

# EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, ED.S.

The University of Alabama School Psychology Program is designed to provide exemplary graduate training in research and in the application of practice related to the learning, development, and mental health of children and youth, and their families. The Educational Specialist (EdS) degree in Educational Psychology with a concentration in School Psychology prepares students for direct school-based practice as credentialed school psychologists. The EdS program includes an integrated and sequential program of study with comprehensive coursework and supervised field experiences. Candidates participate in courses and seminars in assessment and data collection, interventions and decision making, prevention and consultation, professional school psychology, sociocultural and educational foundations, psychological foundations, human development, statistics and research, and other areas. Candidates are required to participate in extensive practicum, internship, and research experiences.

Note: The EdS program takes place in person in Tuscaloosa, AL, and there is also a distance learning (hybrid) program offered through UA Online .

## Admissions

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission an application must include a vita/ resume and three letters of recommendation consistent with goals of the program. An applicant to a College of Education program that leads to professional certification must submit references from current and former professors and/or supervisory personnel knowledgeable of the applicant's academic and professional capabilities.

For the *on-campus* concentration in School Psychology, prospective students are encouraged to complete their applications by January 15 for admission the following fall. Note that a prior graduate degree or educator certification is not required for admission to the on-campus program.

For the *distance learning/hybrid* area of focus in School Psychology, applicants are encouraged to complete their applications by April 1. In addition, *distance learning* applicants must meet admission requirements established by the Alabama State Department of Education:

1. valid master's level certification in school psychometry, school psychology, or special education
2. two years of acceptable, professional educational experience in a P-12 setting

Applicants must also meet the fingerprinting requirement for background clearance.

Admission to the Graduate School is not equivalent to "unconditional admission" to a state-approved educator preparation program.

*A composite GRE score of 300 or better is required for all candidates, irrespective of degree program, who are seeking an appointment as a college-sponsored Graduate Assistant.*

### Changes to Certification Programs

The certification programs of the department have been designed to fulfill current requirements of the Alabama State Board of Education. In order to maintain compliance with the Alabama Board of Education, admission and program requirements are subject to change. For the most current information, please check with the Office of Student Services and Certification or the program advisor.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

## Educational Psychology, EDS with a Concentration in School Psychology Curriculum Requirements (On-Campus Program)

Code and Title	Hours
Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability:	
BSP 521 Cog Acad Assess	3
BSP 523 Social-Behavioral Assessment	3
Consultation, Intervention, and Prevention:	
BSP 632 Behavior Interventions	3
BSP 633 Acad Interv Decision Making	3
BSP 638 Consultation and Supervision	3
BCE 512 Counseling Theory Proc	3
Psychological and Diversity Factors:	
BEP 541 Learning and Cognition	3
BEP 565 Personality & Social Dev	3
BSP 601 Appl Pediatric Neuropsych	3
BSP 660 Psychopathology	3
Instructional and Schools/Systems Factors:	
BEF 534 Multicultural Education	3
CRD 569 Intro to Literacy Education	3
SPE 500 Intro Exc Childr/Youth *	3
*If a survey of special education course (SPE 500 or SPE 300) has been completed previously, another graduate-level SPE course should be selected from SPE 520, SPE 531, SPE 532, SPE 571, SPE 576, SPE 581, SPE 582, SPE 584, SPE 586, SPE 590, or SPE 593.	
Research and Program Evaluation:	
BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ	3
BER 558 Psychometric Theory	3
BER 640 Adv Statistical Methods in Ed	3
BER 647 Exp Res Design: Single Case	3
School Psychology Practice and Development:	
BSP 501 Prof Issues/ Ethics Sch Psych	3
BSP 580 Sch Based Pract Assessment	3
BSP 683 Adv Sch Based Pract	3
Specialist Internship in School Psychology (BSP 687)	12
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>72</b>

## Course Requirements (Distance Learning/Hybrid Program)

This course listing applies to those who begin this program June 1, 2017. Candidates earning graduate credit prior to this date may elect to utilize this program. Candidates must present a GPA of at least 3.50 on all courses in the program, with no grade below a C.

The Graduate Catalog is published annually. State-approved program checklists may be updated more frequently and are thus likely to provide

the most up-to date information about requirements. Students should consult their advisors each semester before registering.

