

Assessment Report
School Psychology Program (Psy.S. – Specialist Degree)
Department of Psychology
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Introduction/Context

The School Psychology Program prepares students to serve as school psychologists in school and agency settings. Consistent with accrediting standards, it extends over a two-year Master's degree phase, followed by a one-year Specialist degree phase, for a total of three years of full-time study. During the first year of the program, students complete coursework in assessment and intervention; during the second year, they participate in a two-semester field placement for approximately 15 clock hours per week. Assessment of performance during these first two years consists of a written evaluation in the Spring of the first year, completed by each student's faculty advisor, and a written evaluation in the Spring of the second year, completed by each student's field placement supervisor. These evaluations are conducted in addition to those employed by instructors of didactic and practical coursework.

During the third year, students complete several courses, but the majority of time is devoted to a full-time, nine-month internship arranged by the university with local school districts. It is during this third year that multi-factored assessment of student performance and outcome occurs.

The School Psychology Program is approved (accredited) by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and, as a condition of that approval, assesses students' attainment of the competencies reflected in the program's Goals (#2 – 12).

Data for evaluations by field placement supervisors (2nd year) and for the series of evaluation activities conducted during the internship (3rd year) are not yet available for the 2006-07 academic year. (This information is gathered in June, at the conclusion of the internship or field placement experience, and has not yet been compiled). Consequently, results from the current year's assessment are not included in this report. However, data are available from the preceding (2005 – 2006) academic year, and are included in this report.

Goals/Outcomes

The School Psychology Program has adopted 12 goals, with 11 derived from the Standards for Training Programs in School Psychology (NASP, 2000). The School Psychology Program Committee, consisting of primary faculty in the program at CSU, reviewed the student competencies identified in these training standards during our program review in 2003, and agreed that they represent appropriate domains for ongoing assessment. Thus, with the exception of Goal 1, all of the program's goals are defined in terms of desired student outcomes or competencies.

1. Students will complete a comprehensive program that is structured in accordance with national training standards and adequately meets needs for professional

preparation; be successful in obtaining practice credentials; and obtain employment as school psychologists.

2. *Data-based decision making and accountability.* The student is able to define current problem areas, strengths, and needs (at the individual, group, and system level) through assessment, and measure the effects of the decisions that result from the problem solving process.
3. *Interpersonal communication, collaboration, and consultation.* The student is able to listen well, participate in discussions, convey information, and work together with others at an individual, group, and systems level.
4. *Effective instruction and development of cognitive/academic skills.* The student is able to develop challenging but achievable cognitive and academic goals for all students, provide information about ways in which students can achieve these goals, and monitor student progress toward these goals.
5. *Socialization and development of life competencies.* The student is able to develop challenging but achievable behavioral, affective, or adaptive goals for all students, provide information about ways in which students can achieve these goals, and monitor student progress toward these goals.
6. *Student diversity in development and learning.* The student is aware of, appreciates, and works with individuals and groups with a variety of strengths and needs from a variety of racial, cultural, ethnic, experiential, and linguistic backgrounds.
7. *School structure, organization, and climate.* The student has the ability to understand the school as a system and work with individuals and groups to facilitate structures and policies that create and maintain schools as safe, caring, and inviting places for members of the school community.
8. *Prevention, wellness promotion, and crisis intervention.* The student has knowledge of child development and psychopathology in order to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs for students with a wide range of needs and disorders.
9. *Home/school/community collaboration.* The student has knowledge of family influences that affect students' wellness, learning, and achievement, and are able to form partnerships between parents, educators, and the community.
10. *Research and program evaluation.* The student knows current literature on various aspects of education and child development, is able to translate research into practice, and understands research design and statistics in sufficient depth to conduct investigations relevant to own work.
11. *Legal, ethical practice and professional development.* The student takes responsibility for developing as a professional and practicing in ways that meet all appropriate ethical, professional, and legal standards to enhance the quality of services, and to protect the rights of all parties.

