internship year outlining improvements that must be demonstrated throughout this year in order to successfully complete their internship and graduate from the SSP program.

**Internship:** Candidates are required to complete a 1200-hour internship following the

successful completion of formal coursework and practicum experiences. The internship occurs

during a single academic year unless otherwise approved by the SSP Program. Of the total

1200-hours, at least half must occur in a school setting. This internship is a two-semester

experience in which the candidate demonstrates knowledge and skills acquired during formal

coursework and practicum experiences. Candidates must receive 2 hours per week of individual

supervision from a licensed school psychologist at their site during their internship year.

Interns are required to submit documentation of at least 4 assessment cases, at least 2 intervention/consultation cases (academic & behavioral), and at least 2 individual counseling cases and 2 group counseling cases. All documents submitted will be reviewed by both the field supervisor and the university supervisor and formally evaluated by the university supervisor.

Candidates will be evaluated on their internship performance through field-based supervisor evaluations; evaluations of psychological reports, case study reports, counseling reports, and an overall internship portfolio evaluation. Failure to meet any of the requirements for these evaluations will result in the candidate failing their Internship and being withdrawn from the SSP program.

**Praxis II Exam:** Completion of the Praxis II exam with a score at or above 147, will be

required for graduation. This is currently the cutoff score for both NC DPI licensure and National Certification (NCSP). This score will be updated in the future should these requirements change.

**Assessment of Graduate Candidate Performance**

A variety of assessment tools will be used to evaluate the progress of candidates in this program **(*See Appendix B: Assessment of Candidate Performance*).** Assessment information will be collected throughout candidates’ time in the program from the time that they enter in their first year up to the point at which they graduate. Candidates will receive ongoing and specific feedback regarding their progress**.** Candidates should use the information provided through this feedback process to reflect on their own learning and academic needs. In addition, the information obtained from these assessments will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the school psychology graduate program at WCU. Another source of program evaluation information will be collected through alumni surveys completed by candidates at the end of their program and scores obtained by graduating candidates on the Praxis exam.

A Program Assessment System has been established via Blackboard for the systematic collection of student performance data. (***See Appendix C: Program Assessment System Guidelines*)**

**Admission Data:** The first set of data will be collected as candidates apply for admission to the program. This data will include undergraduate GPA and GRE scores. This information, in comparison to candidate academic performance, will assist the program planning committee in determining ongoing criteria for admittance to the program. This will also serve as the starting point for candidates to use as they evaluate their own progress and acquisition of new knowledge and skills as they complete the program.

**Coursework Data:** Grades provided by professors for candidates’ individual course requirements will be collected as evidence of acquisition of professional knowledge. All courses in the program are linked to the NASP standards and grades in these courses will be one source of data related to candidate success at obtaining knowledge and skills within the standards. (***See Appendix A: School Psychology Course Schedule*)**

**Practicum/Internship Data:** All written reports for activities completed during practica and internship will be submitted to the School Psychology Assessment System via Blackboard and University faculty will provide rubric ratings for each report. In addition,practica and internship supervisors will be asked to complete supervisor evaluation forms and review Hours Logs submissions. Ratings provided will be considered in the practica and internship overall portfolio ratings that are made.

**Research Requirement Data:** Candidates in this program have the option of completing either a Thesis or an Internship Applied Research Project in order to meet their research requirement. Data will be collected regarding successful completion of all research requirements. More information regarding these requirements are provided in **Appendix D: Research Requirements**.

**Professional Behavior Data:** In addition to feedback regarding coursework and field-based experiences, candidates will also receive feedback on their development of professional behaviors/dispositions. As candidates enter the program, they are expected to set short and long term professional goals, reflect on personal strengths and weaknesses, identify activities linked to these goals, and make connections to the NASP standards. This information is all provided on a Professional Development Worksheet **(*See Appendix B: Assessment of Candidate Performance*).** Each semester, prior to meeting with the program director for Advising, each candidate will provide updates to that document. This worksheet will be reviewed during the advising meeting along with other program information available for the candidate including practicum and internship supervisory evaluations regarding professional behaviors. The advisor will provide structured feedback to the candidate and a summary of information discussed during the advising meeting will be posted within the Program Assessment System. Significant concerns regarding a candidate’s performance may lead to the development of an Action Plan that specifies actions that need to be taken in order for the candidate to continue in the program.

**Overall Program Progress:** At the end of the first year in the program, a review of candidate program progress will be completed. This review will include a candidate self-evaluation as well as feedback from all faculty working with the candidate that year. A summary of the results will be provided in the Program Assessment System and shared with each candidate individually. The data collected for this feedback will include:

**Self-Evaluation Data:** The Self-Evaluation rating form will be completed by candidates through an online Qualtrics Survey. The items on the self-evaluation will be consistent with those on the Faulty Evaluation described below. The items will measure a variety of professional behaviors and student academic performance.

**Faculty Evaluation Data:** All psychology faculty who work with school psychology graduate candidates at any level will be asked to complete an online Faculty Feedback Survey using Qualtrics. This will be completed at the end of the candidates’ first year in the program and will consist of the same items as the Candidate Self-Evaluation rating form.

**(*See Appendix B: Assessment of Candidate Performance for more information*)**

**Relationship Between NASP Standards, Course-Work, and Candidate Assessments**

Each of the courses within the school psychology program is designed to address the knowledge and skills involved in one or more of the different training domains as established by NASP’s *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists (2020)*. Within each course, the candidates are graded based on their acquisition of knowledge and skills within those domains most closely associated with that course. In addition, practicum and internship requirements are designed to assess knowledge and skill development within each of these domains. Finally, within several courses, service learning projects will be included that will help candidates develop a better understanding of how these domains relate to families, community agencies, and school services.

A description of each NASP training domain, the courses that have primary coverage within each domain, and the assessments related to each domain are provided below. Other courses address many of these domains as well, but the courses listed are those that have primarily responsible for covering information within that domain.

**Practices that Permeate All Aspects of Service Delivery**

**Data-Based Decision-Making**: School psychologists understand and utilize assessment methods for identifying strengths and needs; for developing effective interventions, services, and programs; and for measuring progress and outcomes within a multitiered system of supports. School psychologists use a problem-solving framework as the basis for all professional activities. School psychologists systematically collect data from multiple sources as a foundation for decision making at the individual, group, and systems levels, and consider ecological factors (e.g., classroom, family, and community characteristics) as a context for assessment and intervention.

**Primary courses:** PSY 663, 661, 664

**Related courses:** PSY 622, 695, 665, Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Praxis Scores, Alumni Surveys, and Completion of Research Requirements

**Consultation and Collaboration**: School psychologists understand varied models and strategies of consultation and collaboration applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems, as well as methods to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with others.

**Primary courses:** PSY 623, 675, 622

**Related courses:** PSY 664, 676, Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Direct and Indirect Services: Student Level Services**

**Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports:** School psychologists understand the biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, use assessment and data collection methods to implement and evaluate services that support academic skill development in children.

**Primary courses:** PSY 622, 623, 695

**Related courses:** PSY 664, PSY 665, Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions:** School psychologists understand the biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on mental and behavioral health; behavioral and emotional impacts on learning; and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning.

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that promote resilience and positive behavior, support socialization and adaptive skills, and enhance mental and behavioral health.

**Primary courses:** PSY 674, 675, 676

**Related courses:** PSY 663, Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Direct and Indirect Services: System Level Services**

**School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning:** School psychologists understand systems’ structures, organization, and theory; general and special education programming; implementation science; and evidence-based school-wide practices that promote learning, positive behavior, and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain safe, effective, and supportive learning environments for students and school staff.

**Primary courses:** PSY 673, 695, 683/684

**Related courses:** PSY 622, 623 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Intern Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, and Alumni Surveys

**Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools:** School psychologists understand principles and research related to social–emotional well-being, resilience, and risk factors in learning, mental and behavioral health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention and health promotion, and evidence-based strategies for creating safe and supportive schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, promote preventive and responsive services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, and psychological and physical safety and implement effective crisis prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.