Code and Title		Hours
Foundations of Professional Studies:		
BSP 601	Appl Pediatric Neuropsych	3
BEP 565	Personality & Social Dev (or program approved educational psychology substitute)	3
BCE 611	Multicult. Approach Counseling	3
Educational Research:		
BER 600	Survey of Educational Research	3
Interventions/Problem-Solving:		
BSP 625	Behavioral Consult-Interv	3
BSP 635	Academic Consult-Intv	3
BCE 652	Couns Stratg Adult-Child	3
BSP 686	Consult Interv Practicum	3
Internship: (minimum of 1200 hours)		
Specialist Internship in School Psychology (BSP 687) or Doctoral Internship in School Psychology (BSP 688)		12
Additional Requirements: (The following courses or their equivalents must be taken if not fulfilled in a previous graduate program.)		0-33
SPE 500	Intro Exc Childr/Youth	
BEF 534	Multicultural Education (or program approved educational foundations substitute)	
BEP 541	Learning and Cognition (or program approved educational psychology substitute)	
BER 540	Statistical Methods In Educ	
BER 558	Psychometric Theory	
BSP 500	Intro School Psychology	
BCE 512	Counseling Theory Proc	
BSP 515	Cog Acad Assmnt Decsn Makng	
BSP 516	Social Behav Assmnt Decisn Mak	
BSP 588	Intern School Psychomtry	
CRD 569	Intro to Literacy Education (or approved curriculum/instruction substitute)	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36-69</b>

## Transfer Credit

The School Psychology Program has more stringent requirements than the Graduate School maximums for transfer credit for students who have completed previous graduate coursework. Generally, fewer courses will be approved for transfer credit than the Graduate School maximums. In some circumstances, a student with a previous graduate degree may be allowed to count some coursework from the previous degree. After a student begins enrollment in our program, transfer credit or use of previous graduate coursework must first be evaluated and approved by program faculty to determine equivalency to a required course in our program. Equivalency is determined by consistency between the proposed transfer course and required program course in terms of objectives, content, projects, and other activities. Only in very unusual circumstances will a student be approved to transfer previous graduate coursework for required courses with the "BSP" (school psychology core) designation in our program of study. However, it may be possible for students to transfer educational psychology, educational foundations, special education, etc., courses that are equivalent to those in our required program of study.

For the distance learning/hybrid program, courses taken for prior Class A certification cannot be counted toward this degree.

Graduate School information on Transfer Credit.

## EdS Plan of Study

The *on-campus* EdS degree requires a minimum of three years of full-time study or the equivalent beyond the baccalaureate degree. Fall, spring, and summer semester enrollment is necessary to achieve these timelines. The *on-campus* EdS degree requires a total of 72 graduate credit hours, which include hours from courses, practica, and internship.

School psychology coursework, clinical experiences, internship, and other requirements are designed to address the domains of knowledge and expertise specified by the National Association of School Psychologists (2010), as well as the Alabama Department of Education. These domains are as follows:

- Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability
- Consultation and Collaboration
- Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
- Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills
- School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
- Preventive and Responsive Services
- Family–School Collaboration Services
- Diversity in Development and Learning
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

The *distance learning/hybrid* program is a State-approved program, so students complete requirements as outlined on the State-approved program checklist.

All students must complete an internship at or near the end of formal training. Students must be approved by the program to begin planning for internship and before an internship placement begins.

## Comprehensive Exam

All students in the School Psychology Program are required to successfully complete written examinations before any degrees will be granted. The examinations are completed independently on a "take-home" basis and require students to integrate knowledge and skills obtained during coursework and other graduate education activities. Successful completion of the program requires that a student passes the exams. Further, no student will be allowed to enroll in internship until all exams are passed. Students must obtain an average of 80% of higher across faculty ratings for all questions to pass. Students who earn less than 80% of points on any one question may orally defend that question in front of the school psychology faculty. Earning less than 80% on two or more questions will result in failure of the examination.

Graduate School information on Comprehensive Exams.

## Fieldwork/Practicum/Internship

### Fieldwork and Practicum

Most of the required school psychology courses with the BSP prefix include some type of clinical or field-based experiences. In the first year in the *on-campus* program, BSP 501 Ethics and Professional Issues in School Psychology, BSP 521 Cognitive and Academic Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making, and BSP 522 Social-Behavioral Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making all require field or clinical experiences,

including classroom observations in local schools, assessment and data collection with youth, families, or other carefully supervised experiences. Several other required courses for the program (prefixes SPE, CRD, BCE, etc.) may also require clinical and field experiences on campus and in local public schools.

