School Psychology

The University of Alabama School Psychology Program is designed to provide exemplary graduate training in research, application and practice related to learning, development and mental health of children and youth, as well as their families, educators and other professionals who work with them. The School Psychology Program admits candidates to the master’s (MA), educational specialist (EdS) and PhD graduate degree programs. The degrees in school psychology prepare candidates for direct school-based practice and, for PhD candidates, careers in academic and other settings as faculty members, researchers, and practitioners. The degree programs in school psychology focus on the provision of school psychology services that are based on a strong foundation of research and application related to learners and learning processes. The school psychology degree programs include 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 foundations, psychological foundations, human development, educational foundations, statistics and research and other areas. Candidates are required to participate in extensive practicum, internship and research experiences.

Two options are available for the EdS degree: On-campus option and distance learning option:

The “traditional, on-campus” EdS and PhD degrees in the School Psychology Program hold full approval status from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and national recognition by CAEP. Applicants with undergraduate or previous graduate degree in psychology, education, human development or related fields are eligible for admission to the traditional, on-campus School Psychology program.

The distance learning option blends online classes with intensive campus weekends and is offered through the College of Continuing Studies: http://bamabydistance.ua.edu/degrees/eds-in-ed-psych-school-psychology. The distance learning program does NOT hold NASP approval. Currently, only applicants who hold master’s level, professional educator certification in psychometry or special education from a state department of education will be considered for the hybrid program.

Admission Requirements

Statement of purpose, vita/resume, and letters of recommendation consistent with goals of the program, GRE score of 300 or above and a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale are needed for regular admission. Applicants may also be considered for admission in some circumstances if they meet either the GPA requirement OR the GRE score requirement, but not both.

Applicants to the on-campus program are encouraged to complete their applications by January 15 for admission the following fall semester. Note that a prior graduate degree or educator certification is NOT required for admission to our on-campus EdS or PhD degree programs.

Applicants to the distance learning program are encouraged to complete their applications by April 15. Statement of purpose, vita/resume and letters of recommendation consistent with goals of the program, GRE score of 300 or above and a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale are needed for regular admission. Applicants may also be considered for admission in some circumstances if they meet either the GPA requirement OR the GRE score requirement, but not both. In addition, distance learning applicants must meet admission requirements established by the Alabama State Department of Education:

1. valid master’s level certification as a school psychometrist or in special education
2. two years of acceptable educational experience,
3. fingerprinting/background clearance

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

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 the 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.
- Graduates of the distance learning program who obtain the EdS in Educational Psychology-School Psychology may be eligible for the National Certification in School Psychology (NCSP), obtain the EdS and PhD degrees in the 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.

Requirements for the Graduate School (Degree Requirements) and the College of Education (Master’s, Professional Certification, EdS, Doctoral) are detailed in earlier sections of this catalog. For specific program requirements visit the College of Education Programs web site or for a student handbook and additional information, email or call: Chairperson, School Psychology, The University of Alabama, College of Education, Box 870231, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0231; phone (205) 348-7575; fax (205) 348-0683; program office, 306 Carmichael Hall, email: parrisod@bamaed.ua.edu.