**Primary Courses:** PSY 673, 675, 676

**Related courses:** PSY 695 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Family, School, and Community Collaboration:** School psychologists understand principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and cultures; evidence-based strategies to support positive family influences on children’s learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context. They facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies to enhance academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children.

**Primary courses:** PSY 623, 624, 695

**Related courses:** PSY 674, 675, 676 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery**

**Equitable Practice for Diverse Student Populations:** School psychologists have knowledge of, and inherent respect for, individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics and the effects they have on development and learning. They also understand principles and research related to diversity in children, families, schools, and communities, including factors related to child development, religion, culture and cultural identity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, and other variables. School psychologists implement evidence-based strategies to enhance services in both general and special education and to address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds through an ecological lens across multiple contexts. School psychologists 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.

**Primary courses:** PSY 624, 674, 663

**Related courses:** PSY 673, 695 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Practicum/Internship Portfolio Ratings, Self-Evaluation Rating Form, Faculty Feedback Form, and Alumni Surveys

**Research and Evidence-Based Practice:** School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, and varied data collection and analysis techniques sufficient for understanding research, interpreting data, and evaluating programs in applied settings. As scientist practitioners, school psychologists evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, and analysis to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

**Primary courses:** PSY 651, 652, 695

**Related courses:** PSY 673 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Self-Evaluation Rating Form, Faculty Feedback Form, Alumni Surveys, and completion of Research Requirement

**Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice:** School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists. School psychologists provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, technological competence, advocacy skills, respect for human diversity, and a commitment to social justice and equity.

**Primary courses:** PSY 673, 695

**Related courses:** PSY 661 Practicum & Internship

**Assessed:** Grades in courses listed above, Practicum/Internship Supervisor Evaluation Forms, Self-Evaluation Rating Form, Faculty Feedback Form, Praxis Scores, and Alumni Surveys

**Program Support and Candidate Responsibilities**

There are a variety of resources and supports available to assist school psychology candidates in graduate study at WCU. These resources include faculty, fellow graduate candidates, library resources, IT support, course materials, seminars, professional development opportunities, community agencies, financial support, and professional organizations in the field. We encourage all candidates to take advantage of the resources available to them and to seek out support as needed.

One of the most important resource will be your **program director.** This person will assist with much of the paperwork necessary for the orderly administration of the graduate program. Please keep the director of the program aware of any changes that may develop over the course of your program. Additionally, the department should be informed in writing of changes of address, telephone numbers, etc., in case we need to contact you.

Other **psychology department faculty** will also be available to assist candidates in specific course requirements, research requirements, and overall support. Close work with faculty is considered to be an important component of the school psychology program at WCU. Various means of communication with faculty are available to candidates including university e-mail, on-line course development through Blackboard, and all candidates are provided with a mailbox located in Killian. Candidates should check their student email regularly and closely for important information provided by the program, the Psychology department, and their professors/supervisors.

Candidates should also view their **fellow candidates** as an important source of support. You are encouraged to discuss issues, look for second opinions, and share your thinking with other students. You will be required to work collaboratively with your fellow students on many different projects and your ability to do so will be an important component of your overall progress in this program.

A limited number of **graduate assistantships** are available to candidates in this program. Stipends vary based on the type of assistantship and number of hours worked. Candidates are encouraged to accept assistantships provided to them as they offer invaluable experiences such as working with a professional conducting research, working with campus partners, or assisting a professor in course development and implementation.

Additional **financial assistance** is available through the department, graduate school, and at the state level. The program director will provide candidates with information about all available financial assistance and candidates are encouraged to seek out as many different opportunities as possible.

Another important source of support for school psychology graduate candidates is involvement in **state and national professional organizations**. Candidates can receive reduced membership rates to a number of professional organizations. As a member of these organizations, you will receive journals and newsletters, which provide information about current practices in the field and research interests of other professionals. Members also receive access to a wealth of information provided on the websites for these organizations. Additionally, many organizations have yearly conferences where cutting-edge research and newly developed assessment instruments are presented. Participation in professional organizations is highly recommended as the field of school psychology is constantly changing. Candidates are especially encouraged to join and get involved with the **North Carolina School Psychology Association (NCSPA)** and the **National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**.

Candidates in this program will have many opportunities to become involved in **other professional activities and leadership opportunities** outside of their course requirements. This includes service learning projects, presentations to undergraduates at this and other universities about the field of school psychology, assistance to school systems on various projects, research presentations at conferences, NCSPA student representation, NASP student leadership, student representation on WCU committees, etc. All candidates are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities and to view them as part of their learning experience in order to develop leadership skills.

While all of this support is important, it is also important that each candidate in the school psychology graduate program recognize their own **responsibilities** in completing this program. You will be expected to monitor your own progress and complete all program and paperwork requirements leading to successful graduation from the program. In order to do that, you will need to become familiar with the policies and procedures of the graduate school, department, and program.

Finally, this program provides opportunities for candidates to develop **personal and professional self-care strategies**. A Personal and Professional Development worksheet is available for students to use in this process. This worksheet encourages candidates to develop personal and professional goals, develop strategies for meeting those goals, and monitor progress in meeting those goals. This worksheet will also encourage candidates to develop and monitor a self-care action plan. The development of these personal and professional self-care skills as a graduate students will be important for success as a future school psychologist.

**Appendix A**

##### School Psychology Course Schedule

**Fall 1st Year**

PSY 651 Advanced Research Methods and Statistics I 4

PSY 661 Psychological Assessment I 4

PSY 674 Advanced Child Psychopathology 3

PSY 673 Professional Issues 3

Introduction to Research Seminar 0

14 hours

**Spring 1st Year**

PSY 675 Cognitive Behavioral Interventions I 3

PSY 622 Academic Interventions & Settings 3

PSY 652 Advanced Research Methods and Statistics II 3

PSY 664 Psychological Assessment II 3

PSY 623 School-Based Consultation 3

15 hours

**Fall 2nd Year**

PSY 624 Advanced Child & Adolescent Development 3

PSY 665 Psychological Assessment III 3

PSY 676 School-Based Mental and Behavioral Health 3

PSY 686 Practicum in Psychology I (Clinic or School-Based) 3

PSY 699 Thesis (For Students Choosing Thesis Option) 3

12/15 hours

**Spring 2nd Year**

PSY 695 Advanced Professional Development 3

PSY 663 Assessment and Intervention with Preschool Children 3

Elective  3

PSY 686 Practicum in Psychology II (Clinic or School-Based) 3

PSY 699 Thesis (For Students Choosing Thesis Option) 3

12/15 hours

**Fall 3rd Year**

PSY 683 Internship in Psychology 6

PSY 680 Applied Research Project (For Students Choosing 3

Research Project Option) 9 hours

**Spring 3rd Year**

PSY 684 Internship in Psychology 6

PSY 680 Applied Research Project (For Students Choosing 3

Research Project Option) 9 hours

**APPENDIX B**

**Assessment of Candidate Performance**

The progress of candidates through the WCU School Psychology Graduate Program will be monitored continuously based on two different sets of factors:

1. ***Knowledge & Skills***: demonstrated through performance on specific coursework, course grades, and performance on practicum & internship requirements
2. ***Professional Dispositions***: demonstrated through behaviors such as interpersonal interaction skills, time-management, personal reflection, work habits, etc.; these will be observed through completion of coursework requirements, in-class behaviors, interaction with peers, and work with practicum, internship, & assistantship supervisors.

