

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the School Psychology Program at FSU**

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## General and Program Specific Questions

### Can I meet with you to discuss the program?

You may meet with program staff **by appointment only**. Once students have applied, we regularly host a group Interview Day in the early spring so that prospective students can meet our faculty and current students. If you have questions about the admissions process or would like to set up an appointment you can email Taneisha Toussaint, our Admissions Coordinator, at [tytousaint@fsu.edu](mailto:tytousaint@fsu.edu). You can also view our program website at <http://education.fsu.edu/degrees-and-programs/school-psychology>.

### Are you an accredited program?

The School Psychology program is accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and by the Florida Department of Education.

### Does this program lead to licensure?

Students who complete the program are eligible to become certified as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). This certification is awarded by the National Association of School Psychologists and requires successful passage of the National School Psychology Examination after graduation. Students are also eligible to become certified at the state level as School Psychologists in Florida. This certification is awarded by the Florida Department of Education and requires successful passage of the Florida Teaching Certification Exam. With additional post-graduate supervision, students can also become licensed as School Psychologists in the State of Florida. Licensure is awarded by the Florida Board of Health.

### I am interested in a doctoral program.

We also have a combined doctoral program in Counseling Psychology and School Psychology. You can contact the Admissions Coordinator, Taneshia Toussaint ([tytousaint@fsu.edu](mailto:tytousaint@fsu.edu)) with questions regarding the program. Please visit our website at <https://education.fsu.edu/degrees-and-programs/counseling-psychology-and-school-psychology>

### Can I enter the doctoral program if I start in the EdS program?

If an enrolled M.S./Ed.S. School Psychology student is interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in the FSU Combined Counseling Psychology and School Psychology Ph.D. Program, there are two points at which admission to the doctoral program are generally considered. Students should apply by the November 1 deadline in the first year of their program or while on the Ed.S. internship. Admission to the doctoral program is not guaranteed. If a student is interested in the doctoral program, they are encouraged to discuss this option with their major professor.

### Can I attend part time?

Our program requires full time status, which is generally 12-13 hours per semester. Few of our courses meet in the evenings or online. Most are during the day.

### I need to keep my full-time job or career while pursuing a degree in School Psychology. Do you offer a part-time course of study, night classes, or online courses?

FSU's program is set-up for the full-time student. Most courses are taught during the daytime hours on FSU's campus. Furthermore, most courses are sequenced and offered only once per year. Therefore, students who wish to attend part-time may find that their program of study will be extended significantly, usually by several years.

### **Is the program online?**

One or more courses may be conducted online in the future; however, at the current time, only one of our courses are online.

### **Is a thesis required?**

A thesis is not required. All students take comprehensive exams during their third year in the program. If they complete a thesis, they are exempt from taking comprehensive exams. A thesis is recommended for those students who have an interest in pursuing a doctoral degree.

### **Where do students typically complete internships?**

Each year, about 75% of our students complete their internships in public schools throughout Florida. The remainder go to nearby states, notably Georgia or South Carolina, although students can choose to complete an approved internship in any state.

### **Do you give assistantships?**

About 20% of our first year students receive an assistantship, and about 90% of our second year students receive an assistantship. Assistantships typically cover a 9-12 credit hour tuition fee waiver. Students are on internship their third year, about 40% of these are paid, and all come with a tuition fee waiver.

### **What assistantships, fellowships, and other sources of funding are available for students?**

In addition to university-based financial aid programs, special scholarships and graduate assistantships are available for students in the School Psychology program. Fellowships and scholarships are highly competitive at both the college and the university level. Please refer to additional information and deadlines for these awards found at <http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Funding-Awards/Graduate-School-Fellowships-and-Grants>.

\*\*College of Education Scholarships: students who are interested in College of Education scholarships must be accepted into one of the programs in the Department before their application can be evaluated for scholarships. Thus, students interested in the Graduate scholarships should submit their scholarship application during the enrollment period in January of each year.

\*\*Fellowships and Assistantships: Students who wish to be considered for; a Department, College, University level Fellowships/Assistantships, are encouraged to submit their application for admission by December 15.

A variety of graduate assistantships are available to students in School Psychology. After being admitted to the degree program, students contact the program director in order to learn about procedures for applying to assistantships. A limited number of assistantships are offered to first year students, and are typically provided through the Adult Learning Evaluation Center (ALEC) at Florida State University. First year students are discouraged from taking on a strenuous external work schedule, as the course load during this first year is considered challenging. Significantly more assistantships are available for second year students, including assistantships offered through ALEC (as psychological evaluators), the FSU Regional Multidisciplinary Evaluation and Consulting Center, and as Teaching Assistants. Faculty members often also have assistantships to offer that are funded by their individually-obtained research grants.

## **I currently hold a certification in School Counseling. How can I become a School Psychologist?**

The Florida Department of Education (FL DOE) certifies School Psychologists, and thus is responsible for determining who has met the requirements for this credential. Professionals with certifications in related fields are urged to directly contact the FL DOE to discuss their individual case.

## **What is the cost of attending your program?**

Tuition is set annually by the university. The tuition and fee schedule can be found at <http://controller.vpfa.fsu.edu/Student-Business-Services/Student-Business-for-Students/Tuition-Rates>  
Information on general costs of attendance can be found at [http://financialaid.fsu.edu/apply/cost\\_grad.html](http://financialaid.fsu.edu/apply/cost_grad.html).

Note that these are merely estimates and will depend on each individual's situation.

## **What kind of jobs does this degree lead to?**

The majority of students in our program work in K-12 public or private schools as certified School Psychologists. A small number might go into private practice, work in administrative jobs in the education field, or work in hospitals or clinics.

