

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, M.A./ CERTIFICATE OF ADVANCED GRADUATE STUDY IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

NASP Approved Program

The school psychology M.A./CAGS program prepares students to help children succeed in school and to serve the needs of children and families. Emphasizing issues of diversity and social justice, the program promotes professional practice by developing competent, socially conscious professionals capable of providing evidence-based services to children, schools and school districts, and school staff members who have an impact on the lives of children. The program emphasizes evidence-based problem-solving skills, considered to be essential to mastering the diversity of roles associated with school psychology today and into the future. Applicants are expected to be committed to working on behalf of children and families, with an understanding and an appreciation of the various contexts of the multicultural, pluralistic society in which we live and that shapes children's lives.

School psychologists are expected to be able to function as mental health experts as well as educators and to have knowledge of typical and atypical development of children and the relationship of children's strengths and needs in relationship to the curricula and school programming offered in schools.

Our school psychology program is prevention-oriented and strength-based. We believe that school psychologists should work diligently to promote emotionally healthy school environments and to provide assistance to school-age children as soon as possible after a psychological or academic difficulty is identified. The program also focuses training on understanding how to advocate for systems in educational environments that can prevent academic, social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties in children. The program believes that this model is more respectful of people's strengths, in that it strives to help children develop fully.

The school psychology program at GCU is based upon the practitioner-scientist model. The program's expectations are that the great majority of graduates will develop a career as practicing school psychologists. They will base their practice upon research-based and validated techniques. As such, program graduates require skills and competencies to be aware of current research, to be able to evaluate it, and to apply it to policies, programs, and practices which affect children in schools. School psychologists also may be called upon by their school districts to conduct applied research concerning the effectiveness of the districts' practices and to systematically evaluate their own work and programs.

Program graduates gain an understanding of how to consult effectively on behalf of children within these contexts and of how to apply their skills to the solution of a broad range of problems related to the processes of schooling. Generalized evidence-based problem-solving skills represent the program's primary emphasis, and they are essential for graduates to assume the diversity of roles associated with school psychology today and in the future. Best practices are based upon the traditions of psychology as a science. As the role and function of professional school psychologists continue to evolve, the program recognizes that skills and knowledge must develop accordingly. Therefore, school psychologists

acknowledge the continuous need for professional development throughout their careers.

The Georgian Court program prepares its students to become practitioners capable of providing a broad range of services grounded in sound psychological knowledge to address school-related problems. Program graduates will be able to address the psychological, emotional, academic, and behavioral needs of school-age children and adolescents, particularly as these issues compromise education. Students develop a range of knowledge and skills essential for the provision of psychological services in schools, including skills in assessment, consultation, counseling, and other school-based interventions through coursework and practicum and externship experiences.

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in School Psychology and the specialist-level Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in School Psychology comprise an integrated sequence of coursework, practicum, and externship experiences that prepares students to serve as school psychologists for public and private schools and for other community-based, human service settings. A total of 69 semester hours, including a 300-hour practicum and a 1,200-hour externship, are required. Graduates are eligible for certification as school psychologists in New Jersey. The program is dedicated to the principles of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and it has adopted NASP's Domains of School Psychology Training and Practice as the basis for the objectives of its training model.

The M.A./CAGS program has two levels: an M.A. in School Psychology awarded upon completion of 33 credits, followed by the 36-credit certification level (CAGS) coursework. The M.A. program alone does not enable students to function as school psychologists; successful completion of the additional CAGS-level courses is required for students to satisfy the New Jersey Department of Education standards for certification.

Note: This three-year program requires fall, spring, and summer coursework. All coursework must be completed before the externship year. This is a full-time graduate program; no part-time completion option is available.

The seven courses in the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) sequence also completes the didactic component of the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA®) training. Those wishing to complete the requirements for the BCBA® certificate can do so by acquiring additional supervised ABA training experiences after completion of the School Psychology program.

Learning Outcomes

The program is dedicated to the principles of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), and it has adopted the NASP's Standards of School Psychology Graduate Education and Practice as the basis for the goals of its training model. The program structure and objectives, field placements, practicum, and externship experiences are based on these 10 standards of practice, articulated in *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* and adopted by the National Association of School Psychologists Delegate Assembly (2020).

These program goals, as noted in the 10 domains of practice, are to have its students develop expertise in:

Domain 1: Data-Based Decision-Making
Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration

Domain 3: Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports
 Domain 4: Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions
 Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
 Domain 6: Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools
 Domain 7: Family, School, and Community Collaboration
 Domain 8: Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations
 Domain 9: Research and Evidence-Based Practice
 Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

Visit <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-2020-professional-standards-adopted/> for a complete and detailed explanation of the 10 domains of the 2020 NASP Practice Model.

