School Psychology Program
Program Handbook

This handbook provides information about the Specialist program in School Psychology at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. It is intended for use by potential applicants to make informed decisions about whether to seek admission to the School Psychology Program and by admitted candidates as a partial guide to their academic decision-making.

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School Psychology Program: Synopsis

School Psychology is a graduate level program in the College of Human Sciences and Humanities. The program involves a minimum of three years of study, consists of 70 semester credit hours and culminates in a year of full-time supervised field experience as a school psychology intern. Candidates earn the Specialist in School Psychology degree and are eligible to become state and nationally credentialed in school psychology. The goal of the program is the development of highly competent specialists in school psychology qualified for licensure to practice in Texas schools.

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Program Philosophy/Mission

The UHCL School Psychology Program is based on the philosophy that all children can learn and that specialists in school psychology who are privileged to work with children must be ethical, responsible and competent in addressing and advocating for each child's individual psycho-educational needs. To accomplish this, candidates must have a foundation for school psychological services based on core knowledge (e.g., research methods, human growth and development, learning principles, psychopathology, and biological bases of behavior). They must then be able to apply this knowledge through developed skills in psychological service areas such as assessment, intervention, behavior analysis and consultation. They must be prepared to work collaboratively with an increasingly diverse population and be resourceful in meeting the challenges that confront them as school psychology professionals. In sum, the program provides theoretical knowledge and applied training in order to assess and address the behavioral and educational problems and well-being of children and adolescents. The emphasis of the program is on delivery of a comprehensive range of services through the public and/or private schools and preparation for licensure as a specialist in school psychology.

The School Psychology program at UHCL has a long history of national approval. It was the first specialist-level NASP-approved program in Texas and has maintained this approval since 1988. Our program is dedicated to providing high quality training that meets national standards. The program reflects the NASP graduate training standards and domains of practice. These standards/practice domains reflect six guiding principles (listed below), which serve as a framework for our training program.

- Specialists in School Psychology (SSPs) have a foundation in the knowledge bases for both psychology and education, including theories, models, research, empirical findings, and techniques, and the ability to explain important principles and concepts.
- SSPs use effective strategies and skills to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally.
- SSPs apply their knowledge and skills by creating and maintaining safe, supportive, fair, and effective learning environments and enhancing family-school collaboration for all students.
- SSPs demonstrate knowledge and skills relevant for professional practices and work characteristics in their field.
- SSPs ensure that their knowledge, skills, and professional practices reflect understanding and respect for human diversity and promote effective services, advocacy, and social justice for all children, families, and schools.
- SSPs integrate knowledge and skills in delivering a comprehensive range of services in professional practice that result in direct, measurable outcomes for children, families, schools and/or other consumers.

As a candidate in our school psychology program, you have chosen a laudable profession, one that will build your knowledge, skills and professional character to become a leader and integral team member in the educational system. You will be prepared to deliver psychological services (e.g., assessment, intervention, and consultation) to children and adolescents, especially those who have disabilities, are culturally and linguistically diverse, come from varying socioeconomic levels, and are in greatest need for support. We can think of no greater mission than to provide services that enhance the learning and mental health of children so they make progress and succeed in the educational system.

Accreditation and Licensing

The UHCL School Psychology Program is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). As graduates of a NASP-approved program and upon passing the national examination in school psychology, program completers are eligible for the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential. More information on this credential can be obtained at www.nasponline.org. As graduates of a NASP-approved program, program completers meet the training standards for the Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP), which is the license required for school psychology practitioners in the state of Texas. The LSSP credential is issued by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists and requires passing an additional state examination. More information on these credentials can be obtained at www.tsbep.state.tx.us.

Prior Graduate Credit Policy

Individuals who have a previous graduate degree or coursework in psychology (or a closely related discipline) must formally apply to the program and be accepted as outlined for all candidates. At a minimum, such candidates will take the Orientation to School Psychology, Seminar in Professional School Psychology, Intervention I & II, Ethics and Law, School Psychology Practicum, Consultation in School Psychology, Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation and in School Psychology, and Internship courses, plus any other assigned coursework to meet the substantial equivalent of the UHCL School Psychology program.