The program director, who also serves as the primary advisor to candidates, will be responsible for gathering data on each candidate in the program. Candidates will be provided feedback on a regular basis regarding their progress. This feedback will be both informal and formal. Decisions regarding candidates’ standing in the program will be made at specific key points in the program including:

1. During advising each semester based on review of Professional Development Worksheet and informal feedback from faculty
2. Between semesters based on grades
3. At the end of 1st year based on faculty and self-evaluations
4. Prior to entering, during, and at the completion of Clinic & School-Based Practicum
5. Prior to entering, during, and at the completion of Internship

The assessment data collected on all candidates is outlined in the following chart:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Entry into Program** | **Coursework and Professional Development** | **Practica (Field –Based & Clinic)** | **Internship** | **Exit from Program** |
| GRE  GPA  Vita  Personal Statement  References  Interview | *Course Work*  Course Grades *Self-Evaluations* Professional Development Worksheet (once per semester)  Advising Feedback  Self-Evaluation Rating Form (end of 1st year)  *Faculty Feedback*  Advising Feedback (once per semester)  Faculty Feedback Form (end of 1st year) | Field-Based Rating on one Psychological Report, two Counseling Reports, & one Case Study Report  Field-Based Practicum Midterm Site Visit Report  Field-Based Practicum Supervisor Evaluation  Candidate Practicum Review  Field-Based Practicum Log Data Clinic Rating on one Psychological Report  Clinic Supervisor Evaluation  Candidate Practicum Review  Clinic Practicum Log Data  *Overall*  Overall Practicum Evaluation | Ratings on four Psychological Reports, four Counseling Reports, and two Case Study Reports  Field-Based Internship Supervisor Evaluations (mid & end of year)  Candidate Internship Review  Internship Log Data  Overall Internship Evaluation | Completion and Defense of Thesis  Or  Completion of Internship Application Research Project  Praxis II  Graduate Satisfaction Survey  Employer Satisfaction Survey |

***\*\*Program Rubrics used to rate practicum and internship assignments are provided in the School Psychology Program Assessment System Blackboard site.***

Formal Feedback Process:

At least once each semester, during advising, candidates will complete an update of the Professional Development Worksheet (see below) and then meet individually with the program director. At that time, data collected (grades; informal feedback from instructors, GA supervisors, research supervisors etc.; and practicum/internship feedback) will be shared and discussed. A summary of the information discussed as well as feedback provided during advising will be provided to students in the School Psychology Program Assessment System including feedback in the following areas:

1. Coursework
2. Thesis/Research Project
3. Assistantship
4. Practicum/Internship
5. Professional Behaviors

At the conclusion of each of these advising meetings, candidates will be given a program rating of ***Acceptable, At-Risk, or Unacceptable*** in terms of their progress toward graduation. In addition to an overall rating, candidates will be given individual feedback regarding their progress. A rating of At-Risk will lead to the development of an Action Plan, which will entail a collaborative process between the program director, other school psychology faculty, and the candidate of concern. A rating of Unacceptable can be given only when a candidate has received a previous rating of At-Risk, been placed on an Action Plan, and not made significant improvement based on that plan. A rating of Unacceptable will lead to dismissal from the program.

Additional meetings with the program director/advisor or any other faculty member can occur at any time if a review of progress is necessitated due to concerns raised. Documentation of issues discussed at these meetings will be provided and noted in the candidate’s next advising feedback form. Based on the outcome of any of these meetings, an Action Plan can be developed as described above and that Action Plan can be reviewed at any time.

There are some behaviors that will lead to immediate dismissal from the program without implementation of an action plan first. This includes any clear indications of academic cheating/dishonesty and other serious ethical violations.

Candidates may appeal any academic action taken by the program. The process for an ***Academic Action Appeal*** can be found at the following link: [http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=26&navoid=492#Academic\_Action\_Appeal](http://catalog.wcu.edu/content.php?catoid=26&navoid=492)

**APPENDIX C**

**Professional Development**

**WCU School Psychology**

**Personal and Professional Development Planning Worksheet**

The purpose of this worksheet is to help school psychology graduate students develop personally and professionally.  Each graduate candidate will begin using this worksheet as they enter the program and each semester the worksheet will be updated as needed based on experiences around coursework, community activities, leadership activities, professional association activities etc.  At the end of the program, the work done in this worksheet will culminate with the development of an early career professional development plan. The information provided in this worksheet will also be used by the candidates in developing their Vitas, preparing job applications, and preparing for job interviews.

The areas addressed within this worksheet include:

* Professional Goals
* Personal & Professional Strengths
* Personal & Professional Weaknesses/Needs
* Experiences (Practicum/Internship/Service Learning/Leadership/etc.)
* Development of Knowledge & Skills within the NASP Standards
* Personal Development: Self-Care Action Plan

Each candidate will input initial information into this worksheet at the beginning of the 1st year in the program.  Each semester, at the time of advising, the candidates will be asked to review and update the worksheet in preparation for meeting with their advisor.  They will also be encouraged to update at the end of each semester.  These updated worksheets will be posted within the School Psychology Program Assessment System for easy access by the Program Director.

**Professional Goals**

Initial goals should be made based on initial understanding of school psychology, personal statement provided when applying to the program, discussion with undergraduate faculty etc.

Updates to the goals should be based on experiences in graduate coursework, practicum/internship experiences, services learning/community experiences, leadership experiences, discussion with faculty etc. If there are no changes that need to be made to the goals, that can be indicated as well.

As the Goals are listed on this chart, also consider steps or activities that are needed to meet these goals.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date:** | **Goals (update as needed and provide steps or activities planned to meet the goals)** |
| Program Entrance |  |
| Fall 1st year Advising |  |
| Spring 1st year Advising |  |
| End of 1st year |  |
| Fall 2nd year Advising |  |
| Spring 2nd year Advising |  |
| End of 2nd year |  |
| Fall 3rd year Advising |  |
| Spring 3rd year Advising |  |
| Exit from Program |  |

**Personal & Professional Strengths**

For each of the time periods indicated identify your own personal and professional strengths and how you would use these strengths for your own professional development.  Initially, the use of your strengths will focus on development as a candidate but later this should shift to your development as a professional school psychologist.  You may or may not add to your strengths over time but whether those change or not you should still consider how you can use those strengths in different ways as you grow professionally.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | **Strengths (update as needed):** | **Use of Strengths for Professional Development (update as needed):** |
| Program Entrance |  |  |
| Fall 1st year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 1st year Advising |  |  |
| End of 1st year |  |  |
| Fall 2nd year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 2nd year Advising |  |  |
| End of 2nd year |  |  |
| Fall 3rd year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 3rd year Advising |  |  |
| Exit from Program |  |  |

**Personal & Professional Weaknesses/Needs**

For each of the time periods indicated identify your own personal and professional weaknesses/needs and strategies that you will use to address these weaknesses/needs in your professional development.  Initially, the strategies that you use to address your weaknesses will focus on development as a candidate but later this should shift to your development as a professional school psychologist.  You may or may not add to or take away your identified weaknesses/needs over time but whether there are changes or not you should still consider strategies that you can use to address these weaknesses/needs as you grow professionally.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | **Weaknesses/Needs (update as needed):** | **Strategies to Address Weaknesses/Needs within Professional Development (update as needed):** |
| Program Entrance |  |  |
| Fall 1st year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 1st year Advising |  |  |
| End of 1st year |  |  |
| Fall 2nd year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 2nd year Advising |  |  |
| End of 2nd year |  |  |
| Fall 3rd year Advising |  |  |
| Spring 3rd year Advising |  |  |
| Exit from Program |  |  |

**Practicum/Internship/Community Service/Leadership Experiences**

Throughout the program, you will be engaged in a variety of hands-on experiences.  Following each of these experiences, you are encouraged to take the time to reflect on what you learned from those experiences that contributed or will contribute to your professional development.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Experiences:** | **Reflection on Contribution of Experiences to Professional Development:** |
| Clinic Practicum |  |
| Field Based Practicum |  |
| Service Learning Activities |  |
| Internship |  |
| Other Community Activities |  |
| Program or Professional Association Leadership Activities |  |
| Other |  |

