

Stephen F. Austin State University
JAMES I. PERKINS COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership



School Psychology Doctoral Programs

Program Approved by the
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Doctoral Student Handbook

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Program Resources

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Welcome.....</i>	6
<i>General Information about the Doctoral Program</i>	7
<i>The School Psychology Doctoral Program.....</i>	8
Program Overview	8
Philosophy.....	9
Domains of School Psychology Professional Practice (2020) as Outlined by NASP Error! Bookmark not defined.	
School Psychology Program Goals, Objectives, & Competencies	10
State Licensure and Certification at the Doctoral Level	11
Program Emphasis	11
Accreditation	12
<i>Admissions and Degree Requirements</i>	12
Student Selection	12
Support for Diversity.....	13
Student Demographic	13
Minimum Completion Requirements	13
Program Sequence and Curriculum	14
Residency	16
COVID-19 Statement	16
Grade Standards and Quality Points	16
Time Limitations	17
Faculty	17
Degree Plan	17
Transfer Credit.....	17
Professional Standards	18
Student Support Opportunities and Resources	18
Graduate Assistantship	18

Lumberjack Education Assistance Program	19
Professional Activities.....	19
<i>Making Changes</i>	20
Due Process	21
Assessment of Dispositions	22
Independent Study	22
Changing the Degree Plan	22
<i>Evaluation and Review of Student Performance.....</i>	22
Process for Evaluation of Student Progress.....	22
Retention.....	22
Inactive Status	22
Leave of Absence	22
Probation and Dismissal.....	23
<i>Practicum and Internship Requirements</i>	23
<i>Doctoral Internship Training Eligibility</i>	23
Doctoral Internship Training Program Options.....	24
<i>Petition for Candidacy.....</i>	26
Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations.....	26
<i>Doctoral Dissertation Requirements and Procedures.....</i>	26
Doctoral Dissertation Committee	26
The Dissertation Process	27

Welcome

Dear Student,

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership at Stephen F. Austin State University, we welcome you to the School Psychology Doctoral Program. Whether you are coming to us from near or far, you are joining a dynamic community of faculty and students who are engaged in learning, teaching, research, and professional leadership in the field of school psychology. With the ongoing advance of research and professional practice, we believe that the spirit of inquiry and the dedication to professionalism that flows from the scientist-practitioner model will be a career-long gift. We hope you will find the School Psychology Program, the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership, the James I. Perkins College of Education, and University to be an exciting, stimulating environment in which to grow professionally and personally.

The role of a psychologist is a complex one that requires a variety of technical skills and personal qualities to be successful. Care has been taken to sort out the skills, knowledge, and qualities that should prepare you to work effectively with future clients and varied work settings. However, no training program can singularly develop all that is necessary. Your professional development ultimately depends upon your own abilities, desires, and initiative to learn and grow. Your experience as part of the Texas psychology community will be enhanced by becoming a student member of such organizations as the American Psychological Association (APA), the Texas Psychological Association (TPA), the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP), the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), and the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis (TxABA). We strongly encourage membership in professional organizations and active engagement in our program-level student organization, which will prove beneficial in becoming a part of our local community.

The program faculty members have prepared this handbook to serve as a guide while you complete the doctoral program. We suggest you use it as your first source of reference for any questions you may have; however, please remember that your faculty advisor is the best point of contact you have with the program.

The SFASU School Psychology Faculty

General Information about the Doctoral Program

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) is a regional university located in Nacogdoches, TX, a thriving historic community nestled in the beautiful piney woods of East Texas, only 132 miles from Houston and 165 miles from Dallas. With a student population of approximately 13,000, SFA has a strong reputation for excellence. Located within the SFA Perkins College of Education (PCOE) Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership, the School Psychology Program has a long-standing commitment to engagement in cutting edge research, training practices, and the integration of technology.

The inception of the School Psychology Doctoral Program was in 2009. The degree takes 3- or 4-years years to achieve leading to a Licensure as a Psychologist in the State of Texas. Graduates of the School Psychology Doctoral Program have a high rate of employability upon graduation and licensure. Typically, students in the program receive multiple job offers following and in the process of graduation. It is common for Texas school districts and special agencies to contact program faculty with openings throughout the year for full and part time School Psychologists around the country. Further many of our graduates work in independent clinical practices or at higher education institutions. The State of Texas (and places across the country) have continued to identify School Psychologists and Psychologists as high-need areas.

All students admitted prior to Fall 2018 were admitted as post-MA students and were required to completed a masters degree in school psychology prior to admission. Beginning in Fall 2018, the program offers a post-BA track for the PhD program, meaning PhD students are no longer required to complete a masters degree in school psychology before beginning doctoral studies.

Facilities. The Human Services and Telecommunication Building's (HSTC) network infrastructure accommodates gigabit Ethernet to the desktop for high-speed networking. It contains Interactive Television classrooms with H.323 protocol and H.320 backward compatibility. There is a digital video editing facility with the ability to stream media feeds for interactive internet-distributed multimedia content. All classrooms have ethernet connectivity for student use as well as multimedia presentation capability, internet access, document cameras and sophisticated built-in computer systems. In addition, the building and campus offers wireless connection capability for students.

Many resources also are available in the College of Education, including a TV studio, Macintosh computer lab, and an audiovisual materials lab. State-of-the-art technology is available to students and faculty through the Center for Professional Development and Technology.

In addition to the above facilities and resources, the HSTC also contains a School Psychology Assessment Center, Human Neuroscience Laboratory, the Counseling Clinic, Stanley Speech and Hearing Clinic, and the Cole Audiology Laboratory. The *Journal of Human Services: Training, Research and Practice*, <http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/jhstrp/> is also connected to the School Psychology faculty at the department with national and international representation on the Editorial Board. The journal serves as an accessible option for the publication of faculty and students' scholarship. The departmental website is www.humanservices.sfasu.edu, which provides an overview of all opportunities available. These settings have state-of-the-art equipment for training students in applied practice and research. Both the Counseling Clinic and Speech and Hearing Clinic have recording capabilities in all the clinic rooms, conference rooms, and student work areas. The SFA School Psychology Program includes resources for clinical and research experiences.

The School Psychology Doctoral Program

The SFA School Psychology post-master's Doctoral Program was authorized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in 2009, and the post-baccalaureate PhD track was authorized by THECB in 2018. Since 2009, the doctoral program has been dedicated to producing ethical, responsible, and competent school psychologists who employ scientific knowledge and methods of critical and creative problem-solving. The mission of our program is to apply scientific knowledge and method to the assessment and treatment of learning, behavior, and psychosocial problems in general and special education populations in public schools. Our program emphasizes critical thinking, communication, personal responsibility, social responsibility, empirical and quantitative skills, and teamwork. A cohort training model is used based on an established course sequence, and the instructional modality is face-to-face in a physical classroom. Students in the School Psychology Program will be prepared to become licensed doctoral-level health service psychologists, who can work effectively with children and families. In addition, our students may be employed as educators, researchers, and/or practitioners in public schools and higher education as well as health service psychologists in community mental health facilities, hospital/medical settings, and independent practice.

Program Overview

The School Psychology Doctoral Program at SFA embraces a scientist-practitioner model of training in which practice, research, and theory are considered integrated components. The emphasis is on developing competencies necessary for functioning in diverse settings including public, private schools, and clinical practices. The program is dedicated to training graduates who are competent in each area:

Scientist: The scientist is expected to understand and advance basic knowledge in school and health service psychology. Students are educated to be skilled consumers of research as well as researchers capable of examining relevant problems, both empirical and applied.