The UHCL School Psychology program does not have a formal option for respecialization. All candidates go through the same process for application. For those candidates who are accepted and have a previous degree or graduate coursework, an analysis of the previous graduate coursework is done to determine equivalency to the coursework and may be transferred into the program. This analysis includes the following elements:

1. A review of the transcripts and identification of similar course titles. If the title is not similar or does not contain keywords to reflect the essence of the course, it will not be considered. For example, a course titled *Motivation* would not be used for *Learning Principles* even if some of the course content may have covered learning.
2. A review of the graduate catalog course description from the former university, if available.
3. A review of the syllabus for the identified course and comparison of the course content and requirements to the similar course in the UHCL School Psychology Program. For example, if a candidate has completed a research and statistics course, he/she must have completed a formal research project, which involves Human Subjects approval, data collection and analysis, and a paper or a poster presentation with literature review, method, results and discussion. The research project is required for completing the UHCL School Psychology Program, as it is not only a research and statistics requirement, but the project also must be included in the portfolio. If the candidate has taken a research and statistics course that did not require the completion of a research project, but he/she did complete a research project as part of another course or thesis, together the research and statistics class and the completed project may count for equivalency.
4. Even if the first three elements are met, the candidate may be required to demonstrate competency in the identified area. For example, if the candidate has taken a class in intellectual assessment that had similar content, he/she would need to provide a videotape of administration of certain tests and a sample report.

Upon completion of the program, students will meet the requirements of the SSP degree. It must be emphasized that the NCSP and LSSP credentials are granted by boards and not by any academic

program.

Application to the Program

There are two main components to applying to the School Psychology Program. One component involves applying to the university through Apply Texas (https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX). The applicant must be admitted to the university in order to be admitted into the School Psychology program. Information regarding university admissions is given in the "Information for New Students" section of the UHCL catalog and can also be obtained on the university's web site at www.uhcl.edu. Acceptance into graduate status at the university should not be confused with acceptance into the School Psychology Program.

The second step involves the application to the School Psychology program itself. This part consists of submitting the $35 fee as indicated on the application form to the School Psychology program. Letters of recommendation should be sent directly to the program by email to clinicalschool@uhcl.edu. The letter writer should submit the letter of recommendation as well as the required recommendation form (found on the program website). The program accepts applications once each year with an acceptance letter from the school psychology faculty. The application deadline is January 25. Approximately 8 to 10 candidates are accepted yearly, which is normally about one-third of the number of applicants.

In addition to completion of the application form, applicants to the School Psychology Program must submit the following: official transcripts with grade point average (GPA) indicated; three letters of recommendation; an essay outlining the applicant's professional goals; a curriculum vitae; and recent Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. The faculty rate each of these pieces of information for each applicant on a 0-3 point scale (increments of .5 can also be given). A score of "0" to "1" means the information is below expectations, "2" is average expectations, and "3" is above average expectations. For example, an undergraduate GPA below 3.00 rates a "0." A score between 3.00 and 3.24 is given a "1." A GPA of 3.25 to 3.49 rates a "2," and a GPA at or above 3.50 earns a score of "3." Based on the GRE scoring system, a score of ≤140 is "0," a score of 141-144 is given "1" point, a score of 145-150 is "2," and a score of ≥151 earns "3" points. Other factors rated include the extent to which letters of reference attest to the applicant's potential for success in the program, whether the applicant's professional goals as stated in the essay are consistent with the goals of the program and the degree to which the essay reflects knowledge of the field of school psychology, whether the applicant has completed graduate work or obtained a professional license, and how well the applicant's prior experiences suggest career potential for providing professional school psychological services, especially to students who are currently under-served and those who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

A minimum of 12 hours of undergraduate psychology coursework is required as a prerequisite to acceptance, including Introductory Psychology, Child Psychology, Abnormal Psychology and one upper-level psychology course. In some cases, a similar course may substitute for a prerequisite. The extent to which the applicant has completed the prerequisite coursework is also rated on the 0-3 scale.

The core faculty rate each applicant independently and the total score for each applicant is averaged across faculty ratings. Applicants who obtain the highest mean score are invited to campus to be interviewed by the faculty. The interview process consists of three parts:
1. An individual interview with the faculty in which a set of standardized questions are asked of each applicant;
2. A group interview with an activity that requires applicants to work together in small groups to answer a set of questions related to professional school psychology practice; and
3. A writing sample in which each applicant is given a specific amount of time to respond to a case study provided by the faculty.

Following this process, the faculty decide on a consensus basis which applicants to invite into the program. Letters are sent, normally by early April, to the applicants as to whether they have been admitted into the program. Those admitted must indicate their acceptance so they can be registered or, if they decline, allow their places in the program to be filled by other applicants. In some cases, admission is possible if all prerequisite requirements are not met at the time of application, but prerequisites would be taken in the summer and/or fall as candidates begin the program.

Advisement

Upon admission to the program, each candidate is assigned a faculty advisor who prepares an individual Candidate Plan of Study. This Plan lists the courses required for the particular candidate. This Plan will be checked against the transcript when the individual applies for graduation. The assigned advisor is the professor with whom the candidate consults regarding coursework for each semester, program of study questions, and other supervisory functions. Candidates must check with their advisor and with the Program Director before any change of the Candidate Plan of Study can be approved. If a candidate has previous coursework and is accepted to the program, the four elements related to prior graduate credit are used to determine coursework equivalency.