**Development of Knowledge & Skills Within NASP Standards**

Training within this program is based on the standards outlined in the NASP Practice Model.  <http://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model>

The development of knowledge and skills within each of the standards is key to professional development.  Throughout the program as you complete coursework, attend workshops and conferences, engage in community activities, etc. you should be thinking about the knowledge and skills that you have obtained and how that knowledge and those skills are related to the NASP standards.  That information should be summarized briefly in the chart below.  It will be best if you add to this on a regular basis and then review at the time of advising and when developing the Professional Goals Strategic Plan (see below).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NASP Practice Model Standards** |  | | |
|  | **Date** | **Activity** | **Knowledge & Skills Obtained** |
| Data-Based Decision Making |  |  |  |
| Consultation and Collaboration |  |  |  |
| Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports |  |  |  |
| Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions |  |  |  |
| School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning |  |  |  |
| Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools |  |  |  |
| Family, School, and Community Collaboration |  |  |  |
| Equitable Practices to for Diverse Student Populations |  |  |  |
| Research and Evidence-Based Practice |  |  |  |
| Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice |  |  |  |

**Personal Development: Self-Care Action Plan**

The development of self-care strategies is as important for school psychology students as any other professional development. Each graduate candidate will complete this Action Plan as they enter the program and each semester the plans will be evaluated and next steps identified. Candidates are encouraged to consider all six different areas of self-care in completing this Action Plan. Up to three actions can be included in each self-care area.

1. **Personal Self-Care:** The things that I do to take care of my body in healthy ways. Examples include: sleep; nutrition; exercise; and, regular health care visits.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Emotional Self-Care:** The things I do to take care of my feelings in healthy ways. Examples include: maintaining personal and professional support systems; counseling and/or therapy as needed; journaling; and talking about feelings in healthy ways.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Cognitive Self-Care:** The things I do to take care of my mind and understand myself better. Examples include: reading for pleasure or work; writing; and engaging in continued education for additional knowledge/skill.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Social Self-Care:** The things that I do in relation to others and the world around me. Examples include: spending time with friends, family, and colleagues you enjoy; having fun and playing; belonging to groups, communities and activities that encourage positive social connections.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Financial Self-Care:** The things I do to spend and save responsibly. Examples include: balancing a checking account; planning for the future; and spending money in thoughtful ways.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Spiritual Self-Care:** The things I do to gain perspective on my life. Examples include: prayer; meditation; contact with nature; connection with god or a Higher Power; participating in worship with a community; and 12-Step Recovery.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action:** | **Date Reviewed:** | **Next Step (continue, change, or stop):** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**APPENDIX D**

**Program Assessment System Guidelines**

The WCU School Psychology Graduate Program collects information that can be used by the program to provide documentation for various accrediting agencies. It hoped that the information collected can also be used by the candidates to identify progress in meeting program requirements and to reflect on their learning experiences. These two goals can be met only if the candidates are consistent in providing submissions as required and faculty members are consistent in providing feedback and evaluations to the candidates based on their submissions. Below is a detailed outline of candidate and faculty expectations:

Information about the new Program Assessment System will be provided here.

There are a total of 4 areas in which Assessment data is collectedwithin the School Psychology Program:

1. **Professional Development**
2. **Field-Based Practicum**
3. **Clinic-Based Practicum**
4. **Internship**

The specific expectations for each of these Assessment areas are described below:

**Professional Development Assessment System Activities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date:** | **Activity:** | **Candidate Responsibility:** | **Faculty/Supervisor Responsibility:** |
| Fall 1st year: Middle | Initial Personal and Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advising |
| Fall 1st year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |
| Spring 1st year: Middle | Updated Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advisory |
| Spring 1st year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |
| Spring 1st year: End | Candidate Self-Evaluation | Prior to individual feedback session, complete rating of self on various professional behaviors | Reviewed by Program Director indicating requirement met and incorporated into feedback session |
| Spring 1st year: End | Faculty & Self-Evaluation Feedback Summary | None | Completed by Program Director based on Candidate Self-Evaluation and Faculty Feedback Survey data and shared with the candidate during the individual feedback sessions. |
| Fall 2nd year: Middle | Updated Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advisory |
| Fall 2nd year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |
| Spring 2nd year: Middle | Updated Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advisory |
| Spring 2nd year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |
| Fall 3rd year: Middle | Updated Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advisory |
| Fall 3rd year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |
| Spring 3rd year: Middle | Updated Professional Development Worksheet | Submit completed worksheet | Reviewed by Program Director during Advisory |
| Spring 3rd year: Middle | Advising Feedback | None | Provided by the Program Director and reviewed with the candidate. |

**Field-Based Practicum Assessment System Activities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date:** | **Activity:** | **Candidate Responsibility:** | **Faculty/Supervisor Responsibility:** |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Psychological Assessment | Submit one Psychological Assessment Report | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Individual and Group Counseling | Submit one Individual and one Group Counseling Report | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Academic or Behavioral Case Study | Submit Case Study Report | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Midterm Evaluation Report | None | University Supervisor will provide a report following the midterm site visits. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Supervisor Evaluation | Notify Field-Based Supervisor of the need to do this. | Field-Based Supervisor completes and reviews with the candidate. University Supervisor and Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Candidate Review of Practicum | Complete and submit the Candidate Review of Practicum Worksheet following a review of the Supervisor Evaluation with the Field-Based Supervisor | University Supervisor and Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Activity Logs | Submit 3 Logs following directions provided and using the Log form provided by the University Supervisor  Notify Field-Based supervisor that these Logs need to be reviewed as they are submitted | University Supervisor will review following the review of the Field-Based Supervisor and confirm that the requirement has been met. Program Director confirms completion. |

**Clinic-Based Practicum Assessment System Activities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date:** | **Tk20 Activity:** | **Candidate Responsibility:** | **Faculty/Supervisor Responsibility:** |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Psychological Assessment | Submit one Psychological Assessment Report | Clinic-Based Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Supervisor Evaluation | None | Clinic-Based Supervisor completes and reviews with the candidate. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Candidate Review of Practicum | Complete and submit the Candidate Review of Practicum Worksheet following a review of the Supervisor Evaluation with the Supervisor. | Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 2nd year | Activity Logs | Submit 3 Logs following directions provided and using the Log form provided by the University Supervisor  Notify Clinic-Based supervisor that these Logs need to be reviewed as they are submitted | Program Director will review following the review of the Clinic-Based Supervisor and confirm that the requirement has been met. |

**Internship Assessment System Activities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date:** | **Task Stream Activity:** | **Candidate Responsibility:** | **Faculty/Supervisor Responsibility:** |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Psychological Assessments | Submit four Psychological Assessment Reports | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Individual and Group Counseling | Submit two Individual Counseling Reports and two Group Counseling Reports | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Academic and Behavioral Case Studies | Submit one Academic Case Study Report and one Behavior Case Study Report | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Supervisor Evaluations | One will be completed end of Fall semester and one end of Spring Semester  Notify Internship Supervisor of the need to do this. | Internship Supervisor completes and reviews with the candidate. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Candidate Reviews of Internship | Complete and submit the Candidate Review of Internship Worksheet following a review of each of the Supervisor Evaluations with the Supervisor | University Supervisor will review the Supervisor Evaluation following the candidate’s completion of the Candidate Review of Internship and confirm that the requirement has been met. Program Director confirms completion. |
| Fall or Spring semester 3rd year | Activity Logs | Submit 6 Logs following directions provided and using the Log form provided by the University Supervisor  Notify Internship supervisor that these Logs need to be reviewed as they are submitted | University Supervisor will review following the review of the Internship Supervisor and confirm that the requirement has been met. Program Director confirms completion. |
| End of 3rd Year | Overall Practicum Evaluation | Submit final Candidate Review of Practicum Worksheet | University Supervisor will review and provide a rating using the form provided. Program Director confirms completion. |