Formal practicum courses are required in addition to field work experiences. In the second year in the *on-campus* program, EdS students take BSP 580 School-Based Practicum in Assessment for 200+ hours of on-site field activities in local schools in fall semester and BSP 683 Advanced School-Based Practicum for 200+ hours of on-site field activities in local schools in spring semester. Practicum sites are schools and other agencies relevant for school psychology practice. BSP 580 School-Based Practicum in Assessment and BSP 683 Advanced School Practicum are taken by EdS students in local public schools in the immediate Tuscaloosa or surrounding areas.

## Internship

All students must complete an internship at or near the end of formal training. Students must be approved by the program to begin planning for internship and before an internship placement begins. With program approval, internships may occur in qualified settings across the country. The EdS internship requires a minimum of 1,200 clock hours and may be completed on a full-time basis in one academic year (600+ clock hours over a continuous 15+ week period in each of a consecutive fall and spring semester) or, with special permission, on a half-time, continuous basis over two consecutive academic years. EdS internships are not offered during summer terms. At least 600 internship hours must be in a school setting.

Students seeking internship placements must discuss the placement with their advisor and program coordinator at least a year in advance—during the first few weeks of the fall semester preceding an internship placement for the following fall term. By May 31 prior to the internship, potential interns must document that all program requirements for internship have been met and must seek and obtain program approval to begin internship by submitting the Internship Approval form. Once program approval has been provided to the intern, the intern will share the UA School Psychology Program MOA with the internship site for signature. When the internship site has agreed to and signed the MOA, the intern will return it to the program coordinator who will ensure the remaining UA personnel signatures are completed. The intern must provide the MOA to their internship site by June 1st. Students may not begin their internship without a completed and signed MOA.

### *Professional Liability*

Students enrolled in College of Education courses that require a clinical placement should obtain professional liability insurance. Professional liability insurance may be purchased through an independent insurer or is available to students who are members of the Student Alabama Education Association (SAEA).

## Admission to Candidacy

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all necessary forms including the program of study form, admission to candidacy form, and application for degree are submitted to the Graduate School and must pay all necessary fees for graduation. Students are reminded to apply for admission to candidacy and graduation for each degree level, as soon as requirements for the applications are met. Each student for a graduate degree must apply for graduation no later than the semester preceding the semester in which degree requirements are to be completed. Thus, *on-campus* EdS students must complete all required forms for the MA degree, which is typically awarded during the first 1½ years in the

program, and for the EdS degree, which is awarded at completion of internship.

## Time Limit for Degree Completion

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

## Student Progress Requirements

### Continuous Review of Student Progress

Each student is required to undergo a formal progress review during an annual progress evaluation at the end of every spring semester after entering the program; thus students entering the program in a fall term will have their first formal progress review at the end of the following spring, after two complete semesters of graduate study in the program. At the end of each spring term in the program, students are required to submit a comprehensive electronic progress evaluation of their work by the due date provided by the program coordinator; faculty members review the progress evaluation and evaluate knowledge, skills, and other relevant characteristics of students as shown in coursework, clinical work, field placements, and other program activities.

Students are expected to receive satisfactory ratings on all progress evaluation components to continue with the planned program of study. In some cases, students may receive ratings of satisfactory that also include program requirements for improvement. Ratings of non-satisfactory on a few components may result in program requirements for additional course or field activities before continuation with the planned program of coursework, practicum, or internship. Thus, failure to make adequate progress in the program, based on a variety of quantitative and qualitative factors, will result in the student being placed on warning or perhaps being dropped from the program. There are four possible outcomes to the annual progress review evaluation process:

- 1) satisfactory progress in all areas,
- 2) satisfactory progress but with requirements for improvement
- 3) unsatisfactory progress in a few areas with probation for student and requirements for improvement, and
- 4) unsatisfactory progress in several areas, with discontinuation of student.

Please note that students may be given a probationary period before they are discontinued, if deemed appropriate or necessary.

### Minimum Grade/GPA Policies in School Psychology Courses

Students enrolled in the School Psychology Program must maintain a grade of B or higher in all core school psychology courses. Students may be able to repeat a course if they earn a grade lower than a B. Failure to receive a grade of a B or higher when taking a core school psychology course a second time results in dismissal from the program.

Students also must continually maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 to continue advancing toward key degree-related milestones. These include taking qualifying exams, comprehensive exams, advancing to candidacy, and accepting/beginning an internship.