Curriculum

Policy on Continuous Enrollment: The School Psychology Program consists of 70 graduate hours and is designed to be completed in a 3-year time period. Once admitted to the School Psychology Program, the candidate is required to be enrolled continuously each fall, spring, and summer semester. Candidates are encouraged to limit their employment in the first year of the program; full-time employment during year 2 is not possible; and employment is not possible during year 3 as the candidate is enrolled full-time in internship. Candidates who are not continuously enrolled for two consecutive semesters will be dropped from the program. If a program of study must be interrupted, the candidate must meet with the program faculty to discuss and obtain approval for the development of a modified plan.

Focus of Training: The UHCL School Psychology Program is based on a collaborative, data-based problem-solving model of training. Candidates in school psychology are trained to engage in a variety of roles and functions as part of a broader education-based model of service delivery and as members of a multidisciplinary team. There is a major emphasis in our program on *collaboration* and delivering services as part of a *team*. The major roles and functions for LSSPs involve assessment for learning, developmental, behavioral, and emotional conditions; planning, developing, and assisting in the implementation of academic and behavioral interventions based on assessment data; engaging in individual and group counseling and crisis intervention; consulting with parents, school personnel, and other professionals regarding learning and behavioral difficulties; and conducting activities designed to address both primary and secondary prevention, including in-service training, participation in problem-solving committees, and participation in all phases of a multi-tiered system of student support.

Program Goals and Objectives: The major goals of the UHCL training program are to produce graduates who (a) demonstrate competency in school psychology, through knowledge, skills and professional work characteristics; (b) obtain state licensure in the field; and (c) are competitive in the job market and/or continue their education. In order to further delineate the focus of training identified above and the general goals of competency in knowledge and skills, the following is a list of program objectives that serve to inform the candidate of the types of training the program is designed to provide. [These objectives are not exhaustive as each course has many objectives to assist you in acquiring knowledge and skills and to ensure that you are competent to practice upon graduation. However, these objectives do indicate the competencies you are expected to have upon completion of the program.]

General
- Candidates will develop foundational knowledge in the following areas of psychology: learning principles and how such principles relate to academic, behavioral, and emotional functioning; normal developmental processes throughout the life span with emphasis on child and adolescent years; psychopathology; and biological factors than impact learning, behavior and development. The purpose of developing this core psychological foundation knowledge is to have a basis for delivery of services and to be able to understand and respond to individual differences.
- Candidates will develop foundational knowledge in the following areas of education: educational systems; models of educational/academic service delivery; criteria for determining educational progress; high-stakes testing; disproportionality; and school-wide prevention.
- Candidates will demonstrate data-based decision making and problem-solving processes to address emotional/behavioral, learning/academic, and developmental issues as students enter and progress through school. Data-based problem-solving will serve as the framework for school psychological services.
- Candidates will demonstrate understanding and respect for individual differences and diverse characteristics in their practice and be able to apply this knowledge in the provision of services; this includes the understanding of the impact of sociocultural, ethnic, experiential, socioeconomic, linguistic, gender-related and other variables on learning and behavior and applying this understanding in case conceptualization, from diagnostic to intervention to progress monitoring services.
- Candidates participate in multi-disciplinary teams in assessment and intervention in order to develop and implement a variety of services for academic/learning and emotional/behavioral difficulties.
- Candidates will be able to clearly and respectfully present results (assessment and intervention) both orally and in writing to various constituents (e.g., parents, colleagues, teachers, school administrators, community service providers).
- Candidates will gain skills in research that will facilitate/lead to: (a) understanding and use of the literature and research for practice; (b) conducting a research investigation, developing a poster presentation, and presenting the study at a professional/student research conference; and (c) evaluating the efficacy of practices and programs in schools for individuals, classrooms, campuses, and school systems.

Assessment
- Candidates will demonstrate skills in various methods of assessment, including review of records, interviews, observations, norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced and curriculum-based measures, behavioral assessment, and ecological/environmental assessment.
- Candidates will be able to collect various forms of data and use that data to complete the following assessment procedures: evaluate strengths and needs; plan interventions and services; conduct diagnostic classification according to IDEA, Texas Commissioner's Rules, and DSM-5 criteria; and evaluate progress and outcomes for individual students, programs, classroom environments, and other aspects of school functioning.

Intervention and Consultation
- Candidates will be knowledgeable about evidence-based practices and interventions for learning/academic and emotional/behavioral concerns and gather and use data to design, implement and evaluate interventions.