**Appendix F**

**Program Research Requirements**

**School Psychology Graduate Program Research Requirements**

**INTRODUCTION**

The development of research skills is an important component of the school psychology graduate

program. School psychologists need to understand research and statistics so that they can access

information from the research literature, share research findings with personnel in schools or

other agencies, and conduct and/or assist others in completing and interpreting research at the

school and agency level. These are important skills whether the candidate plans to work in a

school or agency or whether they plan to later pursue a doctoral degree in the field. The

development of these skills is accomplished through a variety of activities completed throughout

the program including:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **PROGRAM SCHEDULE** |
| Completion of 2 Research and Statistics Courses:   * PSY 651: Advanced Research Methods and Statistics I * PSY 652: Advanced Research Methods and Statistics II | Year 1  1st & 2nd semester |
| Participation in School Psychology Research Seminar:   * Occasional meetings throughout Fall 1st year & periodically Spring 1st year as needed * Led by School Psychology Faculty * Goal is to help students develop a comprehensive understanding of research and prepare for completion of the program research requirements | Year 1  1st & 2nd semester |
| PSY 673: Professional Issues   * Introduction to the NASP Practice Model Domain regarding Research * Identification of possible research questions in education and school psychology * Completion of a Literature Review and Presentation (Poster or 3 min. thesis) | Year 1  1st semester |
| Attendance at Research Presentations:   * Psychology Department Research Colloquiums * Graduate School 3-minute Thesis Competition * NCSPA Conference Sessions & Poster Presentations * Graduate School Research Symposium * NASP Convention Sessions & Poster Presentations * Other Research Presentations (WCU or Regionally) * Webinars available through the NASP website and other professional organizations | Various opportunities during Year 1 & Year 2 |
| PSY 695: Advanced Professional Issues:   * Course training will include applied school-based research * Course options will include plans for completing Applied Research Project during internship | Year 2  2nd semester |
| Other Research Practice Opportunities:   * Completion of Research Reviews and Papers in various courses * Research Presentations in various courses * 3 min. Thesis Presentations * Work with faculty on other research projects of interest | Various opportunities during Year 1 & Year 2 |
| Completion of either a Thesis or an Applied Research Project   * Thesis (PSY 699)   + Required for any student wanting to apply to the WCU PsyD program following completion of MA degree requirements   + Optional for others interested in later consideration of doctoral programs * Applied Internship Research Project (PSY 680)   + Required for students completing Internship hours in their 3rd year\* if Thesis not completed.   \*Highly motivated students with clear access to data may be given the opportunity to complete research projects earlier than their internship year (Year 3) | Thesis will be completed Year 1 & Year 2  Applied Research Project will be completed Year 3\* |

**OPTIONS FOR COMPLETING RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS**

By the end of the 1st semester of their 1st year in the program, all students are expected to have made a decision as to how they will be completing their research requirements. There are several options to choose from and students are encouraged to spend a lot of time exploring these options. More details regarding completion of these options will be provided below.

**Option #1:** Students who plan to apply for the WCU PsyD program during their 2nd year in the program or those who are seriously considering completing a doctoral program in the future:

* These students will need to complete a Thesis with the following timeline:
  + Chair and topic selected by beginning of 2nd semester of 1st year in the program
  + Prospectus completed and defended by the beginning of the 1st semester of the 2nd year in the program
  + Thesis completed and defended by the end of the 2nd year in the program

**Option #2:** Students who do not have plans for completing a doctoral program including the PsyD program at WCU in the future who have the ultimate goal of obtaining the SSP degree and practicing in the schools/other applied agencies:

* These students will need to complete an Applied Research Project with the following timeline:
  + Topics of interest selected by the end of the 1st year in the program & further developed during the 2nd year in the program. Topics should be shared with the student’s selected internship site during their 2nd year in the program at which point topics will be finalized.
  + Research Proposal completed and defended by the beginning of the 3rd year in the program prior to entering internship (could happen any time during 2nd year in program)
  + Final Research Presentation completed by end of 3rd year in the program\*

**\*** Highly motivated students with clear access to data may be given the opportunity to complete research projects earlier than their internship year (Year 3)

**RESEARCH REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES**

Detailed information regarding the completion of each of these options is provided below. The information is organized in the following way:

**Content**

Thesis Guidelines

Applied Research Project Guidelines

Research Appendix A: Research Writing Guidelines

Research Appendix B: Research Ethical Considerations

Research Appendix C: Oral and Written Thesis Prospectus Rating Forms

Research Appendix D: Applied Research Project Rating Form

Research Appendix E: Research Financial Assistance

**Thesis Guidelines**

**Purpose of the Thesis**

The purpose of the thesis is to provide school psychology graduate candidates a way to formally demonstrate both research and content knowledge competency. Thesis projects can make use of qualitative or quantitative methods depending on the nature of the research. The scientific merit of the project (including research methods) must be approved by the candidate's chair and a selected committee during an initial prospectus defense and during the final thesis defense.

**Thesis Procedural Requirements**

To help ensure high quality theses and a fair, constructive evaluation process, the Psychology department has developed the following procedural guidelines. There are only slight differences in requirements for school psychology candidates compared to other graduate candidates in psychology and those differences are primarily related to timing. These requirements supplement those described in the [Thesis Guide](https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/gs_thesis_guide.pdf) provided by the WCU Graduate School. In addition to these Procedural Requirements, Guidelines for Writing the Thesis are provided in Appendix A and Ethical Research Guidelines are provided in Appendix B of this document.

The Thesis must be completed by the end of the 2nd year in the program if a school psychology graduate candidate intends to apply to the WCU PsyD program. The deadline for the completion of the thesis can be extended to the beginning of the 3rd year in the program for those students who are interested in waiting to apply to doctoral program until after they have completed the Specialist Degree and have spent some time working in the schools.

**Thesis Course Requirements**

All school psychology graduate candidates who choose to complete a Thesis must enroll in two 3 hour Thesis courses (PSY 699) for a total of 6 hours.

* For those candidates applying to the PsyD program these courses must be taken during the Fall and Spring semesters of their second year in the program. If unable to complete the Thesis by the end of the 2nd year in the program, candidates will be allowed to enroll in PSY 799 during the following summer semester in order to complete this requirement. Candidates must complete their thesis prior to receiving their Masters degree in General Psychology with a concentration in School Psychology in order to be eligible for enrollment if accepted into the PsyD program.
* For those candidates completing their internship the 3rd year in the SSP program and waiting until later to apply for a doctoral program, these courses must be taken during their 3rd year in the program making it possible for these candidates to have full-time student status. However, it is expected that these students will have completed most their thesis work prior to entering their 3rd year in the SSP program and able to complete their Thesis defense early in that 3rd year in the program.

**Committee Members**

1. The composition of each thesis committee should conform to the following guidelines as often as possible
   1. Thesis committees may only be comprised of three (3) members. Two (2) members must be full-time psychology faculty members (including psychology department courtesy appointments).
   2. The thesis chair must be full time member of the Psychology Graduate Faculty or Psychology Department Courtesy Appointment of the University.
   3. The third member of the committee may be a faculty member from a different department who holds graduate faculty status.
2. If, in consultation with the thesis chair, it is decided that a different composition is needed for membership of a committee then the thesis chair must submit a written request supporting an alternative composition. This request should include justification for this change and be sent to the chair of the Psychology Graduate Committee. The chair will forward this request on to the rest of the committee who will vote by email. A majority vote in favor of the alternative composition will be needed in order to move forward.
3. If a candidate is considering a thesis chair who is not a full-time member of the Psychology Graduate Faculty or a Psychology Department Courtesy Appointment, this needs to addressed with the Program Director and the Program Director will need to send to the Psychology Graduate Committee a request for such a change including justification for why this change would benefit the candidate’s thesis work. This request should be sent to the chair of the Psychology Graduate Committee who will forward the request on to the rest of the committee. An email vote will be taken and a majority vote will be needed for approval of the request.
4. Any changes to the membership of a thesis committee may only be done before a draft of the prospectus is ever distributed to the committee members. No changes to the committee membership are allowed after the thesis prospectus has been distributed with only extreme exceptions (e.g., a committee member departs the university).
5. If a candidate finds that an already defended prospectus is untenable (e.g., data are no longer available or are impossible to collect), then the candidate *may* form a new committee *but* a new prospectus ***must*** be defended in both oral and written form.
6. Consultation with an expert outside of thesis committee is allowed as a non-voting member. Only the thesis committee may require adoption or rejection of outside expert’s recommendations, and their ratings are not counted towards total scores on the thesis prospectus. However, the non-voting member may participate in both the written and oral defense process.