Practitioner: The practitioner is expected to demonstrate a high level of expertise in the professional practice of psychology in the state of Texas. This expertise includes the areas of consultation, assessment, and intervention.

There are two options to complete a Ph.D. program in School Psychology at SFA. Both the 66-hour post-master's Ph.D. program and the 99-hour post-bachelor's Ph.D. program in School Psychology are grounded in the scientist-practitioner training model. The programs view the role of scientist-practitioner as one who is: (1) a consumer of empirically based practices, (2) a reflective decision maker regarding professional actions and, (3) a researcher who collects data from their own settings and reports these findings to the professional community. The programs adhere to the idea that practice and research should reciprocally influence and strengthen each other. The programs prepare students to integrate scientific knowledge and skills into all professional activities, to promote empirically established practices on behalf of those being served, and to exemplify the legal and ethical standards of the psychology profession.

The SFA Psychology Programs stress the applied scientific nature of the field of psychology and its professional and ethical responsibilities to those that it serves while respecting the cultural diversity with all those with whom its faculty and students work. Training orientation is the the biopsychosocial model as the central unifying scientific themes in understanding human behavior in working with children families and schools. Within the training orientation, emphasis is placed on effective scientifically supported interventions for learning, behavioral, emotional and family and system problems.

Philosophy

The primary purpose of the program is to prepare students to provide and promote scientifically research-supported, psychological services for children, youth, and families. The program is founded on the central belief that school psychologists offer a unique and valuable contribution to society through the provision of scientifically sound prevention and intervention services. The need for quality school psychological services has been strongly felt throughout the East Texas community, the state of Texas, and the United States.

As a program within the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership in the PCOE, the program emphasizes the professional identity of school psychologists within the broader field of psychology that prepares students to competently perform a variety of school psychology functions. The program also addresses an education that values and respects cultural diversity among students, faculty, and service recipients.

The program's philosophy is operationalized through the following specific values:

1. Approaches every aspect of professional functioning from a science-based practice perspective;
2. Adopts a systems-based ecological framework that acknowledges the multiple influences on human behavior including biological, environmental, cultural, familial, socio-political, and institutional influences;
3. Works respectfully, collaboratively, and ethically with parents, teachers, and other key individuals in the lives of children and youth;
4. Treats every person as a unique individual who is capable of improving their life in dignified and meaningful ways;
5. Honors and accommodates human diversity while acknowledging basic aspects of human functioning that are common to people of all ages and backgrounds;
6. Advocates and upholds the legal and ethical standards of the psychology profession;
7. Honors the role as citizens of the school psychology profession by giving back to the profession through leadership and other service-related activities in professional organizations, research and dissemination activities, and other forms of service to the profession;
8. Serves a pragmatic societal function in the state of Texas and beyond through the provision of quality prevention and intervention services to children, youth, parents, and families; and
9. Maintains a steadfast commitment to professional improvement and accountability through the ongoing evaluation of all professional activities.

Although not accredited, the program integrates the following philosophical and ethical foundations of the American Psychological Association in all training activities:

- Psychologists are committed to increasing scientific knowledge of behavior and people's understanding of themselves and others and to the use of such knowledge to improve the condition of individuals, organizations, and society.
- Psychologists respect and protect civil and human rights and the central importance of freedom of inquiry and expression in research, teaching, and publication.
- They strive to help the public in developing informed judgments and choices concerning human behavior. In doing so, they perform many roles such as researcher, educator, diagnostician, therapist, supervisor, consultant, administrator, social interventionist, and expert witness. (From the preamble of the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, APA, 2003; <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>).

The program honors the following tenets of the National Association of School Psychologists: The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) empowers school psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve students' learning, behavior, and mental health. (From the mission

statement of the National Association of School Psychologists, <https://www.nasponline.org/utility/about-nasp/vision-core-purpose-core-values-and-strategic-goals>).

School Psychology Program Goals, Objectives, & Competencies

The program mission is to apply behavioral scientific knowledge and methods to the assessment and treatment of learning, behavior, and psychosocial problems in children adolescents, adults and their families. Our program emphasizes functional analytic, collaborative, and data-based decision making expressed in the following themes:

1. An appreciation and respect for the special attributes, dignity, diversity, and unique characteristics of each student as a contributor to our culture;
2. A commitment to support the best interests of students over and above bureaucratic and procedural demands of institutions;
3. An emphasis on the scientist-practitioner model of problem solving directed at behavioral assessment, intervention, follow-up treatment, consultation, applied and basic research, and on-going program evaluation.
4. Our training model assumes that the primary functions of a school psychologist are relevant to both learning and social issues as well as mental health issues outside the academic realm. An additional tenet of this training model is that the school psychologist's service is most effective when it is approached from a data-based decision-making orientation.

These goals and the manner in which they are operationalized are consistent with the SFA mission, which states that the University is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. These goals also reflect the mission of the PCOE, which is to prepare competent, successful, caring and enthusiastic professionals dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development.

Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community. Graduates will be qualified to contribute substantially to the following needs and service trends:

1. provision of scientific research-based intervention services to children for academic, behavioral and emotional problems within the schools, where they can be delivered most immediately and effectively;
2. provision of prevention services through assessment screenings, systems analysis, and data analysis;
3. creation and provision of culturally responsive interventions and helping services to children of all backgrounds;
4. provision of services for children, adolescents and adults with significant behavioral, cognitive, physical, and psychological challenges;
5. implementation of applied research and dissemination pertaining to wellness and remedial programs for children and youth;
6. establishment of effective data collection and analysis systems for school and program improvement;
7. assessment of instructional, behavioral and emotional problems;
8. consultation services with schools, teachers, and parents, provision of assessment and interventions for children, adolescents, and families in environments that include but are not limited to schools, colleges/universities, community mental health settings, hospitals, and specialized treatment settings.

State Licensure and Certification at the Doctoral Level

The School Psychology PhD program meets the Rules of the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (BHEC) and Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP). In addition to the degree in School Psychology, students must pass a national exam for licensure: the Examination for the Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP) for licensure as a psychologist (doctoral level) or as a licensed psychological associate (Master's level). Both levels of licensure, licensed psychologist and licensed psychological associate require the passing of a state jurisprudence exam as well. Other requirements for the LP licensure include a one-year doctoral internship supervised by licensed psychologists, and a one-year postdoctoral experience supervised by a licensed psychologist. Provisional licensure must be acquired prior to full licensure. EPPP and the Jurisprudence examination must be passed prior to this. TSBEP Rules change frequently. It is the responsibility of the student to remain informed of these changes. TSBEP has set rigid deadlines and guidelines, and students should request their information packet, and review it carefully in order to be well prepared for the licensure process. The licensure process is an expensive process.

Although this is not the main focus of the program, students may be eligible for **State Licensure as a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) in the State of Texas** if they meet all the requirements of the BHEC and TSBEP. **Students interested in obtaining the LSSP in Texas must consult with the faculty and training directors to make sure they meet all the necessary requirements.** Subsequent to the degree in School Psychology from a regionally accredited university, candidates must pass a national exam for licensure: the National School Psychology Examination **Praxis Series, School Psychologist** exam. These examinations are administered every other month beginning in January. Texas' minimum passing score for Licensed Specialists in School Psychology is 147. **Licensure** requires the passing of a state jurisprudence exam within 6 months of application. **The Jurisprudence Examination** is required of all candidates for licensure and covers the Texas Psychologists' Licensing Act, Board Rules, and applicable Texas laws.