12. *Information technology.* The student has knowledge of information sources and technology relevant to the practice of School Psychology. The student is able to access, evaluate, and utilize information sources and technology in ways that safeguard and enhance the quality of service.

Research Methods

Goal 1

Direct Methods

- 1) Students are required to take the Praxis examination in School Psychology during the internship year; a score of 650 is required for licensure in Ohio. Results are reported to the Program Director, who reviews them and reports them to the CSU College of Education and the School Psychology Program Committee (annually, in June). Scores also are reported in periodic accreditation reviews.
- 2) Obtain, from each year's graduating cohort of students, information regarding employment obtained subsequent to program completion (annually, during the period June – September).
- 3) Gather, review, and submit application materials for licensure of graduates by the Ohio Department of Education, ensuring that all standards have been satisfied (annually, in June).

Indirect Methods

- 1) Conduct and document program review for submission to the National Association of School Psychologists in order to maintain "approved" status (every five years).
- 2) Collect "exit survey" data from student interns to assess the impact and value of coursework, practicum and internship experiences; to assess perceptions regarding faculty support, facilities and equipment, departmental administrative support, and the overall quality of preparation provided by the School Psychology Program (annually, in June).

Goals 2 through 12 (Student Competencies)

Direct Methods

- 1) During the internship year, students are required to compile a portfolio of work products associated with various learning experiences. Products include a written case evaluation report (prepared in collaboration with school-based intervention teams); written documentation of a case study addressing a reading problem, using functional assessment methods; a written plan for counseling an individual or group of students; and written documentation of a training activity conducted for parents of students. Rubrics are used to evaluate each of these work products (ongoing, during the internship year).
- 2) Enumerative summary of services provided to children in various demographic categories. This summary is maintained on an electronic spreadsheet, and lists the

number of children served by the intern according to the demographic categories required for reporting under the No Child Left Behind Act (e.g., gender, race, disability, etc.). Services are also reported under three categories: Tier I (services provided to all students, without regard for risk or disability status); Tier II (services provided to students at risk for academic and behavior problems); and Tier III (students identified as having problems that require intensive, individualized intervention). At the conclusion of the internship year, summaries are submitted to the Ohio Inter-University Council for School Psychology for compilation and submission to the Ohio Department of Education (ongoing, during the internship year).

- 3) During the second-year field placement, students are required to conduct a comprehensive case study, employing the applied behavior analytic model taught during the first year of study. The case study addresses either an academic or behavioral problem, and includes evidence of problem identification, problem analysis (including hypothesis testing), plan implementation, and plan evaluation (employing formative evaluation techniques such as curriculum-based measurement). A rubric for evaluating student performance is employed (at the close of the first semester of the second year).
- 4) During the internship, students are required to maintain a journal in which they discuss principles of behavioral consultation as applied to their work in the schools. Among the issues assigned for consideration are (a) needs assessment at the system level; (b) analysis of organizational structure and function; (c) leadership style and effectiveness; (d) identifying and addressing resistance; (e) interpersonal communication skills in professional interactions; and (f) influence and persuasion techniques. Students submit journals to the instructor periodically, and receive written feedback about their observations (ongoing, during the internship year).
- 5) During the internship, students are required to conduct a problem identification interview with a classroom teacher using the Problem Identification Interview protocol discussed in the course, PSY 767, Process Issues in Consultation. Students also prepare a transcript of the interview and code verbalizations across a variety of categories. Results are discussed in terms of the appropriateness and effectiveness of various types of consultant verbalization throughout the interview (early in the second semester of the internship year).
- 6) Interns maintain a record displaying outcome data for school-aged students served by intern using appropriate single case design measures such as “percent of non-overlapping data points”, “effect size”, or “goal attainment scaling.” Desired student outcomes are defined by the intern in collaboration with teachers, students, and parents, and are evaluated for academic, behavioral, and classwide interventions, as well as for individual counseling cases. Outcomes may take the form of behavioral or academic goals. At the conclusion of the internship year, a summary of case study outcomes is submitted to the Ohio Inter-University Council for School Psychology for compilation and submission to the Ohio Department of Education (ongoing, during the internship year).
- 7) Interns maintain a written (weekly) log of their activities over the course of the internship year. Logs are reviewed by the university supervisor during site visits conducted three times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring).