**Development of the Prospectus**

See writing guidelines below in Appendix A

**Defending the Prospectus**

The determination of whether a prospectus is ready to be defended is up to the discretion of the thesis chair. Candidates may not send a prospectus to the committee without approval from the chair. After approval for defense from the chair, a prospectus must be sent to the committee with one (1) week of advance to allow sufficient time for review. During the review time, the committee members a) Evaluate and grade the written product and b) Prepare thoughtful, constructive criticism for the project. The committee members must grade the written product using the corresponding form (Appendix B below) to be completed before the oral defense.

A written prospectus must meet the following criteria to pass:

-Clear, thorough, relevant, and up to date literature review of the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of the idea being tested.

-Clear “statement of the problem” or “purpose of the study” that must be well linked to the literature review in the introduction.

-The methodology must be appropriate to answer the question at hand.

-Significant results are NOT a requirement for a project to be successful. However a clear explanation of the findings, linkage to the extant literature and thoughtful conclusions are necessary for a project to be deemed worthy of a passing grade.

During the oral defense the candidate is expected to provide a cogent presentation of the project and allow for sufficient time to field questions about the project. After the oral defense, the committee discusses the oral defense, grades it using the Oral Defense form (see Appendix B below) and tallies scores to determine whether the candidate has passed or failed.

During the oral defense the candidate should be able to accurately demonstrate:

- Understanding and dominion of the background literature,

- Understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the study,

- Understanding of the research methods and data analyses,

- Understanding of the implications/applications of potential findings of the study.

**Action following Successful Prospectus Defense**

* Send Abstract with [Abstract Cover Sheet](https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/GS_Abstract_thesis.pdf) signed by committee (directions provided in the Graduate Schools Thesis Guide linked above). This has to be submitted prior to enrolling in any PSY 699 classes.
* Complete an IRB application if project is not already IRB-approved or IRB-exempt
* Complete research, analysis, and writing of Thesis under supervision of Thesis Chair. Turn final product in to the graduate program within the established deadlines (consult graduate school website).

**Action following Unsuccessful Prospectus Defense**

* School Psychology candidates will be given a second chance to defend their Prospectus as long as it is determined that there would still be enough time for the candidate to complete the final Thesis defense in the time-frame required:
  + End of 2nd semester of 2nd year for those applying to accepted into the PsyD program.
  + Beginning of 3rd year in the program for those completing their internship and applying for doctoral programs at a later date.

**Defending the Final Thesis**

The determination of whether a Thesis is ready to be defended is up to the discretion of the thesis chair. Candidates may not send a Thesis to the committee without approval from the chair. After approval for defense from the chair, a thesis must be sent to the committee with one (1) week of advance to allow sufficient time for review. The committee must grade the written product using the corresponding form (Appendix C) prior to the oral defense.

**Action following Successful Thesis Defense**

* Get signatures on the [Defense Approval Form](https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/GS_Thesis-Dissertation_Final_Abstract_Approval_Form.pdf)
* Complete all editing requested by the committee
* Assistance with editing can be obtained by contacting Bobbi Smith at the

Graduate School Office: [bobbismith@wcu.edu](mailto:bobbismith@wcu.edu) 828-227-2925

* Submit to the graduate school following the guidelines provided in the Thesis

Guide

**Action following Unsuccessful Thesis Defense**

* The thesis committee can decide whether the candidate will be allowed a second attempt to successfully defend the thesis or whether the candidate has failed the thesis which would result in the candidate not being able to graduate from the program.

**Applied Research Project Guidelines**

**Purpose of the Applied Research Project**

The purpose of the Applied Research Project is to provide school psychology graduate candidates a way to formally demonstrate both research competency and content knowledge competency with an emphasis on applied research within school or other agency settings. The completion of these projects should allow students to develop an understanding of how applied research can be conducted to meet the needs as identified within schools and agencies.

**Applied Research Project Procedural Requirements**

The following procedural guidelines have been developed to ensure the completion of high quality Applied Research Projects and a fair and constructive process for evaluating these projects. In addition to these Procedural Requirements, Guidelines for Research Writing are provided in Appendix A and Ethical Research Guidelines are provided in Appendix B of this document.

**Timeline & Course Enrollment Requirements**

School Psychology graduate candidates who choose to complete an Applied Research Project enroll in a 3-hour Independent Research course (PSY 680) during both the Fall and Spring semesters of their third year while on Internship (6 hours total). Students can begin initial planning for the Applied Research Project during Years 1 and 2 in the program:

* While it is expected that most students will complete their applied research projects during their internship year (Year 3), highly motivated students with clear access to data may be given the opportunity to complete research projects earlier than Year 3.
* If prior school or agency connections have not been made, candidates need to begin further planning their Applied Research Projects as soon as they have identified an internship site during the Spring semester of their 2nd year so that they can have an approved Applied Research Project ready to implement as they enter their internship.

Even if candidates begin their Applied Research Projects earlier, they do not enroll in Independent Research hours until Fall of their 3rd year. If a candidate is unable to complete their Applied Research Project by the end of their third year, they will need to enroll in a 2 hour PSY 799 Thesis section each semester until their project is completed and they are then eligible for graduation.

**Development of Proposal and Committee**

Each candidate will select or be assigned one School Psychology faculty member to serve as chair for their Applied Research Project. As soon as the candidate has identified a school system willing to work with them on an Applied Research Project (internship district or other site if identified previously), they should start exploring with the system a possible research project that can be completed within that system. Candidates have the option of either proposing a research idea to the system based on the Candidate’s interests or completing a needs assessment with the system to identify a possible research project to assist in meeting those needs. Candidates should work closely with one School Psychology faculty member in developing their plans. If possible, candidates should identify one member of the school system where they will be working to serve on their research committee as well.

No later than the summer prior to starting the internship (but earlier if at all possible), all candidates should complete a brief review of the literature and begin development of their Applied Research Project proposal. These proposals will include a brief overview of the research literature, the research questions being proposed, and a methods section that includes information about participants, materials, procedures, and proposed analyses. These brief proposals will be shared with the student’s research committee as the basis for developing a final research plan for the candidate. Following their proposal presentation, students will be given feedback and approval from their committee to complete their research projects as planned.

Candidates should use resources provided in the School Psychology Program Blackboard site and the Research Writing Guidelines provided in Appendix A to assist in writing these proposals.

**Proposal Presentation and Project Approval**

Candidates who are able to develop an Applied Research Project proposal prior to the start of internship can request a meeting of the School Psychology faculty at any time to discuss the proposal and begin work on the project. For the candidates who plan to complete their Applied Research Projects during internship, the School Psychology faculty will schedule an individual virtual meeting with each candidate between September 1 and September 15. At least one week prior to the meeting, the candidate will submit the brief written research proposal to all School Psychology faculty and other committee members. During this meeting, the candidate will work with the committee on fine tuning and finalizing the plans for completing the research project. At the end of the meeting, the committee will give approval for starting the research project or schedule a follow-up meeting if needed.