### Practica and Field Placement Policies

Addressing Concerns about Students in Field Placements, Practica, and Internships Field supervisors are asked to immediately report any concerns, issues, or suggestions to the student and to the university professor. Concerns by the field supervisor and/or university professor may be addressed through improvement plans developed for the student, in collaboration with the student, field supervisor, and university professor. Significant concerns may result in temporary suspension of

the field placement, removal of the student from the placement, a grade of F for the course, and/or dismissal from the program.

#### **Improvement Plans**

If a student improvement plan for courses, field placement, or other program activities becomes necessary, the program faculty, placement site supervisors, and students will develop an improvement plan that identifies concerns/issues, specific goals, deadlines, evaluation methods, and required outcomes needed for the student to meet all criteria and achieve all objectives and earn a satisfactory grade for the course or field placement. The improvement plan will include frequent meetings between the student, professors, and supervisors to monitor progress. The improvement plan will include frequent submission of materials by the student and frequent submission of a formal evaluation by the professors and supervisors.

#### **Program Dismissal**

The student will have the right to meet with the program faculty and department chair. If the decision is to be that the student is dismissed from the program, the student will be informed in writing. If the student disagrees with the program decision, or feedback provided, the student may consult with someone outside the program, and consider submitting an appeal. The University of Alabama College of Education Grievance Procedures (<https://education.ua.edu/students/student-complaint/>) will be followed if a student has a grievance about the decision to dismiss the student or another type of academic concern.

## **Additional Academic and Program Requirements**

#### **Fingerprinting/Background Check**

The UA College of Education requires that all students must clear a fingerprinting/background check prior to field experiences. Prior to their first semester of enrollment in the program, school psychology students must meet this requirement for activities in schools under the jurisdiction of the Alabama Department of Education. Students should contact our college's Student Services Office at (205) 348-0193 to obtain instructions or confirm if a background check has been completed. Students also have the responsibility to meet fingerprinting/background check requirements of their specific agency, state, etc. for all field, practica, and internship placements or other field experiences. Students should note that fingerprinting/background checks usually cannot be transferred from one state to another or, within a state, from one type of agency to another. New background checks typically are required by each state or type of agency. NOTE: After your graduation from the program, additional fingerprinting/background checks also typically are required to receive a state credential/certificate/license to practice as a professional in schools and other agencies.

#### **National School Psychology Examination and State Credentialing Exams**

According to UA College of Education and Alabama Department of Education policy, all school psychology EdS students are required to take the National School Psychology Examination offered as a Praxis assessment by ETS. The exam must be taken and scores submitted to the program prior to the completion of 1,200 hours of EdS internship. However, students are encouraged to take the exam soon after completing program coursework and either prior to or during the first few months of internship to allow opportunities to retake the exam, if needed to meet the program's criterion score.

Students must obtain a passing score on the Praxis National School Psychology Exam [PRAXIS number (5402)] to receive a grade for

internship and graduate from the program. Currently, the program requires a score of 147 to receive a grade for internship and, thus, to graduate from the program. Students must have their scores sent to the UA (recipient code 1858; this same code should be recorded as the student's "attending institution"). The exam also is required for school psychology certification in Alabama; students desiring certification in our state should also have their scores sent to the Alabama Dept. of Education (recipient code 7020). Many other states require the PRAXIS school psychology exam for a state school psychology certificate; students should obtain the recipient code for the state in which they will apply for certification and have scores sent. The exam is required for the National Certificate in School Psychology (NCSP), and students should have their scores sent to the National Association of School Psychologists (recipient code R1549). A passing score of 147 also is currently required for the NCSP.

Students should be aware that additional exams may be required for applications for state credentials and should determine these requirements well in advance of graduation. Students should keep in mind that they may need to apply for Alabama certification to meet certification requirements in another state, even if they do not plan to work in Alabama. Other states also have their own specific requirements for examinations, which should be identified by students well in advance of graduation from the program.

#### **Survey of Special Education Course**

A survey of special education course is required. An individual who completed a survey of special education course prior to meeting requirements for unconditional admission to a Class AA program on July 1, 2017, and thereafter, must take an approved course focused primarily on one of the following categories: methods of accommodating instruction to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities in inclusive settings, multicultural education, teaching English language learners, rural education, or urban education. A course used to meet this requirement for one level of certification may not be used to meet the requirement for a higher level of certification.