Indirect Methods

- 1) Written evaluation of first-year students by faculty advisors using a standard rating scale; domains include quality of work, reliability, initiative, communication skills, and professional demeanor. If significant concerns emerge, a written plan for remediation is devised in accordance with program policy as articulated in the School Psychology Program Handbook (annually, Spring semester).
- 2) Written evaluation of second-year students by field placement supervisors using a standard rating scale; domains are similar to those listed in (1) above (annually, late Spring semester).
- 3) Written "Initial Assessment of Intern Skills" completed and distributed to internship supervisors; this comprises "baseline" data for the internship year (annually, early Fall semester).
- 4) Evaluation conferences held at internship school site, including the student (intern), university internship supervisor, and field supervisor (school psychologist), documented on the Internship Plan and Evaluation Protocol prepared for each student at the beginning of the internship year. The Internship Plan and Evaluation Protocol includes a list of competencies to be attained; specific "sub-skills" for each competency; a timeline for the initiation of experiences related to each competency; and a matrix describing the schools in which experience with a variety of student populations will be provided (i.e., regular and special education; preschool, elementary, middle, and secondary school, etc.). These evaluation conferences are held in the early and late Fall, late in the Spring semester, and upon request by the field supervisor, student, and/or university supervisor.

At the conclusion of the internship year, performance ratings for 6 key competencies identified by the Ohio Inter-University Council for School Psychology are summarized for each intern to demonstrate growth over the course of the internship year. (Ratings are taken from the Internship Plan and Evaluation Protocol completed during the three evaluation conferences held with the student, university internship supervisor, and field supervisor.) At the conclusion of the internship year, a summary of performance ratings is submitted to the Ohio Inter-University Council for School Psychology for compilation and submission to the Ohio Department of Education (ongoing, during the internship year).

Findings/Review/Actions

Data obtained via the above research methods were analyzed in various ways, depending on the method employed:

- a) *Standardized Examination (Praxis)*: Scores are reviewed by the Program Director and reported to the Program Committee. Score data are not yet available for the intern class completing the program in Spring, 2007. In 2005-06, all 9 students passed the exam, receiving scores equal to, or exceeding, the cut score (650) established by the Ohio Department of Education, as well as the National School Psychology Certification Board (660). The mean score for CSU students was 771

(mdn = 780). Both averages fell above the upper limit of the average range nationally (660 – 750).

- b) *Employment Status:* Graduating students notify the Program Director when they obtain positions as school psychologists. As of this writing (May, 2007), 3 students (of 8) have obtained employment in Ohio. (Note that the internship does not conclude until early June, and many school districts do not finalized hiring plans until the new budget year goes into effect in July.) In the preceding two years, 100% of graduating students obtained employment as school psychologists in the State of Ohio, so the program appears to be maintaining its satisfactory rate for successful job placement, despite limitations imposed by shrinking school budgets.
- c) *Credential Status:* Application materials for Initial Professional Licensure are currently being compiled for the graduating class. Review of materials indicates that 100% of graduating students will obtain licensure. This has always been the case for CSU program graduates.
- d) *Program Review Status:* A folio was compiled and submitted in Fall, 2006 for interim review by the National Association of School Psychologists, and we were notified in December that the CSU program was awarded Full Approval for the period from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2013.

Comments furnished by the NASP program reviewers (along with information from other program assessment sources) have prompted the initiation of a review of the program curriculum by the program committee, with particular attention to the topics of human learning processes; enhanced (and assured) experiences with diverse populations in practicum and internship activities; family systems theory and applications; opportunities for work with preschool populations; expectations for research and evaluation experiences; and expectations for the application of technology in coursework and field experiences.