**Research Completion and Presentation**

Candidates will be responsible for managing and completing the research project as finalized with the committee during the proposal presentation. They should keep their committee chair updated on progress and consult as needed for assistance. The goal should be to have these research projects completed by the end of March during the candidate’s internship year.

In early April, a School Psychology Research Presentation day will be scheduled and all interns/candidates are expected to return to campus (students may be given a virtual option if travel back to campus is not possible) for participation in this event. Candidates will need to submit the presentation a week in advance to their chair for feedback. Each candidate will be required to present their completed research project to an audience that will consist of other psychology department faculty and graduate students. The power point research presentation should be 20 to 30 minutes long including opportunities for questions and consist of the following:

* Brief review of the literature on the topic
* Problem statement including research questions addressed
* Methods used in completing the research project including
  + Participants with information about the school district
  + Materials involved in the project
  + Procedures used in completing research project
* Analysis of Results
* Discussion including anticipated impact, how this information will be used, how this information will be shared, etc.

In addition, the students should develop a brief written summary of the Research Project in the School Psychology Program Blackboard site and links shared with the audience for those interested in accessing more information later.

Each presentation and written summary will be evaluated by the School Psychology graduate faculty. The scoring rubric and criteria for meeting the requirements for the Research Project is provided in Appendix D.

Although a full formal write-up in paper form of the applied research project (i.e., for publication) is not required, students can work with their chair/research project supervisor if they later have an interest in doing so.

**Research Appendix A: Research Writing Guidelines**

The following guidelines should be followed whether the candidate is completing a Thesis or an Applied Research Project. The term “research paper” will be used to refer to both a final Thesis and an Applied Research Project article.

The key to writing a good research paper is to strive, first and foremost, for *accuracy* and *clarity* (Bem, 2002). Like any scientific writer, you and your committee chair have some flexibility in the organization, structure and length of your final research paper to best achieve these goals. In general, a Thesis will be more thorough and in-depth in the literature review, results section, and discussion section than a Research Project article.

Below, general guidelines are provided for you to consider as you write your final research paper.

a. **APA standards**. The research paper should adhere to the latest edition of the APA publishing guidelines. In the case of a Thesis, your final paper must be in the graduate school’s format (see graduate school [Thesis Guide](https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/gs_thesis_guide.pdf) and attached formatting tips)

b. **Introduction (Prospectus & Thesis)**

*Opening Statements*. The first task of a research paper is to introduce the background and nature of the problem or issue being investigated, and to let the reader know the purpose of your research.

*Prospectus Example*: As any college candidate will affirm, taking a test can be stressful experience. In fact, apprehension associated with taking a test can at times feel overwhelming. By merely anticipating a difficult test, a candidate can experience intense anxiety and their minds can be invaded by fearful thoughts of failure and self-doubt that interfere with concentration. In the proposed research, we will consider the possibility that having a “good laugh” prior to taking a test can actually inhibit anxiety and prevent performance impairment. Specifically, we will test the effect of exposure to humorous stimuli on math test performance and anxiety associated with taking the test.

*Literature Review*. After making the opening statements summarize the current knowledge in the area of your investigation. Describe relevant theories and previous research that has been done on the problem. The goal of the literature review is to provide a context and a rationale for your new hypothesis or research question.

The APA Publication Manual gives the following guidelines for the literature review:

Discuss the literature but do not include an exhaustive historical review. Assume that the reader is knowledgeable about the field for which you are writing and does not require a complete digest. . . . Cite and reference only works pertinent to the specific issue and not works of only tangential or general significance. If you summarize earlier works, avoid nonessential details; instead, emphasize pertinent findings, relevant methodological issues, and major conclusions (APA, 2001, p. 16).

The literature review for a Thesis should be very thorough while the literature review for a Research Project should be more of a summary of the literature available on the topic being researched.

*Ending the Introduction*. A good way to end the Introduction is by providing a brief overview of your own study. Describe your conceptual hypotheses or research questions and then briefly discuss what you will do to test your hypotheses (answer your research questions). This provides a smooth transition to the Method section.

*Prospectus Example*: On the basis of the stress-reducing effect of humor, I hypothesize that exposure to humorous material prior to taking a difficult math test can inhibit the amount of state anxiety associated with the anticipated test, and thus enhance performance. Accordingly, I will tell participants that they will take a difficult math test. Before giving the test, however, I will ask participants to read either 10 cartoons, 10 short poems or nothing at all. Participants will then complete the math test and a measure of state anxiety associated with taking the test. I predict that participants in the cartoon condition will report less test anxiety and perform better on the math test than participants in either the poem condition or the control condition.

**c. Method Section (Prospectus & Thesis)**

The APA Publication Manual describes what needs to be included in the Method section. As an overview, the Method section provides the information by which the validity of your study is judged. It should describe what you did to test your hypothesis or answer your research questions. Thus, the Method section requires a clear and precise description of how you conducted your study and a rationale for why you chose certain procedures (e.g., experimental manipulations, measures). The Method section should be divided into sub-sections that describe: the participants of your study, the design of your study, materials used in the study, the research protocol or procedure, how manipulations were introduced, and how measurements (observations) were made.

**d. Results Section (Thesis only)**

Your thesis prospectus may not include a Results section, although you might want to include a section that describes expected results. For the Results section of your research paper, your goal is to report the results of the data analyses used to test your hypotheses or answer your research questions. Therefore, remind the reader of your hypotheses or research questions. Then, identify your data analysis strategy, report your analyses, and provide some interpretation of the findings. Be sure to make clear the connection between each analysis and your hypotheses (research questions). In describing the results of statistical tests, report the descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, as well as the test statistic, degrees of freedom, obtained value of the test, and the probability of the result occurring by chance (p value). When reporting a significant difference between two conditions, indicate the direction of this difference, i.e. which condition was more/less/higher/lower than the other(s). Assume that your audience has a professional knowledge of statistics. Do not explain how or why you used a certain test unless it is unusual (i.e., such as a non-parametric test).

**e. Discussion Section (Thesis only)**

Your Thesis prospectus will not include a Discussion section but this will be a significant component of your Final Thesis and of the Research Project article. Begin the discussion by describing what you have learned from your study. Make a clear statement about how the results supported or failed to support your hypothesis, or how they addressed your research question. Next, explain the meaning of the findings, why they are important. Relate the findings to those of similar studies, consider alternative explanations for the findings, draw out practical or theoretical implications of the findings, acknowledge the study's limitations and describe ways that future research can be conducted to address remaining questions or issues.

f. **References and Appendices (Prospectus & Thesis)**

The number of references cited will vary. The important guiding principle is to "cite and reference only works pertinent to the specific issue and not works of only tangential or general significance" (APA, 2001, p. 16). Appendices should include consent/assent forms and all surveys/questionnaires/measures/materials unless they are copyrighted

**g. Tables and Figures (Prospectus & Thesis)**

See the APA Publication Manual for a description of how to incorporate tables and figures.

**Research Appendix B: Research Ethical Considerations**

**Human Subjects Research**

Any and all research projects that involve human subjects must first be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before being carried out. Procedures to obtain IRB review are available on the [IRB website](http://www.wcu.edu/academics/research/about-the-office-of-research-administration/research-policies-procedures/human-subjects-institutional-review-board-irb/irb-request-and-approval-process.asp).

**Plagiarism**

The Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct specifically state that psychologists do not present “portions of another’s work or data as their own, even if the other work or data source is cited occasionally” ([Standard 8.11](http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx?item=11), APA, 2010). Plagiarism is also a violation of [WCU’s academic integrity policy](http://www.wcu.edu/student-life/division-of-student-affairs/departments/student-community-ethics/student-community-ethics-for-students/academic-integrity-policy.asp). Plagiarism of any form on a prospectus or thesis will not be tolerated. Any faculty member who discovers an instance of plagiarism must follow the procedures outlined in WCU’s academic integrity policy including informing the department head, and the associate dean of the graduate school within five (5) days of discovery. Any substantiated instance of plagiarism will result in an “F” in the corresponding prospectus/thesis course and thus expulsion from WCU’s psychology graduate program. Faculty and candidates are strongly encouraged to become intimately acquainted with the Writing and Learning Commons [resources to avoid plagiarism](http://www.wcu.edu/academics/campus-academic-resources/writing-and-learning-commons-walc/faculty-toolbox/resources-for-teaching-writing/plagiarism-resources/index.asp) before starting work on the prospectus.