Program Emphasis

The emphasis of this curriculum is on prevention and intervention within the context of data-based decision making. While preparing students to deal effectively with maladaptive behaviors and difficulties at the individual and systems level, the program also prepares students to identify and utilize strengths and resources of individuals and systems.

To achieve its goals, the program provides extensive training in the foundations of psychology and prepares its students to practice school psychology at a high-level of professional proficiency. The areas covered in the foundations include:

1. biological aspects of behavior
2. cognitive and affective aspects of behavior
3. social aspects of behavior
4. history and systems, mental health and psychopathology
5. psychological measurement and statistics
6. research methodology
7. data analysis

Those aspects of the doctoral curriculum that relate to professional practice and which comprise strong components of the program include:

1. traditional and functional assessment and data-based decision making
2. prevention and intervention
3. collaboration, consultation, and supervision
4. individual and cultural diversity
5. organizational change and program evaluation
6. legal, ethical, and professional issues in school psychology
7. extensive practicum experience
8. a comprehensive internship

The faculty members of the School Psychology program are dedicated to working with students in a close mentoring relationship in order to prepare them for doctoral-level practice and research. Students are encouraged to pursue outside experiences and professional interactions (e.g., professional organization membership, present at regional and national conferences, and publish in refereed professional journals). In particular, faculty in the school psychology program are dedicated to working with students from diverse and multicultural backgrounds and are particularly interested in promoting the achievements of students from under-represented populations. As per the THECB's authorization of this doctoral program, didactic instruction is provided face-to-face in a classroom or other appropriate setting. Online classes are not provided within either of the doctoral course sequences.

Accreditation

Stephen F. Austin State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as a Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, and Doctoral degree granting institution. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accredits teacher education programs at the bachelor's, master's, and specialist's degree levels. The SFA Graduate School adheres to the Guidelines of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States, and the SFA School Psychology Program adheres to the Council's charge to protect the rights of students.

Admissions and Degree Requirements

Student Selection

There are three different paths for student selection in admission to the doctoral program. Applicants with MA degrees in school psychology or a related-field, who receive positive ratings of required application materials (i.e., completed university application, official transcripts, professional interests and goals narrative, vita, letters of recommendation from faculty and/clinical supervisors) and faculty interview shall be admitted to the post-masters doctoral program. The School Psychology Graduate Application process can be located on the program webpage <http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/97.asp>

Applicants with master's degrees in other disciplines or bachelor's degrees may apply to the post-baccalaureate Ph.D. program. The most competitive undergraduate juniors in psychology or psychology-related fields may apply for early admission to the post-bachelor's Ph.D. program through the SFA Overlap Program http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/documents/overlap-rec_fm_062014.pdf.

Admission decisions are based on full faculty review of applications, size of incoming cohort, and consideration of the collective body of application materials. Applications are due January 31st of each year. Applicant interviews will occur in February or March. Graduate assistant applications will also be considered at this time.

For an application file to be considered complete and eligible for review, required materials must be received in both the School Psychology program AND the SFA Graduate School. It is strongly advised that the application process begins well in advance of the anticipated date of initial enrollment.

It is anticipated that the program will accept 7-8 new students per year, with emphasis on attracting a highly qualified and diverse doctoral student population.

Support for Diversity

The program faculty members are committed to supporting diversity. Following the guidelines of APA, the program faculty members make systematic, coherent, and long-term efforts to attract and retain students and faculty from differing ethnic, racial, and personal backgrounds into the program. Consistent with such efforts, the program faculty act to ensure a supportive and encouraging learning environment appropriate for the training of diverse individuals and the provision of training opportunities for a broad spectrum of individuals. Further, the program faculty avoids any actions that would restrict program access on grounds that are irrelevant to success in graduate training. The program implements a thoughtful and coherent plan to provide students with relevant knowledge and experiences about the role of cultural and individual diversity in psychological phenomena as they relate to the science and practice of professional psychology. We also follow the Diversity Statements from the department of Human Services and Educational Leadership (<http://sfasu.edu/humanservices/827.asp>), PCOE (<http://coe.sfasu.edu/about-us/vision-mission-and-core-values>), and SFA (<http://www.sfasu.edu/multicultural/>)

Student Demographic

Since its conception in 2009, the program has had 34 graduates. Racial/ethnic minority enrollment is approximately 52% of the total doctoral enrollment in school psychology. About 70% of the students are female (See <http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/97.asp> for additional information).

Here is the student demographic information for the last three years:

Academic Year	# of Candidates Enrolled in the Program	Females	Males	Ethnicity	# of Program Completers
2020-2021	29	19	10	17 ethnically diverse students	3
2019-2020	26	18	8	15 ethnically diverse students	1
2018-2019	29	20	9	14 ethnically diverse students	6

Minimum Completion Requirements

The doctoral program in School Psychology includes formal course work, practica and internship experiences, participation in local, regional or national professional organizations, comprehensive evaluation, and dissertation research. Doctoral students are required to take 66 semester hours in the post-master's Ph.D. program and 99 semester hours in the post-bachelor's Ph.D. program, including the full-time academic year internship. Students are encouraged to attend full time and follow the sequence of courses. Following the recommended full-time sequence, the average time for completion of the post-master's doctoral program for students is 3 years. Following the official full-time sequence, the average time for completion of the post-baccalaureate doctoral program for students is 4 years.

Program Sequence and Curriculum

The official course sequence for full-time enrolled students admitted to the post-master's doctoral program is as follows:

YEAR ONE		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6346: Child/Adolesc. Psychopath.	SPSY 6304: Verbal Behavior Social Bases of Behavior	SPSY 6316: Advanced Neuropsychological Assessment OR SPSY 6323: Multicultural Considerations in Therapy
	SPSY 6347: Adv. School Psychology	SPSY 6353: Practicum
SPSY 6315: Child/Family Assessment	SPSY 6334: Advanced Research Method	Seminar in Professional Psychology (6375 for Summer)
SPSY 6331: Quantitative Research	SPSY 6348: Ethics SPSY 6314 : Human Neuroscience	
Total: 9 hours	Total: 12 hours	Total: 6 hours
YEAR TWO		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6353: Practicum	SPSY 6353: Practicum	SPSY 6138: Dissertation
SPSY 6335: Multivariate Analysis	SPSY 6321: Child and Adolescent and Family Therapy	SPSY 6349: History, Systems & Interventions
SPSY 6138: Dissertation <i>Committee Identified and Completed Proposal Development w IRB approved.</i>	SPSY 6306: Applied Behavior Analysis	SPSY 6305: Severe Dev. Disab./Autism
SPSY 6336: Single Case Res. Design	<i>Doctoral Comprehensive Examination</i>	SPSY 6138: Dissertation <i>Dissertation Completion and Oral Defense</i>
<i>Prepare for Internship Application</i>		
Total: 9 hours	Total: 12 hours	Total: 9 hours
YEAR THREE		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6154: Internship	SPSY 6154: Internship	
Total: 3 hours	Total: 3 hours	

The official course sequence for full-time enrolled students who are admitted to the post-bachelor's doctoral program is as follows:

YEAR ONE		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6301: Learn/ Cognitive Dev.	SPSY 6348: Ethics	SPSY 6362: Instr. Strat/Except Learners
SPSY 6311: Psychoed. Assessment	SPSY 6347: Seminar in School Psychology	SPSY 6342: Ethics in School Psychology Psychometrics
SPSY 6331: Quantitative Research Methods	SPSY 6312: Individual Intelligence Testing	Seminar in Professional Psychology
	SPSY 6304: Verbal Behavior Social bases of Behavior	
Total: 9 hours	Total: 12 hours	Total: 6 hours