- Candidates will become familiar with multi-tiered systems of support for both academic and behavioral needs and be able to provide a variety of evidenced-based services in a multi-tiered system of support.
- Candidates will participate in the following primary and secondary prevention activities: conducting in-service workshops; applying knowledge and skills in addressing risk factors for students with academic, social-emotional, and behavioral challenges; applying knowledge of facilitators and inhibitors for academic, social-emotional, and behavioral functioning; contributing to the development and implementation of positive behavior supports in the educational environment; and participating on school assistance teams and developing interventions prior to referral for special education assessment (i.e., MTSS/RtI process).
- Candidates will have knowledge of various models/approaches in consultation, possess positive interpersonal skills and professional dispositions, and have skills to effectively engage in a consultative, collaborative process with colleagues, parents, teachers, school intervention teams, school administrators, and service providers from the community in order to affect positive change in individuals, schools, families, and systems.
- Candidates will acquire knowledge and skills in methods related to direct and group counseling, including cognitive-behavioral techniques, solution-focused techniques, and other methods that are evidence-based.
- Candidates will acquire knowledge in crisis intervention techniques and be able to intervene with students and develop crisis intervention plans.

Professional Practice
- Candidates will gain knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology as a specialty, the roles and functions of specialists in school psychology and the contributions of specialists in overall service delivery to students, families and educational systems.
- Candidates will gain a working knowledge of federal and state laws, case law, and state and circuit court decisions applicable to the practice of school psychology in general and the practice within the state of Texas.
- Candidates will gain understanding that school psychological practice involves ongoing continued professional development and begin to engage in professional development activities during their graduate program by attending conferences and workshops.
- Candidates will be knowledgeable of and apply ethical principles in their practice and service delivery.
- Candidates will obtain state licensure as Licensed Specialists in School Psychology and certification as Nationally Certified School Psychologists.

Competency in Professional Work Characteristics: Effective interpersonal skills and the ability to work constructively and collaboratively with diverse individuals and agencies are indispensable for specialists in school psychology. These characteristics, or dispositions, are evaluated through information collected during courses, practicum, internship, and other appropriate means. Professional work characteristics involve the ability to solicit input from others and to listen well, adapt to changing circumstances, communicate well, and facilitate the development of harmonious relationships and learning environments. More specifically, professional work characteristics include respect for human diversity, communication skills, effective interpersonal relations, ethical responsibility, adaptability, initiative and dependability.

Competency in NASP Domains of Practice: Candidate competency in school psychology is measured through how well the individual meets the NASP Domains of Practice listed below. There are 10 Domains of Practice, which correspond to 8 Standards for Graduate Education. Our program is based on these standards/domains of practice and the table below presents the general description of each practice domain with corresponding reference to the graduate training standard.

Standard II **Practice Domain 1. Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability:** School psychologists have knowledge of varied methods of assessment and data collection methods for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to use psychological and educational assessment, data collection strategies, and technology resources and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate response to services and programs.
Standard III **Practice Domain 2. Consultation and Collaboration:** School psychologists have knowledge of varied methods of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and used to promote effective implementation of services. As part of a systematic and comprehensive process of effective decision making and problem solving that permeates all aspects of service delivery, school psychologists demonstrate skills to consult, collaborate, and communicate with others during design, implementation, and evaluation of services and programs.
Standard IV, Element 4.1 **Practice Domain 3. Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills:** School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence based curriculum and instructional strategies. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data-collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills.
Standard IV, Element 4.2 **Practice Domain 4. Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills:** School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health; behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills; and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to use assessment and data-collection methods and to implement and evaluate services that support socialization, learning, and mental health.
Standard V, Element 5.1 **Practice Domain 5. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning:** School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote academic outcomes, learning, social development, and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others.
Standard V, Element 5.2 **Practice Domain 6. Preventive and Responsive Services:** School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multi-tiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental health, safety, and physical well-being through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery.
Standard VI **Practice Domain 7. Family–School Collaboration Services:** School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children's learning, socialization, and mental health; and methods to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school partnership/interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children.

Standard VII
Practice Domain 8. Diversity in Development and Learning: School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role differences; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds and across multiple contexts, with recognition that an understanding and respect for diversity in development and learning and advocacy for social justice are foundations of all aspects of service delivery.

Standard VIII, Element 8.1
Practice Domain 9. Research and Program Evaluation: School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation methods sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings. School psychologists demonstrate skills to evaluate and apply research as a foundation for service delivery and, in collaboration with others, use various techniques and technology resources for data collection, measurement, analysis, and program evaluation to support effective practices at the individual, group, and/or systems levels.

Standard VIII, Element 8.2
Practice Domain 10. Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice: School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards; engage in responsive ethical and professional decision-making; collaborate with other professionals; and apply professional work characteristics needed for effective practice as school psychologists, including respect for human diversity and social justice, communication skills, effective interpersonal skills, responsibility, adaptability, initiative, dependability, and technology skills.