**Research Appendix C: Thesis Prospectus & Final Defense Examination Forms**

**School Psychology Thesis Prospectus Written Document Evaluation Form**

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Written Document Evaluation:** (To be completed prior to the oral presentation and submitted to the Committee Chair)

A. Thoroughness and relevance of literature review \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. Clarity of Statement of Problem and its relevance to

the literature reviewed. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C. Clarity and thoroughness of proposed methodology. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

D. Appropriateness of research design for testing the

hypotheses presented in the Statement of Problem. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E. Overall quality of written expression. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Each item should be rated on the following scale:

4 = Very good

3 = Adequate

2 = Weak

1 = Unacceptable

**Criteria for passing written component**: The student’s score on the written document must be 15 or greater from at least 2 committee members with no score less than 13 from any members. The thesis chair will notify the committee members and student of passing/failing the written component.

**If the student does not pass the written component:** Guidelines provided by the program will be followed.

**School Psychology Thesis Prospectus Oral Presentation Evaluation Form**

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Oral Presentation:** To be completed immediately after the oral presentation and submitted to the Committee Chair)

A. Conceptual understanding of the purpose and relevance

of the research. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. Ability to articulate literature review. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C. Demonstrated understanding of methodology and

research design. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

D. Demonstrated breadth and depth of knowledge in

proposed research area. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E. Overall quality of presentation. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Each item should be rated on the following scale:

4 = Very good

3 = Adequate

2 = Weak

1 = Unacceptable

**Criteria for passing oral component**: The student’s score on the oral defense must be 15 or greater from at least 2 committee members with no score less than 13 from any members.

**Final criteria for passing prospectus examination**: The student must successfully pass both the written and the oral components of the prospectus as outlined within the rating forms.

**School Psychology Thesis Defense Written Document Evaluation Form**

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Written Document Evaluation:** (To be completed prior to the oral presentation and submitted to the Committee Chair)

A. Thoroughness and relevance of literature review \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. Clarity of Statement of Problem and its relevance to

the literature reviewed. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C. Clarity and thoroughness of proposed methodology. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

D. Appropriateness of research design for testing the

hypotheses presented in the Statement of Problem. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E. Overall quality of written expression. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Each item should be rated on the following scale:

4 = Very good

3 = Adequate

2 = Weak

1 = Unacceptable

**Criteria for passing written component**: The student’s score on the written document must be 15 or greater from at least 2 committee members with no score less than 13 from any members. The thesis chair will notify the committee members and student of passing/failing the written component.

**If the student does not pass the written component:** Guidelines provided by the program will be followed.

**School Psychology Thesis Defense Oral Presentation Evaluation Form**

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Oral Presentation:** To be completed immediately after the oral presentation and submitted to the Committee Chair)

A. Conceptual understanding of the purpose and relevance

of the research. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. Ability to articulate literature review. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C. Demonstrated understanding of methodology and

research design. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

D. Demonstrated breadth and depth of knowledge in

proposed research area. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E. Overall quality of presentation. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Each item should be rated on the following scale:

4 = Very good

3 = Adequate

2 = Weak

1 = Unacceptable

**Criteria for passing oral component**: The student’s score on the oral defense must be 15 or greater from at least 2 committee members with no score less than 13 from any members.

**Final criteria for passing final thesis examination**: The student must successfully pass both the written and the oral components of the prospectus as outlined above

**Research Appendix D: Applied Research Project Rating Form**

**Western Carolina University**

**Specialist in School Psychology Program**

**Research Project Rating Form**

**Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Faculty Rater: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**BE - Below Expectations ME - Meets Expectations EE - Exceeds Expectations**

**I. Literature Review Circle One**

Review of the literature demonstrates breadth & depth BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of the literature review is clear BE ME EE

**II. Problem Statement and Research Questions**

The problem addressed by the student’s project is clearly identified BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of problem statement is clear BE ME EE

Research questions are appropriate given the identified problem BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of research questions is clear BE ME EE

**III. Methods Used**

Data collection methods used are appropriate BE ME EE

Information regarding participants is included (including pertinent information BE ME EE

about the school/district)

Information regarding materials and procedures used is included BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of data collection methods used is clear BE ME EE

**IV. Analysis of Results**

Analysis techniques utilized are appropriate BE ME EE

Results are related to stated research questions BE ME EE

Results are supported by the inclusion of relevant data BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of results is clear BE ME EE

**V. Discussion**

Limitations of the research project are included BE ME EE

Appropriate future directions given project results are included BE ME EE

Methods for sharing results with relevant stakeholders are included BE ME EE

Student’s presentation of future implications of their project is clear BE ME EE

**Overall Research Project Presentation Evaluation**

Use of time (including opportunity for questions) BE ME EE

Overall effectiveness and clarity of presentation BE ME EE

Clarity of one-page summary provided BE ME EE

**Overall rating of the research project: BE ME EE**

**Other Comments:**

­

**Research Appendix E**

**Research Financial Assistance**

**Psychology Department**

***Project Value Funds***

Graduate candidates may ask their faculty mentors to apply for ‘Project Value’ funds on their behalf. These funds are available on a limited basis from the Psychology Department and may be used to help defray costs associated with research (e.g., costs of materials). To apply, please ask your mentor to complete a ‘Project Value Funds Request Form’ and submit to Dr. Erin Myers ([emmyers@email.wcu.edu](mailto:emmyers@email.wcu.edu)).

**College of Education & Allied Professions**

***The Morrill Family Fund for Research in Education Scholarship***: <http://www.wcu.edu/academics/departments-schools-colleges/CEAP/ceap-current-students/ceap-scholarships/index.asp>

**Checklist of Criteria**

(Candidates who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for this particular scholarship)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Criteria*** |  |
| A. | Applicants must be enrolled as full-time or part-time **graduate candidates** in a degree program in the College of Education and Allied Professions during the academic year in which the award is made |  |
| B. | The proposals must involve research that relates to the improvement of teaching at any educational level, and the award may be used to fund equipment, supplies, travel, and services |  |
| C. | Good citizenship/good academic standing with WCU |  |
| D. | Applicants must obtain the signatures of their research advisor and department head and submit the application form to the Office of Special Programs\* |  |
| E. | The research must be completed by the end of the academic year in which the award is made. A written report describing the findings must be submitted by that time to the Selection Committee, the Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions, and the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies-- recipients are encouraged to present their projects at the Annual Fall Graduate Research Symposium |  |

**Graduate School**

***Graduate Candidate Research and Creative Projects Award***: <http://www.wcu.edu/academics/wcu-graduate-school/current-graduate-students/funding-sources-for-graduate-students/>

Up to 20 awards given each year!

***Graduate Candidate Travel Award:***

<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/wcu-graduate-school/GSA/graduate-student-research-travel-award.asp>

**NASP**

***Graduate Candidate Research Grants***: <http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/gsra.aspx>

The NASP Research Committee supports candidate-initiated research through its Graduate Candidate Research Grants (GSRG). Up to three $1,000 awards are made each year to candidates who demonstrate exceptional ability to conduct high-quality research that furthers the mission and goals of NASP and has the potential to impact the field positively. GSRG recipients are eligible to receive $500 Travel Grants to present their research at a future NASP convention.

**Other**

Candidates are encouraged to talk to their research committee chair about other financial assistance that might be available for graduate research work. This would include discounts on test materials from publishing companies, grants, etc.