YEAR TWO		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6322: Advanced Family Therapy	SPSY 6334: Advanced Research Method	SPSY 6316: Advanced Neuropsychological Assessment
SPSY 6344: Adv. Human Gr. & Devel.	SPSY 6351: Practicum	SPSY 6353: Practicum

SPSY 6315: Child/Family Assessment	SPSY 6303: Consultation and Supervision	SPSY 6323: Multicultural Considerations in Therapy
SPSY 6346: Child/Adolesc. Psychopath.	SPSY 6314: Human Neuroscience	
		Prepare for Internship Application
Total: 12 hours	Total: 12 hours	Total: 9 hours
YEAR THREE		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6353: Practicum	SPSY 6353: Practicum	SPSY 6138: Dissertation
SPSY 6335: Multivariate Analysis	SPSY 6138: Dissertation	SPSY 6349: History, Systems & Interventions
SPSY 6336: Single Case Res. Design	SPSY 6321: Child and Adolescent and Family Therapy	SPSY 6305: Severe Dev. Disab./Autism
SPSY 6138: Dissertation	SPSY 6306: Applied Behavior Analysis	PRAXIS Examination???
<i>Submit Internship Application</i>		
	<i>Doctoral Comprehensive Examination</i>	<i>/Dissertation Completion and Oral Defense</i>
Total: 12 hours	Total: 12 hours	Total: 6+ hours
YEAR FOUR		
Fall	Spring	Summer I & II
SPSY 6154: Internship	SPSY 6154: Internship	
Total: 3 hours	Total: 3 hours	

- **Notes about the Schedule**
- After faculty members' careful study of transcripts, degree plans are developed and distributed to each student upon admission. Program shifts in course schedules will only occur in cases of unanticipated, significant attrition within cohorts. Changes in any degree plan due to student's change in enrollment status or the program's required adjustment because of cohort enrollment will result in the development of new individual student plans and distribution. When the program is required to make a course schedule shift, an announcement will be made to all students.
- Any student-requested deviation from the official course sequence and/or degree plan must be approved by the School Psychology Program Faculty (SPPF) in writing. Students should first bring proposed changes to their advisor, who will then bring the proposal to the SPPF for a final decision. Changes made without SPPF written approval will result in delays in program completion and a loss of good standing in the program. Loss of good standing could result in being placed on probation; delayed approval for practicum, internship, and dissertation, and dismissal from the program.
- The School Psychology Program expects all doctoral students to make continuous progress towards their degrees. A program is only considered "complete" after the appropriate documentation for degree completion has been filed with the School Psychology Committee or the Graduate School.
- Students admitted to the doctoral program are expected to complete all degree requirements in a timely manner. Students will have 10 years to complete the doctoral coursework. Students who do not finish within 10 years will be dismissed from the program unless the Department Chair grants an extension based on extenuating circumstances.
- The program includes the following major requirements. **It is the graduate student's responsibility to comply with all regulations for graduation as outlined in this document and in the SFA Graduate School Handbook.**

Residency

Each student *should* enroll in residence as a full-time student for at least 9 hours per Fall semester and Spring semesters and 6 hours in the Summer. At least 60% of the school work will be delivered in a face-to-face and same-location teacher and student form. The other 40% of the classes in the program could be delivered via livestream or a combination face-to-face and livestream. All courses in this program will be delivered in a synchronous form.

COVID-19 Statement

As a result of the COVID-19 health crisis, the School Psychology Ph.D. program follows the guidance offered by our institutional administration (<https://www.sfasu.edu/covid19>) as well as that from the World Health Organization, the US Center for Disease Control, and the state and local health departments in the program's location in regard to maintaining operations in a manner that reduces risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus. In addition, we follow the recommendations of the office of post-secondary education of the US Department of Education guidance for programs that allow flexibility in the methods by which students may continue their education.

The faculty will work with students to accommodate and help them continue their education despite interruptions caused by COVID-19. We are permitting students to waive the above residency standards to implementing distance learning solely for the purpose of allowing currently enrolled students to complete a term that is interrupted by COVID-19 social distancing requirements. Similarly, students enrolled in practicum and internship are allowed to participate in distance education for a period of time until they can resume ground-based attendance. We may also provide online/livestream opportunities for students who had difficulties due to the crisis.

Grade Standards and Quality Points

Grades of A, B, and C will allow students to receive graduate credit representing 4, 3, and 2 quality points, respectively. If a student receives a C in any class, they will be placed on academic probation and will be required to repeat the course in which the C was earned during the next semester the course is offered and make at least a B. If a student makes a second C, they will be dismissed from the program. If a student makes any grade lower than a C, they will be dismissed from the program.

In addition, a GPA of 3.25 must be maintained at all times. A student whose cumulative grade point average is less than this is placed on academic probation. In the next semester or summer term in attendance, the student must achieve a cumulative 3.25 average. If the cumulative 3.25 is not met, the student is ineligible to continue graduate studies at SFA for one year and must officially reapply to the program in order to complete the degree after the suspension period. These rules apply to all 5000 and 6000 level courses.

Withheld: A grade of Withheld is given to the student who shows good cause for not completing the work by the end of the semester. The grade of Withheld is appropriate only when, because of unavoidable circumstances, a student cannot complete all of the coursework by the end of the semester/term. Examples of unavoidable circumstances include documented illness which prevents a student from attending classes, death in the immediate family, military service, or other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor. A grade of Withheld should not be requested nor given for lack of completion of work because of procrastination or dissatisfaction with the grade earned.

A student who is entitled to receive a grade of Withheld must develop a written contract with the instructor of the course to remove the grade of Withheld. The contract, signed by both instructor and student, must be filed with the program secretary and Office of the Department Chair. The instructor and student shall maintain copies for future reference. The instructor will also specify that, if the work is not completed by the designated time, a grade of F will replace the Withheld on the student's transcript. If the student completes the required work by the assigned completion date, the instructor will submit the new grade to the Office of the Registrar. In most instances, work to be completed should be finished within the first several weeks following the end of the semester/term. The maximum time allowed to finish the course work is one calendar year, after which time the WH automatically becomes an F.

Time Limitations

All requirements toward a doctoral degree must be completed within a period of 10 consecutive calendar years from the date that doctoral credit is first earned. This should be considered when transferring in courses completed prior to registration in the doctoral program. Although the time limit for completing the doctoral degree is 10 years, the School Psychology Doctoral Program strongly encourages full-time students to complete their doctoral program within 5 years of their acceptance into the program.

Faculty

The program faculty body is composed of state licensed and/or nationally certified psychologists, school psychologists, or professionals having expertise in a content area deemed relevant in training Psychologists (i.e., Neuroscience). Graduate training in school psychology is complemented by the expertise and resources provided by faculty in the Departments of Psychology and Human Services and Educational Leadership. This interdisciplinary approach affords the student a broader perspective of the field of psychology.

Faculty Advising. Each student is assigned a temporary academic advisor from the department upon admission to the Ph.D. program. The advisor is available to support the student in a variety of ways, including program planning and scheduling, corrective intervention, and career exploration. No later than the beginning of the second year, students should choose a permanent advisor.

Degree Plan

The plan of study is developed prior to admission into the School Psychology program and must be reviewed and approved by the full body of program faculty, copied, and sent to the Graduate Dean. A copy of the approved plan of study is forwarded to the student and maintained in the local files with the program secretary.

