

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

Mission

The mission of the school psychology program track is to educate future school psychologists so that graduates have expert skills in assessment, intervention (including prevention), consultation, research, and program planning, and evaluation to work with students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other professionals. Preparation is focused on comprehensive service delivery to meet the complex needs of the diverse clientele that is served. The structure of the program is based upon professional standards established by the National Association of School Psychologists. Program requirements are also consistent with licensure standards set by the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Psychology Board.

Philosophy

The school psychology curriculum is rooted in the scientist-practitioner and ecological-behavioral models. Students are taught to be both consumers and producers of research. Professional accountability is stressed. Academic, social, and emotional functioning are seen as resulting from interactions between key behavior, personal, and environmental variables. Consistent with the National Association of School Psychologists and the Arkansas Department of Education, data-based decision making, assessment, intervention (including prevention), consultation, research, and program planning and evaluation are emphasized in addition to applicable laws, ethical principles, and codes of conduct. In accord with the National Association of School Psychologists Principles for Professional Ethics school psychologists act as advocates for their students/clients and at the very least do no harm. Program graduates are well educated in the problem-solving model. They are equipped to draw upon strong foundations in psychology and education when providing direct and indirect services to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students.

Support for Diversity

The program of study is committed to support diversity. Following the National Association of School Psychologists Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology we are committed to understanding and responding to human diversity throughout the program including admissions, faculty, coursework, practicum, and supervised internship. The program of study actively recruits applicants from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Goals

The program of study in school psychology is designed to graduate school psychologists who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to:

1. establish a professional identity as a school psychologist, and to perform their professional roles and functions in accord with relevant legislation and high ethical standards;
2. work effectively in a multicultural society with persons of varied cultures, language patterns, and abilities;
3. apply the knowledge base of school psychology to promote the educational and mental health needs of all students by utilizing empirically validated practices related to problem-solving, assessment, intervention (including prevention), and consultation;
5. provide leadership to promote the adoption and utilization of best practices in education and mental health services in classrooms, schools, and communities;
6. consume and contribute to the literature in school psychology in a scientifically sound manner; and
7. continue their professional development as school psychologists.

Objectives

School psychology students receive education and training in the eleven domains recognized by the National Association of School Psychologists.

1. Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability
 - a. Program graduates will be able to administer, score, and interpret standardized assessments of intelligence, achievement, adaptive behavior, visual-motor functioning, social-emotional functioning, language, and auditory discrimination.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to gather relevant information on students' background, academic, social, and emotional functioning through reviews of relevant student records.
 - c. Program graduates will be able to gather relevant information on students' background, academic, social, and emotional functioning through interviews with parents, teachers, administrators, counselors and other school personnel.
 - d. Program graduates will be able to gather relevant information on students' background, academic, social, and emotional functioning through interviews with students.
 - e. Program graduates will be able to conduct functional assessments of academic, social, and emotional functioning.
 - f. Program graduates will be able to gather relevant information on students' academic, social, and emotional functioning, and the instructional environment through observations.
 - g. Program graduates will be able to use relevant information to make accurate determinations of students needs at the time of pre-referral, initial evaluations, and reevaluations.
2. Consultation and Collaboration

- a. Program graduates will be able to consult with teachers, administrators, counselors, other school personnel, and outside professionals concerning students' academic, social, and emotional functioning; and work collaboratively with these constituent groups to accomplish academic, social, and emotional goals for students.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to lead, serve as a member of, or work with pre-referral teams to meet the needs of students at-risk for academic, social, and emotional problems.
 - c. Program graduates will be able to lead, serve as a member of, or work with multi-disciplinary teams to meet the needs of students with special academic, social, and emotional needs.
 - d. Program graduates will be able to provide in-service training to school personnel to promote students' academic, social, and emotional development.
3. Effective Instruction and Development of Cognitive/Academic Skills
- a. Program graduates will be able to conduct authentic assessments of student academic progress such as curriculum-based assessments and measurements.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to develop effective instructional methods and academic interventions and assist others in implementing and evaluating these methods and interventions.
4. Socialization and Development of Life Skills
- a. Program graduates will be able to develop effective interventions for students with social and emotional difficulties, and assist others in implementing and evaluating these interventions.
5. Student Diversity in Development and Learning
- a. Program graduates will be able to serve the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students from preschool through high-school education.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to serve the academic, social, and emotional needs of students with special needs including students from both high and low incidence populations.
6. School and Systems Organization, Policy Development, and Climate
- a. Program graduates will be able to apply relevant federal and state laws and policies, ethics, and codes of conduct to the practice of school psychology.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to apply local educational policies and practices to the practice of school psychology.
7. Prevention, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health
- a. Program graduates will be able to provide appropriate individual interventions to students.
 - b. Program graduates will be able to provide appropriate group interventions to students.
 - c. Program graduates will be able to develop, implement, and evaluate effective programs in the areas of prevention, crisis intervention, and mental health.

8. Home/School/Community Collaboration

- a. Program graduates will be able to consult with parents concerning students' academic, social, and emotional functioning; and work collaboratively with parents to accomplish academic, social, and emotional goals for students.
- b. Program graduates will be able to act as an advocate to address the academic, social, and emotional needs of children and adolescents in their homes and communities.

9. Research and Program Evaluation

- a. Program graduates will be consumers of relevant research.
- b. Program graduates will be able to engage in research and program evaluation in a legal and ethical manner.
- c. Program graduates will be able to design, implement, and evaluate effective academic, social, and emotional intervention programs in school and home settings.
- d. Program graduates will be equipped to disseminate relevant research findings.

10. School Psychology Practice and Development

- a. Program graduates will be able to provide accurate and complete written reports and case documentation.
- b. Program graduates will be able to provide recommendations in a form that is useful to parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, other school personnel, and outside professionals.
- c. Program graduates will be able to identify personal needs for continuing education and professional development, and to pursue relevant opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and skills.

11. Information Technology

Program graduates will be able to use the latest information technology applied to their profession including the Internet, electronic mail, electronic data bases, word processing, course shells, statistical and assessment software, Power Point presentation media, and graphing software.