- e) *Exit Survey Data:* Surveys are currently being collected from 2007 program graduates. Survey results from 2006 indicate the highest levels of professional relevance and student satisfaction with coursework involving practicum and internship experiences; remediation of academic problems; professional role of the school psychologist; and functional assessment of academic performance and classroom behavior. Students reported the least satisfaction with support from the department's administrative staff.

This year, the School Psychology program introduced two activities in response to student feedback: a Student Advisory Board, consisting of elected representatives of the first, second, and third (internship) year cohorts, and a CSU School Psychology student organization. Elections were held in Fall, 2006, and Advisory Board members have filed necessary paperwork with campus officials, and drafted a constitution for the student organization. A member of our Advisory Board was one of three students nationally to receive an award in March, 2007 from the National Association of School Psychologists student leader network for his leadership activities in Ohio.

- f) *Portfolio Assessment:* Evaluation of work products contained in the most recently available students' internship portfolios (2006) revealed a satisfactory level of

quality, with continued strong performance in conducting functional assessment case studies and interventions with schoolchildren. Last year's assessment revealed a need for more guidance in developing training activities for school staff and parents, which is being incorporated in the PSY 725/6 "Role and Function of the School Psychologist" sequence that is presently being taught. Finally, a revision of portfolio requirements, undertaken due to the increased demand for documentation by the Ohio Department of Education, has necessitated a revision of the assessment rubrics; those will be available for use during the 2007 – 08 academic year.

- g) *Enumerative Summary of Interns' Services*: Data reported below are from the 2005 – 06 intern cohort, and are therefore identical to last year's data. (Reports for the 2006 – 07 cohort have not yet been submitted, as the internship doesn't end until early June. Last year's assessment report was submitted late – in mid-June.) The table below presents the number of schoolchildren served by CSU students during their internship year. Results are reported in demographic categories, and according to the level of service provided by the intern.

Males:	357
Females:	648
African-American:	511
Asian/Pacific Islander:	30
Hispanic:	16
Multiple Race/Ethnicity:	41
White:	399
Students with Disabilities:	710
Students with Economically Disadvantaged Background:	480
Students with Limited English Proficiency:	27
Tier One Service*:	3,468
Tier Two Service*:	363
Tier Three Service*:	626

*Tier 1: Universal intervention/instruction in general education (DIBELS administration/norming; in-class social skills/crisis lessons; consultation re: classroom management; etc.)

*Tier 2: Interventions in general education, but not as a result of individualized, functional assessment – targeted, standard protocol intervention (teacher consultation re: specific students; social skills groups for at-risk students; etc.)

*Tier 3: Interventions resulting from individualized functional assessment, either as a result of pre-referral team process, or as part of MFE for special education eligibility determination

- h) *Case Studies for Second Year Field Placement*: All students enrolled in the second-year field placement achieved satisfactory ratings of case studies reflecting behavioral interventions. Ratings were derived from an evaluation rubric created by the instructor.
- i) *Journal*: Review of journal submissions by the course instructor (PSY 767 – Process Issues in Consultation) revealed adequate understanding of the concepts and principles addressed in the course; written feedback was provided to students.