Transfer Credit

Under certain circumstances, a graduate student may transfer six semester hours of doctoral coursework taken at other accredited institutions.

To transfer any credit from other institutions, however, the student must submit an official transcript and course syllabi for each course to be reviewed and have the approval of the program's instructor of record, the program faculty, appropriate academic department and academic dean. The work must have been taken not earlier than 10 years prior to the student's first graduate enrollment at SFA. Moreover, if the student fails to complete work on the graduate degree at SFA before the expiration of the 10 years, the transfer credit will not be applicable toward the School Psychology degree.

Any course accepted by transfer will carry credit, but not grade-point value. Moreover to transfer credit, the student must have earned a course grade of B or better.

The exception is that ALL hours earned in an SFA certificate program can be considered for transfer into a graduate degree program. Courses that have contributed to the completion of another degree may not be considered as transfer courses.

There is no automatic transfer of graduate credit, but the SPPF has the prerogative to recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School the acceptance of transferable credits. The rule governing the time limit for doctoral credit also applies to transferable credits (10-year limitation).

The SPPF does not allow course credit for experiences such as workshops, seminars, remedial study, or other such types of learning experiences. The SPPF and the Graduate School do not award doctoral credit for undergraduate or master's-level coursework.

Immediately after admission to the program and receipt of program degree plan, students must contact the program secretary in writing to request the approval for transfer credit and submit the course syllabus and documentation that the course(s) had not contributed to a prior degree. Program faculty will then review during a program meeting, and students will be notified in advance of enrollment of the final decision.

Professional Standards

The School Psychology program is firmly based on professionally recognized core areas of psychology, education, and professional practice. The faculty of the School Psychology Program and the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership prides itself in the practice of offering its students individualized guidance and supervision as well as opportunities for continuous personal interaction between students and professors. Ethical practice is modeled, expected, and enforced. Ethics and professional practice standards are discussed across several classes and applied in practica and internship. Upon entrance into the program, students are expected to sign a policy statement on impairment, incompetence, and ethical misconduct. Additionally, students are evaluated on ethical behavior and conduct as part of the program's annual student evaluation process.

Student Support Opportunities and Resources

Financial support for graduate students may include financial aid, grants, loans, scholarships, and assistantships. Information regarding these opportunities can be found at the SFA Financial Aid Office (<http://www.sfasu.edu/admissions-and-aid#section=financial-aid>).

Graduate Assistantship

The School Psychology Doctoral program provides 16 assistantships for qualified graduate students. Stipends vary according to assignment and educational level of the applicant. Graduate Assistantships in the School Psychology Doctoral program require assisting in research and/or teaching or assisting with undergraduate courses. Graduate Assistantships require 20 hours of work per week. A 20-hour assistantship carries a stipend of \$18,000 for the full year: Fall, Spring and Summer semesters). For consideration for a graduate assistantship, applicants should complete a graduate assistantship application. It is available from the program secretary and should be submitted along with a vita and three letters of recommendation.

Graduate assistantship positions are competitive (e.g., there are typically more students than assistantship slots) and are not guaranteed with an offer of admission. Graduate assistantship positions are renewable for up to four years for post baccalaureate students and two years for students coming into the program with a Masters in School Psychology, pending adequate performance/annual reviews and budgetary requirements.

A graduate student on scholastic probation may not hold a graduate assistantship. In general, a person may not have any employment in addition to the graduate assistantship. If a graduate assistant wants to maintain an additional employment, a request must be made to and approved by the program faculty, and an outside employment form must be submitted according to University policy. The minimum course load for a graduate assistant is 9 semester hours.

Lumberjack Education Assistance Program

Active, regular (100% FTE) employees of the university, their spouses, and dependents, as well as certain graduate assistants may participate in the Lumberjack Education Assistance Program (LEAP) provided eligibility requirements are met.

Highlights of the Lumberjack Education Assistance Program (LEAP) include:

- Mandatory tuition and fees are exempted for eligible participants, except statutory tuition (\$50 per semester credit hour for undergraduate classes or \$80 per semester credit hour for graduate classes).
- Employees who enroll in classes will have scholarship support available to cover the statutory tuition costs.
- There is no cap on the number of courses an employee, spouse, or dependent may take with the LEAP benefit.
- The program is available to employees who had already reached the former Employee Scholarship Program annual cap of \$3,000.

The application form for LEAP is available through [mySFA](#) in the Benefits section of the Employee tab. Neither employees nor dependents are taxed on any portion of the exempted undergraduate tuition and fee value. However, pursuant to Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 117(d), employees who take graduate courses are taxed on exempted tuition and fee values that exceed \$5,250 annually. Also pursuant to the IRC, dependents of employees who take graduate courses are taxed on the exempted tuition and fees for those courses.

Professional Activities

Students, who participate in professional activities, e.g. attending or presenting papers at state or national conventions, are eligible to apply for travel funds from the PCOE.

Student-to-student mentoring. Each incoming doctoral student is assigned to an existing graduate assistant from the school psychology program for mentoring purposes during the first semester of the program. The role of the mentor is to provide information regarding the program from a student's perspective. The specific arrangement and form of mentoring are determined by each pair of students.

Professional conference attendance. All faculty within the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership encourage students to attend appropriate professional conferences and workshops. In this program, conferences and workshops sponsored by the National Association of School Psychology (NASP), the Texas Association of School Psychology (TASP), the International Association of Behavior Analysis (IABA), the Texas Association of Behavior Analysis (TxABA), the Texas Psychological Association (TPA), and the American Psychological Association (APA) are most meaningful to students. Students will present research with faculty at these conferences, and there are plenty of opportunities for informal interaction with faculty at these times. Students are expected to document engagement in ongoing professional involvement (e.g., professional conference and workshop attendance, professional organization service and leadership) and scholarly activities (e.g., professional presentations, publications). Such documentation should be present in dossiers submitted annually on October 1st for program faculty review and evaluation. Students should maintain updated dossiers throughout enrollment.

Professional involvement. Student membership in at least one professional state organization (e.g., TASP) and at least one national organization (e.g., NASP, APA) and professional liability insurance are required throughout enrollment. Beyond these minimum expectations, the following activities are products that meet the criteria for professional involvement to be included in dossiers for annual review.

1. Active participation in professional service leadership in a local, regional, state, and/or national professional organization (i.e., representative, student liaison, officer, conference development);
2. Active participation in service leadership in program-sponsored professional development activities;
3. Active participation and service leadership in university graduate student organizations.
4. Participation in log-approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, which may include, but are not limited to opportunities offered in and outside the program; and
5. Participation in service leadership in program-related activities (i.e., Orientation, peer mentoring, admission interviews, faculty search interviews, student recruitment).

Scholarly activities. Prior to degree completion, all students are expected to have at least one professional conference presentation at the state, regional, or national level or publication in a refereed journal. Beyond this minimal requirement, the following are products that meet the criteria for this area in annual reviews:

1. Submission of a manuscript for publication in a professional journal, which may be completed with faculty or fellow students;
2. Submission of a grant proposal for review;
3. Presentation of a workshop for a professional community, agency or organization;
4. Presentation of a workshop for parents, adolescents or young children;
5. Presentation of a scholarly paper or poster at a local non-program, state, regional or national/international professional conference; and
6. Author or co-author of a book chapter, journal article, encyclopedia entry, book review, or test review.

Research presentation requirement. This requirement should be completed prior to the internship. To demonstrate knowledge and ability in the area of school psychology research, the student is required to be the first author and primary presenter at an advisor-approved state, regional, or national conference. The project being presented must be reviewed and supervised by a faculty member within the School Psychology Doctoral Program. Students may apply to the SFA Student Activities and the PCOE for financial support to meet travel needs. A poster or paper presentation will be acceptable.