Coursework: Coursework is provided in the following areas: Psychological and Educational Foundations (e.g., developmental psychology, biological basis of behavior, learning principles, social and cultural diversity, research and statistics, psychopathology, and educational systems); Assessment (e.g., intellectual, personality, and behavioral assessment), Interventions (e.g., academic and cognitive skills, social and behavioral skills, affective and adaptive skills, and program design and evaluation for special populations), Consultation, and Professional School Psychology (e.g., school psychology seminar, ethics and law, practicum and internship). Descriptions of the courses can be found in the UHCL catalog. The School Psychology Program represents an integrated program of study in which aspects of multiple courses cover several standards. The grid below identifies the courses that relate to and measure the NASP Standards.

Courses	NASP Standards/Domains of Practice and Associated Courses*									
	S II	S III	S IV-4.1	S IV-4.2	S V-5.1	S V-5.2	S VI	S VII	S VIII-8.1	S VIII-8.2
PSYC 5031: Hum. Growth & Dev.			X			X		X		
PSYC 6036: Research & Statistics I									X	
PSYC 6037: Research & Statistics II									X	
PSYC 5235: Learning Principles	X		X	X						
PSYC 5131: Psychopathology of Childhood						X		X		
PSYC 5111: Orientation to School Psyc.					X					X
PSYC 6032: Intellectual Assessment	X		X					X		
PSYC 6139: Intervention I: Academic and Cognitive Skills	X		X		X	X		X		
PSYC 6134: Biological Basis of Behavior			X	X						
PSYC 5630: Behavioral Family Systems		X				X	X	X		
PSYC 6133: Personality Assessment of the Child	X			X		X		X		
PSYC 6230: Intervention II: Social & Behavioral Skills	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
PSYC 6121: Ethics and Law in School Psychology										X
PSYC 6111: Student Diversity in Learning							X	X		
PSYC 6138: Design and Evaluation of School Health Programs				X	X	X			X	
PSYC 6231: Intervention III: Affective and Adaptive Skills	X			X	X	X	X	X		X
PSYC 6034: Consultation in School Psychology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PSYC 6039 (x2): School Psychology Practicum	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PSYC 6132: Seminar in Professional School Psychology	X				X					X
PSYC 6332 Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
PSYC 6666 (x2): Internship	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* S II - Data-based Decision Making and Accountability; S III – Consultation and Collaboration; S IV 4.1 – Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills; S IV 4.2 – Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills; S V 5.1 – School-wide Practices to Promote Learning; S V 5.2 – Preventive and Responsive Services; S VI – Family-School Collaboration Services; S VII – Diversity in Development and Learning; S VIII 8.1 – Research and Program Evaluation; S VIII 8.2 – Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice.

Practica: Practica are defined by NASP as closely supervised on-campus and/or field-based activities designed to develop and evaluate a school psychology candidate's mastery of specific professional skills.

Skill and competency development rather than delivery of professional services is primary, as practica occur prior to internship, and the goal is to ensure that the candidate is able to begin internship and deliver school psychological services. Several courses in the program have supervised practica experiences in order that the candidate develop certain skills needed for delivering the broad range of school psychological services. These include, but are not limited to, courses such as Intellectual Assessment, Consultation and Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation in School Psychology, and the Intervention I through III sequence. This means that in each of these courses, candidates will be required to perform tasks that demonstrate knowledge application and skill acquisition; thus, much outside work is required for these courses and candidates need to be aware that these courses will have higher demands than a typical college course.

In addition to the practica experiences that occur throughout the program, each candidate also completes a course titled Practicum in School Psychology (a two-semester course). This course involves two major components: (a) working in teams to assess clients at the UHCL Psychological Services clinic (this university-based practicum experience is designed to teach data-based problem solving and involves all phases of assessment: planning, conducting the evaluation, producing a comprehensive written report, meeting with the parents in an interpretive conference, and meeting with school personnel when applicable), and (b) working in the field (a public school district) with a mentor/supervisor to observe and perform various duties of the specialist in school psychology.

In the university-based practicum, candidates meet one day a week and work in teams to assess referred clients. The children and adolescents referred for this service have learning, developmental, behavioral and/or emotional difficulties and are referred by parents, usually upon the recommendation of a physician, teacher, school counselor, or other community service provider. The supervision is provided by a professor who is a licensed psychologist, licensed specialist in school psychology, and nationally certified school psychologist. The practicum is taught like a course, where candidates not only perform assessments, but also meet as a group, present case studies, and are provided with training on specific instruments, the process of disability determination, and other relevant issues related to the practice of school psychology. In addition to the direct assessment of clients and meeting with parents, candidates meet individually and in their teams for supervision of cases. The assessments and parent conferences are performed on campus at the university's Psychological Services Clinic, which has one-way mirrors for observations as well as video capabilities for recording sessions.

