

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Offered by Department of Counseling, School Psychology and Family Science (<http://catalog.unk.edu/graduate/departments/counseling-school-psychology-family-science/>)

Program Information and Admission Requirements

Accreditation

The School Psychology Education Specialist Degree is accredited by the National Association of School Psychology (NASP) and the International School Psychology Association (ISPA). The program is Nebraska State Department of Education approved and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP; formerly NCATE) affiliated.

The following program meets the academic requirements for the Nationally Certified School Psychologist regulated by the National Association of School Psychologists and school psychologist endorsement requirements by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).

Admission Requirements

Those planning to be full-time students in the School Psychology should obtain full admission to their chosen program of study the semester prior to their enrollment by completing the following steps:

1. Complete the UNK Graduate online application. All materials listed below are uploaded with the online application:
 - a. \$45 non-refundable application fee
 - b. Academic history-official transcripts of all previous academic work. If your GPA falls below the UNK Graduate Studies minimum expectation of 2.75, please upload a *Low GPA Statement* with explanation for your past academic performance, how you be successful academically at the graduate level (minimum 3.0 GPA), and why you should be admitted as an exception to the GPA requirement.
 - c. Resume with requested information
 - d. "Motivation for becoming a counselor, school psychologist or student affairs professional" essay
 - e. Three Professional Electronic References (Forms are automatically sent to recommenders when application is submitted).
2. When all materials have been received, the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach will conduct an initial evaluation. Applicants meeting admission requirements for graduate study will be forwarded to the Department for consideration and recommendation.
3. Applicants must participate in the CSP Department admission interview/intake process which occurs each semester. When the application is complete, the CSP Department secretary will send the applicant a confirmation of this meeting via electronic mail to the preferred email address indicated on the application.
4. Department recommendations for admissions are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach.
5. Letters with admission decisions (i.e. an unconditional/full status, conditional/provisional status, or denial) are mailed from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach.

Advising

All students are assigned an academic advisor within the department upon admission.

Application for Candidacy

To be eligible for candidacy (i.e. approval to continue coursework and "stand" as a candidate for the degree), the student must have fulfilled the following requirements:

1. If you were conditionally admitted, this condition must have been met.
2. Application for Candidacy must be made prior to completion of half of the required credit hours on the student's program of study.
3. A grade of B or higher in CSP 855 with a B or higher.
4. A cumulative GPA of at least 3.00.
5. Demonstrate professional fitness and competencies.
6. Adhere to ethical standards.

Failure to meet any of these conditions can result in denial of the Application for Candidacy.

Comprehensive Examinations

All students seeking degrees and/or endorsements are required to complete comprehensive examinations. The examinations may be written, oral or both. Additionally, in order to successfully complete a degree program, students must meet the expectations outlined in department academic progress and ethical conduct policies (see respective Program Handbook for more detailed information).

School Psychology Information

School psychologists help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community for all students.

School Psychology was rated second best Social Service job by 2019 US News and World Report and will have strong growth over the next decade. It has been projected by The Labor Department that the number of jobs held by school psychologists is likely to increase by 20 percent between 2014 and 2024.

School Psychology is one of the fastest growing areas of professional psychology. School Psychologists bring psychological perspectives to individual, group and system issues in schools; that is, they deliver mental health services in educational systems. The framework of the UNK School Psychology Program is an ecological and developmental approach, which focuses upon human strengths to maximize positive outcomes. Human diversity is recognized as a strength. If the school psychology student attends full time, the student takes two years of academic coursework and related field experiences, followed by a year long, 1200-hour internship. Upon successful completion of degree requirements, the student is eligible for endorsement as a School Psychologist in Nebraska.

To provide the student with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to meet the demands of the profession, the School Psychology Program has adopted an ecological training approach. In the ecological approach, the student practitioner learns to collect and interpret data from a variety of sources in order to meet the needs of the individual within the school system. As a component of this approach, students

are taught to be skilled at problem solving, consultation, interviewing, observation, assessment, and intervention development.

