

University of Houston-Clear Lake
School Psychology Program (SSP)
Frequently Asked Questions



Thank you for your interest in our program. This FAQ is intended to provide you with additional information regarding the program. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Thomas Schanding (Program Director), Dr. Valerie Morgan, Dr. Gill Strait, or Dr. Julia Strait (schandingjr@uhcl.edu; morganva@uhcl.edu; strait@uhcl.edu; straitj@uhcl.edu).

Application/Financial Aid Questions

Q. WHEN ARE APPLICATIONS DUE?

A. Applications are due on January 25th of each year and reviewed by the faculty in February. Applicants typically begin coursework in summer after notifications for admission are announced in spring. Applications are submitted through “Apply Texas” and the School Psychology Program Application (see program website for more details). Applicants must also have three professional references submit letters of recommendation and the recommendation form to the program.

Q. HOW DO FACULTY RATE MY APPLICATION TO THE PROGRAM?

A. The top applicants who meet certain prerequisite standards (GRE, GPA, prior coursework, experience, letters of recommendation, etc.) are invited for an interview on campus. Selections to the program are made after the interview process and are usually complete by the first week of March. Only 9-12 students are accepted each year. Applicants should have a minimum 3.25 GPA for undergraduate coursework.

Q. WHAT IS THE REQUIRED GRE SCORE?

A. The majority of those students admitted to the program have a combined Verbal and Quantitative GRE score of 300 or higher. A higher GRE score does make an applicant more competitive in the admission process, but faculty take into consideration other factors within the application for admission. In recent years, the average GRE score for students admitted and enrolled in the program has been 298 (GRE-Verbal = 151; GRE-Quantitative=147).

Q. MAY I TRANSFER IN CREDITS FROM ANOTHER GRADUATE PROGRAM?

A. It is possible to transfer some graduate credits; however, this requires meeting particular criteria. The student must have earned a passing grade (B- or higher) in the course and the course must closely align with learning objectives and practices of the program course it is intended to replace. If you plan to request transfer credit for courses, please talk with your Faculty Advisor and/or Program Director. More information may be found in the School Psychology Handbook found on the School Psychology program’s website.

Q. HOW MUCH ARE TUITION AND FEES?

A. Tuition and fees can be obtained on the UHCL website, but generally a 9-hour semester costs approximately \$4000-\$5000 depending on residency status.

Q. WHAT FINANCIAL AID, SCHOLARSHIPS, ASSISTANTSHIPS, AND STIPENDS (IF ANY) ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM?

A. The program does not have guaranteed funding opportunities for students. Paid teaching assistantships are rare and typically not available to students during their first year in the program. The university offers some opportunities for financial aid (see <https://www.uhcl.edu/costs-aid/>).

Program Specific Questions

Q. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE ME TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM?

A. The UHCL School Psychology program is nationally approved and is a 3-year program. Students should expect to complete the program in no less than 3 years, but may be able to transfer in previously taken graduate courses. Collectively, the courses taken meet national standards and the National Association of School Psychology's domains of training and practice.

The program is 70 semester hours, 12 of which are internship. Graduates are required to pass the national school psychology examination prior to graduation and upon graduation, are automatically eligible for the NCSP and LSSP Trainee credentials. To complete the process to become an LSSP, graduates take the jurisprudence exam in the summer following graduation. We are actively involved in all phases of the student's application process for both the LSSP and NCSP.

Q. WHAT IS THE COURSE SEQUENCE?

A. Full information regarding the course sequence can be found in the School Psychology Handbook posted on the website. Year 1 involves coursework in the core of psychology (e.g., Human Growth and Development, Biological Basis of Behavior, Research and Statistics, Learning, Psychopathology) and a three-course sequence in assessment and cognitive/academic interventions (Intellectual Assessment, Intervention I: Cognitive and Achievement, Personality Assessment of the Child). You can maintain full-time employment during the fall and spring semesters of Year 1. However, Year 1 also includes the summers. Unless you are a teacher or other school employee and have summers off, full-time employment cannot happen in the summer as most courses are offered during the day.

School Psychology is one of the designated specialty areas of psychology, and Year 2 is devoted to specialized training and practice. You have a full academic year of Practicum, which includes conducting assessments in our training clinic on campus and being in schools for 2 days per week. In addition, there is coursework in Consultation, Behavior Intervention, Counseling, Legal/Legislative Issues and Ethics. Full-time employment cannot occur in Year 2; 3 days per week are devoted to practice (1 in clinic and 2 in school) and the remaining days involve taking classes that also involve practice-oriented requirements.

Year 3 is a full-time internship, and all interns receive a stipend. Technically you are employed full-time, but not receiving a full-time salary. Stipends typically range from \$20,000-\$30,000. While this is

not a full-time salary, the paid internship will cover the majority of the cost of your graduate education. This is definitely a plus as many internships are non-paid. Our program has agreements with over 15 school districts, and we place students in districts based on geographic location, match with district needs, and match with student characteristics. We have a 100% rate for placements in paid internships.

Q. DO YOU OFFER ONLINE COURSES?

A. The UHCL School Psychology program does not offer courses online.

Q. WHAT LICENSES/CREDENTIALS WILL I BE ELIGIBLE TO OBTAIN?

A. The Program prepares you to become a **Licensed Specialist in School Psychology** (LSSP) in Texas and a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). The LSSP is a license given by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP; <http://www.tsbep.texas.gov/>). The LSSP is a license unique to the state of Texas; program completers who move away from Texas after graduating are prepared to apply to become licensed/certified school psychologists in other states. The NCSP is granted through the National School Psychology Certification System; <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/national-certification/apply-for-the-ncsp>). Student may also be eligible to apply for the **Licensed Psychological Associate**; however, this would require additionally planning on the part of the student.

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE A PART-TIME STUDENT IN THE PROGRAM?

A. No. Students are expected to maintain full-time enrollment in the program, typically taking courses in fall, spring, and summer semesters.

Q. ARE STUDENTS ABLE TO WORK WHILE ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM?

A. The School Psychology program is rigorous and challenging. Student may be able to maintain employment during their first year, but would be unable to maintain this full-time work schedule in the second year of the program when taking advanced, skill-based courses and completing a clinical-practicum within a public school and the UHCL Psychological Services Clinic. Students in their third year complete a full-time, paid internship in a school district.