In the field-based component of the practicum, candidates spend a minimum of two days per week in a public school district. They are assigned a mentor/supervisor and perform a variety of duties including assessment, consultation and intervention. A formal summative evaluation is completed by the university-based supervisor (includes input from the field-based supervisor). Parents also complete an evaluation and provide feedback regarding the services they received for their child (e.g., appropriate, thorough, information well explained) and the usefulness of such services (e.g., beneficial in understanding the child's difficulties, recommendations appropriate and able to be implemented, results and recommendations lead to the development of a school plan). More information regarding the practicum course is provided in the course syllabus.

Internship: For candidates who have successfully passed the first two years, including practicum, the program culminates with the internship. Completion of the internship is a privilege, not a right, and depends upon whether the candidate meets the expectations of both the university and the placement district. Students are evaluated by the primary School Psychology faculty upon completion of practicum regarding the student's eligibility to begin internship. The internship is designed to be accomplished on a full-time basis over a period of one academic year. The internship consists of a minimum of 1200 hours of experience, at least 600 of which must be working within a public school district. An internship in two sites is not recommended; candidates are placed in a public school district for an academic year (two sites

would only be considered under certain circumstances). Consistent with NASP standards, the internship can occur over a two-year period (consecutive years) on a part-time basis, but this is not recommended and is considered only under certain circumstances. UHCL maintains internship agreements with over 15 school districts in the Houston/Gulf Coast area and, on some occasions, internships have been arranged with school districts outside of the Houston metropolitan area. Out-of-state internships are strongly discouraged and require approval of the faculty. The School Psychology Internship Coordinator arranges each intern's placement in consultation with the potential intern, the School Psychology faculty, and the placement district. Interns earn a stipend during this year, are supervised by field-based licensed specialists in school psychology, and must complete minimum standards, which ensure that the intern is able to integrate knowledge and skills in providing the broad range of school psychological services and demonstrate professional work characteristics. Interns are evaluated each semester by field supervisors. The final evaluation is designed to determine the degree to which the candidate has successfully integrated theory and practice in the delivery of the full range of school psychological services. This supervisor will not only evaluate the intern but serve as a required reference for licensure and certification. More specific information about the internship and the evaluation of performance in internship can be found in the *UHCL School Psychology Internship Manual/Syllabus.*

Sequence of Study: The program is sequentially organized. It is designed to be a full-time program that requires three years to complete. Most courses are only offered in the semester listed, and all candidates must follow this sequence. The School Psychology faculty must approve any modifications in the sequence. The specific curriculum by semester is as follows:

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM SEQUENCE

Summer – Year 1	Fall – Year 1	Spring – Year 1
Prerequisites if needed	PSYC 6036: Research & Statistics I*	PSYC 6037: Research & Statistics II*
PSYC 5031: Human Growth & Dev.	PSYC 5235: Learning Principles	PSYC 6032: Intellectual Assessment
PSYC 6134: Biological Basis of Behavior	PSYC 5131: Psychopathology of Childhood*	PSYC 6121: Ethics and Law in School Psychology*
	PSYC 5111: Orientation to School Psychology*	PSYC 6111: Student Diversity in Learning*
Summer – Year 2	Fall – Year 2	Spring – Year 2
PSYC 6139: Intervention I: Academic and Cog Skills*	PSYC 6034: Consultation in School Psychology*	PSYC 6230: Intervention II: Social & Behavioral Skills*
PSYC 6133: Personality Assessment of the Child*	PSYC 6138 Design and Evaluation of School Health Programs*	PSYC 6231: Intervention III: Affective and Adaptive Skills*
	PSYC 5630: Behavioral Parent Training	PSYC 6332: Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation*
	PSYC 6039: School Psychology Practicum*	PSYC 6039: School Psychology Practicum *
Summer – Year 3	Fall – Year 3	Spring – Year 3
PSYC 6132: Seminar in Professional School Psychology*	PSYC 6666: Internship	PSYC 6666: Internship

*These courses only offered in the semester designated.

The School Psychology program is a nationally approved program of continuous study and consists of a total of 70 semester hours.

The School Psychology program is very rigorous and requires full-time enrollment to complete in 3 years. While employment can be maintained in Year 1, **full-time employment is not possible in Year 2**. During the second year, 16 hours per week (2 days) of Practicum in the schools are required for each semester. In addition, there are some courses that are offered in the day and many course requirements must be completed in the schools during the day. **Employment is not allowed in Year 3** as the internship is full-time.

Grade Requirements

Only courses in which a grade of B- or better is earned may be applied toward the Plan of Study requirement (no "incomplete" or "in process" grades may be applied). Grades of C+ or below are not acceptable. A minimum GPA of 3.00 must be maintained.