#### **Electronic Learning Management System Requirement**

For Class AA School Psychology (hybrid, distance learning program), a designated, electronic learning management system is required of all students in programs leading to professional educator certification.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

## **Withdrawals and Leave of Absence**

The School Psychology Program faculty members and field placement agencies recognize that major emergencies can happen for some students and that they may have a short or long-term impact on a student's participation across program activities during a semester, including coursework, field placements, graduate assistantships, comprehensive exams, portfolio submissions, etc. The program is committed to supporting students in their program activities and providing assistance and guidance when emergencies have an impact on the student's activities. If you experience a major emergency (e.g., personal or family medical issue, etc.) that significantly impacts across your course, program, or field placement activities and prevents your participation for a period of time, notify the program coordinator immediately or as soon as possible after the emergency. The program coordinator will assist you with making immediate requests to course professors, field or assistantship supervisors, or program faculty about making sure that your duties and responsibilities are covered, extending

deadlines, rescheduling assignments, withdrawing from activities or field placements, etc. Again, student's requests to faculty for possible solutions must be based on a major medical or similar emergency and requests must be submitted immediately or as soon as feasibly possible following the emergency. Students should be aware that any extensions, rescheduling, or withdrawal from any type of program activity possibly may impact your schedule of courses, field placements, internship dissertation, final graduation, etc. The faculty will assist students in evaluating and making plans if major emergencies affect program activities.

Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence.

## Academic Grievances

The Department of Educational Studies in Psychology, Research Methods, and Counseling has procedures by which students may resolve any type of issue or concern. For students in the School Psychology Program, all grievances, complaints, and concerns must be filed with the Head for Department of Educational Studies in Psychology, Research Methods, and Counseling.

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

## Grades and Academic Standing

For the *distance learning/hybrid program*, candidates must earn a GPA of at least 3.50 on all courses in the program, with no grade below a C.

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

## Graduate School Deadlines

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

## Application for Graduation

Information on the Application for Graduation.

## Certification

Requirements for certification and licensure in school psychology vary from state to state. Students are expected to determine the requirements in the state or states in which they are interested in practicing before beginning the program. The degrees from the School Psychology program may lead to state and national credentials:

- Graduates of the NASP-approved (main campus) program, who obtain the EdS and PhD degrees in School Psychology, are eligible for the National Certification in School Psychology (NCSP), following successful completion of the national school psychologist *Praxis* assessment and internship. The NCSP is used by over 30 states, including Alabama, as one possible route to grant state certification in school psychology.
- EdS and PhD degree graduates of the School Psychology program who obtain the NCSP may meet requirements for the Alabama Class AA certificate in School Psychology using the Nationally Certified School Psychologist Approach described at <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/2022/06/national-school-psychologist/>.
- Graduates of the hybrid (distance learning) program who obtain the EdS in Educational Psychology-School Psychology may be eligible for Alabama Class AA certification in School Psychology if they hold the appropriate prerequisite Alabama Class A certificate and the following prerequisites are met:

- a passing score on the appropriate *Praxis* assessment, and
- a minimum GPA of 3.50 on all program courses (effective for candidates unconditionally admitted to a Class AA School Psychology program July 1, 2017, and thereafter.)

Students must complete the proper application form for Alabama certification. Forms are available online through the Alabama State Department of Education. Applications should be submitted to Student Services in 104 Carmichael Hall at least one semester in advance of graduation. A student who does not apply for professional certification within 60 months after completing the state-approved program will be required to meet the current program. Students who plan to seek employment in other states must secure the proper professional licensure application forms from those states' departments of education.

The certification programs of the department have been designed to fulfill current requirements of the Alabama State Board of Education. The state requirements change from time to time and, accordingly, the department's requirements and programs are subject to change.

The associate dean for student services in the College of Education has been designated the teacher certification officer for the University. Students who need information about or assistance with certification should consult the associate dean for student services.

### Certification for Degree-Seeking Students Only

The School Psychology Program enrolls degree-seeking students and, occasionally with special permission, approves students for non-degree status to take only 1 or 2 courses, as noted earlier. The program typically does not enroll, evaluate, or endorse individuals who are not admitted to our degree programs. Only students admitted and enrolled in the EdS or PhD degree programs in school psychology and who complete our required coursework, field experiences, internships, and degrees are recommended by the program for the National Certificate in School Psychology (NCSP).