## **Questions about Admissions and the Application Process**

### **What are the admissions requirements?**

- An earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution, or a
  - comparable degree from an international institution, with a minimum 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average (GPA) in all work attempted while registered as an upper-division undergraduate student working towards a bachelor's degree; or
  - A graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution, or a comparable degree from an international institution; and
  - Test scores from a nationally standardized graduate admission test which is acceptable for the program to which the applicant is applying; and
  - An English proficiency exam for those applicants whose native language is not English.
- Departmental Requirements
- A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) while registered as an upper-division undergraduate student. The upper-division GPA is calculated after 60 credit hours in all work attempted while registered as an upper-division students working toward a bachelor's degree. The GPA calculation tool can be found at the following link:  
<http://admissions.fsu.edu/images/pdf/gpacompworksheet.pdf>;
  - 6) Completion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
  - For tests taken prior to August 1, 2011: A combined GRE score of at least 1000 with a 400 minimum score for each section (verbal and quantitative) is required.
  - For tests taken on or after August 1, 2011: Revised GRE scores between 142- 162 on the verbal section, 139-160 on the quantitative section, and 3.9 on writing have made an application more competitive. Applicants whose combined revised GRE scores fall below 300 may be required to successfully complete the FTCE General Knowledge Test (GK) prior to being considered for admission (per Florida Department of Education requirements).
  - Official TOEFL results are required of all international applicants whose native language is not English and who have not studied in an English-speaking country for at least one academic year. A minimum score 550 on the paper-based test or 80 on the internet- based test.

For more information on admissions to the School Psychology Program, please visit:

<http://education.fsu.edu/degrees-and-programs/school-psychology>.

Or contact:

Taneshia Toussaint, Admissions Coordinator 3210 Stone Building  
Florida State University, College of Education Tallahassee, FL 32306  
Phone: 850.644.8046 Fax: 850.644.8776 [tytousaint@fsu.edu](mailto:tytousaint@fsu.edu).

### **Does your program accept transfer students?**

Yes, an applicant may be accepted as a transfer student. However, they must go through the same application process as non-transfer students. The maximum hours that students are allowed to transfer in toward an Ed.S. degree is 6 credit hours from another university, or 12 hours from another degree program at FSU. Only courses in which the student has received a grade of B or above can be transferred. However, the Ed.S. program is a highly structured program and requires a specific program of study as approved by our accrediting body, the National Association of School Psychologists. Thus, to complete the Ed.S. degree, the student must have all of the required courses for this program on their transcript. Courses taken years prior to entry may or may not be similar or recent enough to satisfy accreditation standards. Student transcripts and transfer credits will be evaluated by the faculty to determine whether or not a transferring student will be exempt or have to re-enroll in a course.

If an accepted applicant is transferring in credits from another university that s/he believes are equivalent to one or more of the FSU program's required courses, then the student will need to meet with the program director and the instructor of the FSU course in order to determine equivalency. In this situation, students should be prepared with course syllabi and other materials from their previous course. If the program decides that the student's former course is equivalent to an FSU course, then the student's program of study will be adjusted accordingly.

### **What GRE scores will make me competitive?**

GRE scores are just one of several factors that determine admittance. Some students with high scores will not be admitted because their other areas are below par, while some students with low scores will be admitted due to excellence in other areas.

### **What should I include in my personal statement?**

The personal statement should provide evidence that the applicant has good writing skills. As such, excellent sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and editing are imperative. The statement should let the reader know that the applicant has learned about the program, and that the applicant has a sincere interest in attending Florida State University. The statement should highlight the applicant's prior achievements, with a brief mention of GRE, GPA, applied experience, research experience, employment, and significant life events. It is not necessary to provide an autobiography of one's life history. It is assumed that all applicants want to become School Psychologists, so that will not necessarily set one apart from other applicants. However, the committee does look for evidence of enthusiasm, an excellent work ethic, self-initiative, goal-directed behavior, and experience working with children.

### **I am an international student. How do I apply to your program?**

In addition to completing the requirements listed on our admissions page, international applicants also need to follow the link to <http://admissions.fsu.edu/international/admissions/graduate.cfm>.

FSU has specific admissions procedures for international students. The program of study in School Psychology does assume that students have mastery of the English language. This is particularly a necessity in courses where students are required to verbally consult with parents and teachers, as well as to write lengthy psycho-educational reports. A student who struggles with the language may find it difficult to successfully complete these program requirements.

### **What majors/minors, coursework, and employment/volunteer opportunities will make my application more competitive?**

Coursework in the areas of psychology, education, family sciences, and social work can be relevant and provide you with a foundational knowledge to begin graduate studies in school psychology. However, majors outside of these areas are still given full consideration for admission, based upon a clear demonstration of school psychology career goals.

Classroom experience and or experiences working with children are valued highly. Experience in conducting or assisting with research are also desirable. Descriptions of these experiences should be described in your personal statement.

### **From whom should I request letters of recommendation?**

Letters of recommendation should be requested from the faculty members at your current or previous institution with whom you have worked closely (e.g., as part of a research team or as a graduate assistant, or with whom you have had classes.) It may be appropriate to request a letter of recommendation from a former employer or supervisor if your job description involved teaching or providing interventions to children. Letters of recommendation from outside employment (e.g., restaurants or retail stores) will be accepted, but typically do not contain the information needed to provide an assessment of your preparedness and capability to achieve success in graduate school. Thus, these types of letters are perhaps the least helpful for your application.