Annual Candidate Review

Candidates accepted into the program will be evaluated each year by the School Psychology faculty. Only candidates who pass each year's review may proceed to the next year or graduate. Candidates who pass the second year's evaluation (which is the summative evaluation conducted in Practicum) and have completed all coursework are eligible to advance to internship. Candidates will be evaluated on how well they are accomplishing the program goals/objectives (listed previously) and on professional work characteristics (see below). The evaluation involves the completion of an evaluation form by the faculty (and/or field supervisor) and may involve a feedback interview if appropriate. The evaluation form is placed in each candidate's file.

Throughout the program, each candidate is assessed on professional work characteristics. These behaviors are essential to being a school psychology practitioner. While the specific characteristic changes across time (for example, in Year 1 meeting timelines means turning in class work on time, while in Year 3 it means completing assessments and other services within IDEA guidelines), the following is a list of the general categories assessed for professional work characteristics.

Responsibility (Personal/Professional)– e.g., meeting time-lines; getting to appointments on time; adapting well to change; showing initiative and appropriate independence in accomplishing work; attendance; being prepared and participating in meetings/classes; conducting oneself appropriately in professional settings, such as when doing observations in schools
Collegiality – e.g., demonstrating positive working relationships with others; having effective interpersonal skills; working constructively and collaboratively with others; regarding others with respect; communicating effectively in oral and written form; listening and getting input from others
Communication – e.g., communicates effectively in oral and written form
Diversity – e.g., respecting diversity; working well with individuals of diverse backgrounds; using non-biased language in oral and written communications
Learning – e.g., using a best practice approach in tasks completed; demonstrating initiative in gaining knowledge; finding resources to address problems; integrating theory with practice; respecting new ideas and different approaches; demonstrating motivation and perseverance in tasks
Integrity - e.g., using ethical principles in all endeavors; maintaining confidentiality; being knowledgeable about laws, ethics, and policies that guide our profession
Supervision – e.g., responding well to supervision; being open to feedback; responding constructively to

evaluations made by professors and supervisors

Professional Identity – e.g., attends conferences and symposia related to field; is member of professional organization(s)

Annual Reviews are based on the following:

- Year 1 – grades and an assessment of professional work characteristics; the candidate's transcript is reviewed to ensure appropriate matriculation.
- Year 2 – grades (transcript review) and summative performance in Practicum, which includes an assessment of professional work characteristics.
- Year 3 - internship evaluation, which includes assessment of knowledge, skills and professional work characteristics by intern supervisors, and portfolio, by the faculty taking into account the intern's readiness to enter the field.

For academic appeals, or general university policies, the student is referred to the UHCL *Student Life Policy Handbook*.

Other Expectations

Each candidate enrolled in the School Psychology program is expected to attend program meetings. There is a meeting at the beginning of the Fall semester for all first year candidates, usually done in the Orientation to School Psychology course. There is also a meeting at the beginning of the Fall semester for all second year candidates. This meeting is to discuss the application process for internship placements. Both meetings address the cohort group's current status and allow for discussion of any issues or questions which may have arisen as a result of the registration process, course requirements, and/or program expectations. Interns meet on a regular basis as noted in the *Internship Manual/Syllabus.*

It is important for each candidate to develop a professional identity as he/she progresses through the program. The UHCL program views school psychology as a specialty, and the three years spent in training should culminate in identification with this profession. Candidates are encouraged to join the National Association of School Psychologists and Texas Association of School Psychologists. Material to join is provided at the Fall meeting during the first year of the program. Candidates are also encouraged to attend the TASP annual conference, and candidates in the second and third years of the program are expected to attend at least one day of professional development activities at the TASP conference. For second-year candidates, the workshops attended are usually related to a specific course (e.g., a workshop on an assessment measure, a workshop on intervention for students with behavioral difficulties, etc.), while for the third-year group (interns), the workshops attended are usually based on specific areas of interest or skill development. The UHCL Professional Psychology programs also conduct a symposium for professional development in April of each year. This symposium takes place on campus and candidates are highly encouraged to attend, as several workshops at this symposium are directly related to school psychology and conducted by school psychology faculty or experts in certain components of the field of school psychology.

The UHCL school psychology program is relatively small, with each group (1st, 2nd and 3rd year) ranging from 8-10 candidates. There is much opportunity for candidates to interact among each other and with the faculty. Attendance at professional conferences and workshops also allows for interaction with practicing school psychologists in local, state, and national positions.

End-of-Program Portfolio

Candidates are required to submit an e-Portfolio of their work to the Program Faculty during the final

semester of their internship. The e-Portfolio consists of samples of the candidate's work products in such areas as assessment, intervention and consultation. Client confidentiality must be protected in any documents included in the e-Portfolio. The e-Portfolio is evaluated by the School Psychology faculty in terms of how well the candidate's work meets the program goals for competency. Information about the details required for the e-Portfolio can be found in the *School Psychology Internship Manual/Syllabus*.