Departmental graduate student organizations. The School Psychology Student Organization introduces interested students to the professional side of school psychology and facilitates in presenting and attending state and national conferences enhancing school psychology.

Other resources. Other sources of support for doctoral students include easy access and full use of the university library system, grant-related opportunities, research funding opportunities, electronic mail/internet access, and use of the University's computer labs.

Making Changes

Due Process

Formal reviews of student performance. Student progress is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Review of student performance may occur on two levels. One level is the annual review, which includes all students in the program. The second level is the individual review, which occurs when a student-related problem is documented and filed by a faculty member, field supervisor, or other individuals affiliated with the training program.

Annual review. The annual review is comprised of two components including: (a) student self-assessment and (b) a review of the student's overall performance conducted by the School Psychology Program faculty.

When necessary, the faculty will work in collaboration with the student to develop a Plan of Improvement designed to improve the student's performance in the program. The committee will provide specific goals and objectives to the student, as well as deadlines related to the improvement plan. A Plan of Improvement could include, but is not limited to, the following options:

- additional clinical coursework and/or supervised experience
- reduction in the number of classes taken each semester
- change of amount, format, and/or content of supervision
- an individual Plan of Improvement.
- referral to SFA's Early Alert Program
- a leave of absence from the program

If students are not satisfied with the decision of this review, they should work closely with their advisor to ensure that an acceptable resolution is achieved. If the students are still dissatisfied, they may appeal the decision by following the "Student Appeals Process" as described in the SFA Student Handbook (<http://www.sfasu.edu/documents/student-handbook.pdf>).

Individual review. An individual review may occur when a faculty member and/or concerned party expresses a concern or complaint about the student in writing to the School Psychology Program faculty, at which point the student's faculty advisor is informed. The concern may revolve around academic or behavioral issues, such as but not limited to:

- Inability or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into clinical practice
- Inability to acquire professional skills and reach an accepted level of competence expected of doctoral students
- Inability to manage personal behavior to the extent that it interferes with training or work with clients

The student and advisor meet. The advisor completes the appropriate evaluation form (such as Dispositions Assessment form, Professionalism Rating Form, Internship Evaluation Form). The advisor, in conjunction with program faculty, makes one of three possible decisions:

- The problem is resolved and requires no formal action (state reasons).
- A Plan of Improvement, to which both parties agree, is developed and documented.
- The faculty advisor has ongoing serious concerns about the problem, or the problem cannot be remediated through a student Plan of Improvement, and the matter is forwarded to the Department Chair.

If this process is initiated, a letter will be sent to the student regarding the decision of the faculty. It is the

responsibility of the advisor to follow up and monitor the situation regardless of the specific decision.

Assessment of Dispositions

Students will be evaluated on their development of professional dispositions throughout the program, and failure to maintain professional dispositions may result in students requiring a Plan of Improvement with stated objectives that must be met. Should a student fail to make expected progress, the student may be terminated from the student's practicum, internship, or program.

Independent Study

Independent study occurs in rare situations and requires approval of the faculty member, the program faculty, and department chair.

Changing the Degree Plan

Upon admission to the School Psychology Program, students will be provided with a degree plan. The degree plan is submitted to the Dean's Office in the PCOE. A copy of the degree plan is sent to the Graduate Dean, and another copy is placed in the student's file in the School Psychology office. Any changes to the degree plan must be approved by the faculty advisor and program director and a degree plan change form submitted to the Dean's office.

Evaluation and Review of Student Performance

Process for Evaluation of Student Progress

Each student's progress is evaluated annually. Students document progress and performance in the program by establishing and maintaining a portfolio. Continued registration in the program is contingent on demonstration of adequate progress as determined by faculty review. In addition, students receive regular feedback on their professional dispositions throughout each academic year.

Retention

To remain in good standing in the program the student must: (a) maintain a minimum overall grade point average of 3.25, (b) maintain appropriate professionalism in class and field settings; (c) observe the fundamental rules of ethical conduct; and (d) receive successful annual reviews conducted by the department throughout their graduate training experience.

Consistent with university policy, the Department of Human Services and Educational Leadership reserves the right to refuse the privilege of further attendance to a student when it has become evident that the student lacks the personal qualities, professional characteristics, or scholastic attainments essential for success.

Inactive Status

Students are expected to be enrolled each semester until completion of the degree. Failure to enroll each semester over the course of a school year without written approval by the Program Director and Department Chair for the absence will result in removal from the program. If the student wishes to return to the program, reapplication for admission is required.

Leave of Absence

Students must register each semester unless they have been granted an approved leave of absence. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing to the Program Director. Requests must be made prior to the semester in which the leave will begin; the maximum length of leave that can be

approved is one calendar year. Leaves of absence must also be approved by the Department Chair. Failure to register without a leave of absence will result in being dropped from the program.

Probation and Dismissal

After students enroll in the Department and Graduate School, they may continue to register as long as they remain in good academic standing, make satisfactory academic progress, and are within the time limitations contained in the departmental handbook and the graduate catalog. Students are considered in good standing if they have a minimum GPA of 3.25, are making satisfactory progress toward completing degree requirements, and meet the minimum requirements, as outlined in the SFA Graduate Handbook (<http://sfasu.edu/docs/research-graduate-studies/orgs-graduate-student-handbook-202004.pdf>) Failure to complete departmental requirements by the department's stated deadlines may also result in corrective action by the Graduate School.

Practicum and Internship Requirements

A 20-hour embedded practicum experience is included in SPSY 6312: Individual Intelligence Testing. During the Spring semester of the second year, students complete 200 hours of school-based experience in SPSY 6351: Practicum. Practicum experiences focus on schools as systems, assessment, academic and behavioral intervention, counseling, home-school collaboration, and consultation. Students then complete three integrated practicum courses (SPSY 6353). The integrated practicum course required for both post-baccalaureate and post-master's doctoral students requires the student to accumulate a minimum of 300 hours each Fall and Spring semester of enrollment, as well as 200 hours for a Summer semester, for a total of 800 hours. Two experiences are school-based, and one typically occurs in a clinical setting. Students will receive supervision from field-based and university-based supervisors during their practicum experiences. Upon successful completion of the practicum experiences, students are prepared for internship.

School-based practica can only be completed during the Fall and Spring semesters and must be scheduled in advance. The clinic practicum may be completed during the Summer semester and must be arranged via the instructor and the university-based supervisor.

A Field Supervision Practicum or Internship Agreement is completed for each student prior to the beginning of the practicum experience. Practicum supervision is provided by both field-based and University-based supervisors who are appropriately licensed and credentialed. In addition to on-site supervision by the assigned field supervisor, practicum students meet weekly on campus for group supervision. Students are required to develop goals and objectives for their practicum experience and document their experiences using weekly and cumulative logs. Additionally, two times per semester written evaluations are collected from the field agency. These evaluations are discussed with the student and the field-based supervisor. This information is used by the university and practicum supervisors in a variety of ways to enhance the working relationships between the university and the field agency.

Doctoral Internship Training

Eligibility

Students must be enrolled in the SFA school psychology doctoral program, have demonstrated competency in practica (i.e., scores of 3 or higher on each item on the field-based supervisor evaluation form), and be considered in good standing with the program in order to begin their doctoral internship experience.