- j) *Problem Identification Interview*: Review of audiotapes, written transcripts, and verbalization coding protocols (2007) indicated (1) an appropriate balance of consultee/consultant verbalizations, although consultant was typically more active; (2) a predominance of references to behavior and individual characteristics in the category of message content, as is typically the case in consultation; (3) a predominance of consultant verbalizations conveying positive evaluation and specification, as is typically the case in this phase of the problem-solving process; (4) control of the interaction generally skewed in favor of the consultant. These results were reviewed by the instructor and judged to indicate satisfactory learning on the part of students; they are consistent with results from previous years and with expectations based on consultation research.
- k) *Outcome Data for Children Served by Interns*: Interns planned, conducted, and evaluated interventions using a functional assessment/direct intervention model. Results for these case studies are identical to those reported last year, as data have not yet been reported by the current (2006 – 07) cohort of interns. Outcome data in the form of “percent of non-overlapping data points” (a measure of intervention success employed in single case design studies using progress monitoring graphs) or “goal attainment scaling” revealed the following:
- Academic Intervention* (on 5.0 scale, with 1.0 indicating “performance significantly below established goals”; 3.0 representing “improvement to predicted/goal level” and 5.0 representing “significantly exceeded performance goals”):
Mean rating of cases: 2.7
- Behavioral Intervention*:
Mean rating of cases: 3.6
- Classwide Intervention*:
Mean rating of cases: 3.0
- Counseling Intervention*:
Mean rating of cases: 3.1
- These data indicate that CSU interns were successful in providing services that resulted in measurable gains in student performance.
- l) *Internship Log*: Review of logs during site visits by two program faculty revealed satisfactory breadth and depth of exposure to various learning experiences.
- m) *Evaluation of First-Year Students*: Review of written survey evaluations prepared by department faculty revealed no significant concerns about any student. Average scores ranged from 4.41 (“showing initiative”) to 4.81 (“accuracy and attention to detail”) in ratings assigned by assistantship supervisors, using a scale of 1 (“poor/unacceptable”) to 5 (“excellent”). Results were reviewed by the School Psychology program committee, with an agreement to meet with students in the Fall to discuss their first year, rather than to hold meetings at the conclusion of the Spring semester of their first year, as had been done in the past.
- n) *Evaluation of Second-Year Students*: Surveys of field supervisors and conferences between students and the university Field Placement supervisor were

conducted. Overall, field placement experiences were satisfactory, although differences among sites result in differential levels of skill, depending on the site to which a student was assigned. For example, the placement in the Cleveland Municipal School District was characterized by heavy involvement in testing during the second half of the year, due to a policy mandate issued by the district administration, while placement at a Positive Education Day Treatment program required very little testing activity.

- o) *Initial Assessment of Intern Skills:* On the whole, students displayed adequate entry-level skill in key competencies, as reported by the university Field Placement supervisor following communication with field-based supervisors. An area of strength for students entering their internship was (not surprisingly) "information technology." These results are consistent with previous years' findings. In general, students enter internship with two competencies (of a total of 10) at a level of "strength;" six competencies at a level of "average;" and two competencies at a "below average" level. Relative strengths and weaknesses are largely a function of the variety of training experiences available for students at various field placement sites; see above (n).
- p) *Evaluation Conferences:* Final site visits were completed during finals week of Spring semester (2007); a summary report of formative ratings is currently being prepared. Preliminary review of intern competency ratings indicates that all students attained ratings of "3" ("satisfactory") or 4 ("mastery") in all competency areas.

Summary of Actions

- a) Based on comments furnished by NASP in its Program Review report, we have initiated a review of several evaluation methods (related to the second year field placement) to ensure that the domains assessed are consistent with those outlined in the NASP Program Standards.
- b) Based on comments furnished by NASP in its Program Review report, we have planned a survey of current students to assess the manner in which they use technology in their work so we can devise a framework for evaluating their competency in "information technology."
- c) Based on comments furnished by NASP in its Program Review report, as well as discussions with internship field supervisors, we are reviewing the competency domain of "student diversity in development and learning" to determine how we can ensure that students have adequate opportunity for skill development in this area, beyond completion of the Multicultural Psychology and Diversity course in the program curriculum.
- d) We formed a Student Advisory Board during the past year, as well as a CSU School Psychology student organization. We held several social events for students across all three years of the program to improve communication and to encourage them to use one another as resources.
- e) We streamlined the data collection protocol for "outcome data for children served by interns" so that it is more feasible for use by interns and its results more easily interpreted.

- f) In response to various sources of feedback, we have undertaken an overall review of the program curriculum to determine how we might address needs for (1) an orientation seminar; (2) coursework/experience in the area of preschool assessment/intervention; (3) coursework/experience in the area of family dynamics.
- g) We obtained approval from the university to add “School Psychology” as a separate track or specialization within the Master of Arts in Psychology degree program.
- h) Moved evaluation conferences to the beginning of the second year of study (vs. the end of the first year) to enhance their emphasis on goal-setting for students.