End-of-Program Examination and Program Completion

Candidates are required to take a graduate comprehensive examination as they near completion of their Plan of Studies requirements. The comprehensive examination has been designated to be the National Certification Examination in School Psychology administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS): Praxis Series. This is a nationally standardized examination designed to assess the entry-level knowledge and skills that are expected of a specialist in school psychology. This exam must be taken in the summer prior to beginning internship. Candidates must obtain a passing score on the exam prior to graduation. A passing score is determined by the National School Psychology Certification Board. It should be emphasized, that a candidate must pass this exam prior to graduation.

In order to successfully complete the program, the following must be present: overall GPA of 3.0 with no grades below B- in coursework; passing score on the School Psychology Praxis Exam; minimum of entry-level competency on the Portfolio; and a minimum of entry-level knowledge and skills coupled with average professional work characteristics upon completion of internship.

Policy for Discontinuance in Program

Discontinuance in the School Psychology Program will occur for any one of the following reasons:

1. Not meeting the grade requirements listed above.
2. Not passing a student annual review, which includes both grades and professional work characteristics.
3. Violating provisions of the UHCL Student Code of Conduct and/or the UHCL Academic Honesty Policy consistent with university policy regarding dismissal, or the NASP Professional Conduct Manual.
4. Failing to register for two long semesters unless specifically excused by the Program Faculty.
5. Failing to comply with legal, ethical, or administrative regulations (e.g., confidentiality, record maintenance, legally-required time lines) in any phase of the program.
6. Not passing the end-of-program comprehensive exam (i.e., the national certification exam) at or above the specified level.
7. Not being able to pass the criminal check for school placements.

Program Evaluation

The UHCL School Psychology Program undergoes two types of reviews on a regular basis. Internal to the university, all programs within each school undergo a yearly assessment of both learning and program outcomes based on objectives submitted one year prior; this annual assessment is designed to provide information on how well the candidates are meeting learning outcomes and how well the program is achieving its designated goals. In the case of School Psychology, some of the learning outcome measures involve the number of graduates each year who pass the licensing exam, receive favorable ratings from employers, and obtain employment/go on to doctoral programs; some of the program outcome measures

involve meeting the program's targets for research and scholarly activity, maintaining the university clinic, and maintaining NASP approval. Results are used to determine budget priorities and make changes to develop or improve the program. This annual review culminates in a comprehensive program review before the university curriculum committee every 7 years. At that time, reviewers external to the program evaluate the program's strengths and, if weaknesses are noted, may make recommendations for changes to the program. The Provost oversees enforcement of necessary changes. External to the university, the School Psychology Program is reviewed by NASP. The Dean and Provost oversee any appropriate recommended changes to maintain NASP approval of the program and to ensure that high standards are maintained for the program.

In addition to review of the program by the university and NASP, candidates are asked to provide feedback to the program faculty in the summer prior to beginning internship and candidates must complete a program evaluation rating scale upon graduation. This allows the faculty to get feedback from candidates and graduates regarding coursework and overall preparation in school psychology. These evaluations are serious endeavors that go beyond just evaluating a course, as student comments provide information that can lead to changes in the program. Candidates also provide feedback through mandated course evaluations which are completed at the end of each semester. Again, such evaluations are taken seriously and may lead to course revisions to consistently improve instruction. Thus candidates in the school psychology program are active participants in ongoing program improvement.

Faculty

School Psychology Program Faculty:

G. Thomas Schanding, Jr. (Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi), Associate Professor & Program Director
> Teaching: Ethics and Law in School Psychology, Student Diversity in Learning, Orientation to School Psychology, Seminar in School Psychology, Design and Evaluation of School Health Programs

Valerie Morgan (Ph.D., University of Texas – Austin), Assistant Professor of Health Service Psychology
> Teaching: Intellectual Assessment, Intervention II, Intervention III

Gill Strait (Ph.D, University of South Carolina), Assistant Professor of School Psychology & Internship Coordinator
> Teaching: Child Psychopathology, Consultation, Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation, School Psychology Internship

Julia Englund Strait (Ph.D., University of South Carolina), Assistant Professor of School Psychology
> Teaching: School Psychology Practicum, Personality Assessment of the Child, Intellectual Assessment

Adjunct Faculty:

David Kahn (Ph.D., Texas A&M University), Adjunct Professor
> Teaching: Intellectual Assessment

Participating Full-time UHCL Faculty:

Sarah Lechago (Ph.D., Western Michigan University), Associate Professor
> Teaching: Learning Principles

Sara Elkins (Ph.D., University of Tennessee), Assistant Professor
> Teaching: Behavioral Family System

Christine Walther (Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh), Assistant Professor
> Teaching: Human Growth and Development

Christopher Ward (Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi), Associate Professor
> Teaching: Biological Bases of Behavior, Research and Statistics I and II