Students must also successfully pass their doctoral comprehensive exam prior to beginning their doctoral internship experience. Furthermore, the doctoral internship is a culminating experience that is post-practicum and post-course work; therefore, all non-dissertation course work must be completed. It is highly recommended that students also defend their dissertation prior to beginning their doctoral internship training.

Doctoral Internship Training Program Options

The doctoral internship is an organized program consisting of properly administered, systematically coordinated, planned, structured, and sequenced training experiences that extend beyond practicum training in depth, breadth, duration, frequency and intensity of experiences. The primary training method is experiential, including modeling, vicarious/observational learning, and supervisory or consultative guidance. At all times, interns and supervisors adhere to the ethical principles of APA and NASP. Specific responsibilities for the internship agency, intern, and university are outlined in the SPSY 6154 Memorandum of Agreement.

In general, students have three options for completing their doctoral internship training experience. Any option that a student chooses must be approved by the school psychology program faculty in order to ensure appropriateness of the placement, activities, and field supervision. The doctoral internship training requirements outlined below are a minimum standard. They do not necessarily lead to licensure as a psychologist. Licensure as a psychologist means that an individual may practice psychology independently. The requirements for licensure as a psychologist typically require specific training beyond earning a Ph.D. and vary from state to state. Students that wish to become licensed psychologists should research the requirements for internship training in the jurisdiction in which they wish to become licensed and ensure that their doctoral internship training program meets those standards. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain all documentation and secure experiences necessary to become licensed in the jurisdiction in which they seek licensure. Information about the requirements for both predoctoral and postdoctoral internships in Texas are available on the [Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council website. bhec.texas.gov](http://bhec.texas.gov)

Option 1 – Accredited Internship Training Program

When choosing this option, the student applies for and is accepted into a doctoral internship training program approved by the American Psychological Association (APA) and/or the Association of Post-doctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). Although there are some APA and APPIC approved internships in the state of Texas, this option may require relocation to another state for one year. Applications for APA and APPIC approved internships are due as early as October 15th during the fall semester prior to beginning internship. Doctoral graduate students in school psychology who pursue an APA-accredited and/or APPIC internship will typically meet state psychology board requirements for licensure as a psychologist; however, it is not guaranteed.

Option 2 –Internship Training Program

This option is open to students who apply for and are admitted into internship training programs that are not accredited by APA or APPIC, but are designed to meet a synthesis of requirements for doctoral internship training programs outlined by the NASP, APA, The Council for Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP), and the Texas State Board of Examiners in School Psychology (TSBESP). The requirements for this type of training program are outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement. Internship programs meeting these requirements must employ two or more interns and two or more licensed psychologists at their agency. Also, the training

program must be sequenced and structured in nature with clear training goals and experiences. If the internship training program is completed in a school and a separate licensure/certification is required to practice psychology in a school setting in the jurisdiction in which the internship agency is located, the supervising psychologist must also have this license/certification. This option is designed to meet licensure requirements in the state of Texas; however, there is no guarantee that this experience will lead to licensure as a psychologist.

Option 3 – University/Agency Consortium Agreement

If a student wishes to gain internship training in a school or mental health facility that does not meet the requirements for Option 2, the student may arrange a consortium agreement with the university and internship agency. The training program must be sequenced and structured with clear training goals and experiences. There must be at least one full-time licensed psychologist employed by the internship agency. Also, the student must receive 2 hours of individual supervision by a licensed psychologist that is employed full time by the internship agency and 2 hours of group supervision by a licensed psychologist, who is a faculty member of the SFA school psychology program. If a separate licensure or certification is required to practice school psychology in a school setting, the supervising psychologists must also have this license/certification. This option is recommended for students who wish to practice psychology in school settings upon completing PhD requirements. This option does not clearly meet licensure requirements in the state of Texas; therefore, if a student wishes to become a licensed psychologist they should carefully research the licensure requirements for the jurisdiction in which they wish to be licensed and ensure that the training program satisfies those requirements.

Required Hours and Settings

If the internship program takes place in a school setting, interns must log a total of 1,750 hours with at least 25% of those hours spent in direct services. If the internship program takes place in a mental health setting, a total of 2,000 hours with at least 25% of those hours spent in direct services is required. Students in the post-bachelor's program must complete their doctoral internship in a placement that allows for a minimum of 600 hours in a public-school setting.

Obtaining Doctoral Internship Training

Academic training programs and internship training programs are two separate training experiences in health service psychology. The internship training experience typically occurs in a different agency and/or institution than academic training. Academic training programs are not required to provide internship training programs. Internships are not guaranteed under Options 1, 2, and 3 for all students; therefore, it is the student's responsibility to apply for and build relationships with possible internship agencies. Also, a willingness to relocate during internship year is highly encouraged.

Responsibilities

In general, the responsibility for the effectiveness of the internship is shared equally by the intern, the school or agency supervisor and internship program, and the university-based supervisor. If a problem is identified it should be brought to the attention of the other parties as soon as possible. Examples of problems which might interfere with the effectiveness of the internship are inappropriate experiences for the intern, misunderstanding the requirements of the internship, personality conflicts, inappropriate or unprofessional behavior on the part of the intern, or other issues. If a problem is determined by the intern or school/agency supervisor, it is particularly important that the university-based supervisor be contacted immediately. Such problems should not be ignored until the end of the semester. The SFA university-based supervisor will work with the intern and the supervisor to find a solution to the problem. If no solution can be found, the internship would be terminated before the end of the semester.

The intern. The intern is responsible for discharging their assigned duties in a professional manner and for responding to supervision appropriately. The intern shall follow all rules and regulations of the sponsoring school or agency comparable to that of any other employee. This includes such matters as working hours, time off, vacations, and manner of dress.

The school or agency supervisor. The intern supervisor must have a minimum of three (3) years of credentialed experience as a school psychologist or psychologist and be employed as a regular employee or consultant with the school district or agency. The school or agency supervisor helps determine the most appropriate experiences for the intern, assigns duties to the intern, and provides on-going supervision of the intern's work, either directly or through other staff personnel. It is especially important for the school or agency supervisor to notify the SFA internship coordinator if a problem develops during the internship which does not seem amenable to solution within the school or agency. At the end of each semester and at the end of the internship, the supervisor will be asked to submit a written evaluation of the intern's work, and to help the SFA internship coordinator determine a grade for the intern.

The SFA university-based supervisor. The university-based supervisor helps place the intern, determines the experiences of the intern, and works with the intern and the school or agency supervisor as necessary to work out details and training experiences of the internship. The coordinator contacts the supervisor periodically to monitor the progress of the intern and to be apprised of any problems.

Petition for Candidacy

Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations

All students must pass a program-administered doctoral comprehensive examination prior to taking SPSY 6138: Dissertation. After completing 45 doctoral hours of school psychology coursework, students are eligible to take the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination. The comprehensive examination sections align with the 10 domains of the NASP, as well as the APA training competencies. Students who fail must schedule a re-take, another form of the initial examination. Failing scores on the second evaluation will result in dismissal from the program, barring extenuating circumstances.

Doctoral Dissertation Requirements and Procedures

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

PhD candidates must write a dissertation based upon research that makes an original contribution to the literature. Before beginning the dissertation process, the student should obtain and become familiar with the Dissertation Guide, which is applicable to all doctoral dissertations. This guide is located on the SFA Graduate School website (See <http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/108.asp>). The SFA School Psychology PhD program requires a dissertation committee that consists of three members of the School Psychology faculty, one graduate faculty member from the Human Services and Educational Leadership department and at least one graduate faculty member from outside the department of Human Services and Educational Leadership.