The School Psychology Program encourages the integration of experience and skills with knowledge of psychology and education to prepare graduates to serve as education team members. Acting in this role, the school psychologist is concerned with promoting teacher effectiveness, creating a positive classroom environment, and influencing educational philosophy in the school system to enhance student learning potential.

The School Psychology Program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney strives to provide the most current and comprehensive practitioner training within the midstates region of the country. As such, participating in 300 clock hours of Professional Development activities is a program requirement. This assures exposure to a wide variety of contemporary issues, skills, and knowledge beyond what can be covered in courses. These hours must be accrued after admission to and prior to graduating from the program. Ample opportunities are provided for students via Professional Development Seminars, partner school staff development, state and national conferences. Graduates are eligible for certification and endorsement as a School Psychologist in Nebraska and have enjoyed high levels of professional employment in this state as well as many others.

"It is the responsibility of graduate training programs in school psychology to provide students with the building blocks for 'effective practice'" (Ysseldyke, Dawson, Lehr, Reschley, Reynolds & Telzrow, 1997, p. 6). Therefore, the program of preparation for endorsement shall include training in practices that permeate all aspects of service delivery in the following areas:

- Data based decision making and accountability;
- Consultation and collaboration;
- Direct and indirect student level services;
- Direct and indirect systems level services;
- Family-school collaboration;
- Diversity of development and learning;
- Research, program evaluation, legal, ethical and professional practice.

Counseling and School Psychology Mission Statement

The Department of Counseling and School Psychology (CSP) promotes a field-based scientist/practitioner model in order to prepare culturally competent and compassionate professionals at the graduate level to provide service and leadership in school psychology. The focus of the scientist/practitioner model within the CSP department is to create practitioners who understand, critically evaluate and effectively use the research base within their profession in order to make decisions and guide practice. CSP is an interdisciplinary department committed to work towards equity and social justice within the College and University, our professions, and throughout the broader society.

All students are required to complete an exit survey during the semester of graduation or program completion.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Required Courses		
CSP 800	Advanced Educational Psychology ²	3

CSP 802	Research Methods In Psychology and Education	3
CSP 805	Child and Adolescent Development and Interventions ¹	3
CSP 855	Techniques of Counseling	3
CSP 856	Multicultural Counseling ²	3
CSP 901	Ethical, Legal and Professional Practice in Schools ¹	3
CSP 905	Behavioral Problem Solving Assessment	3
CSP 906	Infant/Preschool Assessment	3
CSP 907	Academic Problem Solving Assessment	3
CSP 908	Orientation to School Psychology ¹	3
CSP 920	Cognitive Problem Solving Assessment	3
CSP 957	Problem Solving Consultation ¹	3
CSP 960	Globalization of School Psychology ²	3
CSP 990	Pre-Internship Seminar ¹	3
Select 6 credit hours of the following:		6
CSP 921	School Psychology Interventions Practicum	
Select 6 credit hours of the following:		6
CSP 922	Problem Solving Assessment Practicum	
Select 6 credit hours of the following:		6
CSP 991	Scholarly Study ¹	
Select 12 credit hours of the following:		12
CSP 992	Internship in School Psychology ²	
Total Credit Hours		72

1

Blended courses

2

On-line courses

Prerequisites

The following areas of study are prerequisite to the program: Human Development, Human Learning, and Evaluation. Students without this background in these content areas will be required to take coursework (in addition to their Program of Study) to make up these deficiencies.

Endorsements

Upon the completion of the Program and the recommendation of its faculty, students will be eligible for a Nebraska teaching certificate with the endorsement of School Psychologist PK-12.

Residency Requirements

The Department has established a residency requirement for the purpose of ensuring that the Education Specialist degree reflects continuity while allowing continued employment of the students in their major field. The preferred option is Option I. In Option I, students must accrue eighteen (18) credit hours in residence at the University of Nebraska at Kearney across two consecutive offering periods (excluding internship hours). If Option I is not possible, the student may request Option II from their major advisor. Option II requires that the student take eighteen (18) credit hours accrued across three consecutive offering periods. The residency requirement must be met after admission to the program and prior to

internship. The program values employment experiences of its students and offers flexibility in meeting these requirements.