The required courses related to dissertation are: SPSY 6138 Dissertation – taken for a total of nine (9) hours. As per Graduate School policy, if the student is unable to complete the dissertation by the time these 9 hours have been completed, the student must continuously enroll in a minimum of one credit of SPSY 6138 every fall, spring, and summer until the dissertation is defended and approved. At a minimum, the student will meet with the dissertation committee two times; once for the proposal defense and once for the final dissertation defense. The student's committee may request additional meetings if necessary. Students may not propose their dissertation and defend their dissertation within the same

semester. Students should not expect to be able to propose or defend their dissertations during the summer semester or during semester breaks. Faculty may or may not be on contract during the summer semester, and so may not be available for a dissertation proposal or defense during that time period. Students must plan carefully, so as to be able to propose the dissertation, and defend the dissertation, within the academic year (e.g., fall or spring semesters) and within the parameters set by the graduate school.

Students are encouraged to complete their dissertation during their last year of coursework prior to internship. Completion of the dissertation prior to internship benefits the student during their internship experience and ensures graduation upon completion of the internship experience. At a minimum, the dissertation proposal should be completed before the student leaves for internship. Having the dissertation proposal approved prior to internship facilitates timely degree completion. Dissertations are graded as a Pass (P) or Fail (F) scale. Students will be given a grade of Pass (P) on the 9 credits required for SPSY 6138 after they successfully complete their proposal (6 credit hours) and defend (3 credit hours). The grade of WH will be assigned to indicate progress on the project. The grade of F will be assigned to students that do not make any progress during the enrolled semester and subsequently be dismissed from the program.

The Dissertation Process

The following information is provided as a guide to help students initiate and sustain a successful dissertation process. The most conscientious students will begin the process the first year of enrollment by seeking faculty-guided engagement in critical review of bodies of literature that address their social issue areas and populations of greatest interest. Each opportunity for paper development might be used to further shape and hone research questions that could be considered in pilot studies and the future dissertation. Variation in the details below may occur as a function of the dissertation topic itself, the student, the dissertation chair and committee, and other aspects of the process. Students are responsible for initiating all the major steps of this process. Students should refer to the syllabus for SPSY 6138 for the Dissertation course prior to enrollment.

a) Preparing the dissertation proposal

Before registering for dissertation credit, the student should choose a dissertation chair. The dissertation chair should be a School Psychology faculty member (or the dissertation needs to be co-chaired and one of the co-chairs must be a School Psychology faculty member). The dissertation topic must be approved by the student's doctoral committee chair prior to proceeding with the proposal process. Once an idea has been generated, the student should write several research questions that address the selected topic. The dissertation chair will assist the student in formulating researchable questions. In conjunction with the chosen chair, the student will then select the dissertation committee and gain permission of each faculty member chosen to serve on the committee. Note that all departmental committee members must be members of the graduate faculty, which requires approval by the departmental and university committees. Students are to verify this status as invitations are extended for committee membership.

The dissertation proposal should provide information on the need/rationale and overview of the study (Chapter One), review relevant literature (Chapter Two), and describe research methodology for addressing the questions (Chapter Three). Students should work with their doctoral committee chairperson and committee members as needed in order to refine the proposal and schedule the proposal meeting. The student should allow the dissertation chair(s) or committee members at least a two-week period for returning drafts during regular semesters. When the dissertation chair has approved the proposal manuscript, the student should work with the committee chair and other members to schedule a date for a proposal meeting. The student is responsible for (A) working with the department administrative assistant or secretary to secure a room for the meeting, (B) notifying committee members of proposal date and time, (C) providing

all committee members with a copy of the proposal, and (D) collecting and bringing multiple copies of the appropriate forms to the meeting for faculty signatures.

The proposal manuscript must be given to committee members at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled proposal meeting to provide time for committee members to prepare for the meeting or to raise major questions that should be addressed prior to the meeting. The student is also responsible for securing the necessary approvals and sanctions related to the dissertation study from the agencies and settings where the research will be implemented prior to the proposal meeting.

At the meeting itself, the student will be asked to provide an overview of the dissertation proposal in a PowerPoint presentation and to address related questions from committee members. The meeting is designed to clarify dissertation plans and procedures as deemed necessary by the student and committee members. At the conclusion of the meeting, committee members vote on the proposal and share the decision with the student. Upon successful completion of the proposal meeting and approval by the SFA Institutional Review Board (IRB), students may proceed with their dissertation research. Students are responsible for all arrangements and details associated with conducting the dissertation study including (but not limited to) securing the necessary research settings(s), subjects, observers, data collectors, and other related details. This includes any financial costs incurred in order to carry out the dissertation and approval process.

b) Preparing the dissertation defense

Upon completing the entire study, analyzing the data, and preparing a final copy of the dissertation in accordance with the university's Dissertation Guide, students should schedule the dissertation defense meeting. For this, the student should work with the committee chair and other members to determine an agreed upon date for the defense meeting. If necessary, changes in committee membership may be made by the student or the faculty or the committee. The request is submitted to the committee chair, and the change would be reflected on the School Psychology Doctoral Dissertation Committee form.

The student **MUST** notify the school psychology secretary and the program director at least 30 days prior to the proposed dissertation defense date. The student must then complete the routing form to notify the following people regarding date and time of defense: Department Chair, College Dean, and Graduate Dean. It is not unusual for the announcement to be publicized in the university newspaper and members of the student body may be encouraged to attend. It is the student's responsibility to reserve a room with appropriate technology to support the defense presentation. Once a location for the meeting has been secured, the student will email committee members with the date and time. At least two weeks prior to the meeting, the student must (a) provide a final copy of the dissertation document to (b) the committee members AND (c) use the "Pre-defense Routing Form" (obtained from Program administrative assistant) to accompany copies of the dissertation document for the Department faculty (1 copy each left with Program administrative assistant), Department Chair, College Dean, and Graduate Dean.

The PhD candidate will give a formal 30-40 minute presentation (overview of study, summary of results, discussion, and implications). The dissertation committee may question the candidate during or after the presentation; however, in the most structured process questions are reserved until after the completion of the PowerPoint presentation. Following the formal presentation, at the discretion of the committee, questions can be solicited from the non-committee attendees for up to 20 minutes followed by a break. Following the question and answer period, the candidate and all non-committee members will be asked to leave the room so that the committee may discuss the candidate's performance in private. During deliberations, which usually take no

longer than 30 minutes, committee members will vote to “approve,” “approve with conditions,” or “not approve” the defense. The candidate is then asked to return to the room to receive the committee’s final decision.

c) After the dissertation defense

Once the dissertation has been defended, the student works with the chairperson to make any committee-recommended changes to the dissertation document. Committee members reserve the right to review and approve the final revised manuscript. The final manuscript is the document signed by the dissertation committee and the dean of Graduate Studies and is subsequently bound, placed in the library and uploaded to ScholarWorks. Therefore, the manuscript must be of the highest possible quality with respect to content and presentation. The student bears the primary responsibility for quality but must realize that each member of the dissertation committee also bears responsibility and is not obligated to sign the manuscript until satisfied with the overall quality of the dissertation. Before making copies of the manuscript, the student should thoroughly proofread all pages of the dissertation to make sure all mechanical specifications have been met. Failure to meet one or more specifications could result in the manuscript being returned for correction, thereby causing the expenditure of additional time and money that could otherwise be avoided. Details concerning the requirements for submission of the dissertation are available on the Graduate School’s webpage (<http://www.sfasu.edu/academics/orgs/graduate-students-faculty/theses-exhibitions-dissertations>).