Admission Requirements for Admission

Admission is contingent on the outcome of an interview with the program faculty. Candidates will be notified in writing as to their status.

Applicants for the M.A. in School Psychology must submit all application materials by March 31; applications received after this date will be considered based upon available space in the incoming cohort. The M.A. in School Psychology program begins during the fall semester.

- Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
- Minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; applicants with a GPA below 3.0 and special circumstances will be considered.
- A minimum of 12 credits in psychology that must include Introduction to Psychology, Abnormal Psychology/Psychopathology, Child/Adolescent/ Lifespan Development, and either Statistics or Experimental Psychology (Research Methods).
- Applicants with deficiencies may be required to register for appropriate undergraduate course(s) without graduate credit as a condition of their acceptance.
- Completed self-managed application packet (see below).

The completed self-managed application packet must include:

- A check or money order for \$40 (nonrefundable) made payable to Georgian Court University.
- A completed graduate application form
- All M.A. in School Psychology applicants must include a personal statement with answers to the following questions: Why do you want to become a school psychologist?; What has influenced you to pursue a career in school psychology?; What experience do you have working with children and adolescents?; and How will this program help facilitate your professional goals?
- Sealed and signed envelopes containing official transcripts of each undergraduate and graduate institution the applicant has attended. If the official seal has been broken, the transcript is considered to be unofficial and cannot be accepted for use toward the application. Official transcripts electronically transmitted directly from the Office of the Registrar of each institution will be accepted in lieu of a paper copy.
- All M.A. in School Psychology applicants must submit at least one letter of recommendation, preferably from a faculty member familiar with the applicant's academic performance. Applicants who have graduated more than five years prior to their date of application may submit letters from certified or licensed mental health or educational professionals in lieu of a letter from a faculty member.

Accepted students will receive a health form that must be completed and submitted to the Office of Health Services.

Applicants who hold a master's degree in school psychology from another college/university and who wish to apply for the CAGS-level only may do so; however, only applicants with degrees earned within five years of the application will be considered. Applications will also be reviewed by the program director and by school psychology faculty to determine the comparability of training and coursework between programs. This review may result in students being required to complete additional master's-level coursework that is congruent with the GCU school psychology program to ensure that the applicant is eligible for certification as a school psychologist in New Jersey. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit all necessary information to establish equivalence. These materials, at the discretion of the program director, may include course descriptions, syllabi, student work such as papers, and class notes.

Requirements Master of Arts in School Psychology

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
Fall Semester		
SPS5401	Sem in Child & Adolescent Development	3.0
ABA503	Experimental Analysis of Behavior ¹	3.0
SPS5402	Seminar: Psychopathology of Childhood	3.0
SPS5190	Sem in Psych Services in the Schools	3.0
Credits		12.0
Spring Semester		
SPS5104	Data-BasdDec-Mkingl:Beh&Soc/ EmoAss&Intrv	3.0
SPS5110	Multicultural Issues in Sch Psych	3.0
SPS5700	Statistics & Research Design I	3.0
SPS5910	Beh Assessment in Edu & Comm Settings ¹	3.0
Credits		12.0
Summer Semester		
SPS5105	Sem in Ethical Conduct for Sch Psych ¹	3.0
SPS5102	Asmnt & Intervtn of Reading Difficulties	3.0
SPS5406	School Crisis Prevention & Intervention	3.0
ABA504	Philosophy of Behaviorism ^{1,2}	3.0
Note: At the completion of these 33 to 36 credits, students will sit for the comprehensive examination (SPS5000). With a passing score, students receive their M.A. in School Psychology and are eligible to move on to advanced-level coursework.		
SPS5000	MA Comprehensive Exam	0.0
Credits		12.0
Total Credits		36.0

¹ Indicates coursework that is part of the 18- to 21-credit ABA sequence.

² Elective; necessary for BCBA® credential

Minimum levels of performance are outlined in the School Psychology program handbook. Students are evaluated and expected to maintain expected levels of performance in their academic coursework, field placements, and professional characteristics. Failure to maintain

minimum levels of performance across any of these areas may lead to dismissal from the program. The program handbook is available on the program website and the program BlackBoard site.

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS)

Course	Title	Credits
Second Year		
Fall Semester		
SPS6100	Introduction to Counseling Skills	3.0
SPS6103	Data-BasdDec-MkingII:CogAsmnt&Intvntn	3.0
SPS6106	Prac I: Consultation & Collaboration	3.0
SPS6911	Beh Interventions in Edu & Comm Settings ¹	3.0
Credits		12.0
Spring Semester		
SPS6109	Data-BasdDec-MkingIII:PsychoEdAsmnt&Intv	3.0
SPS6405	Sem Adv Counseling with Children & Adol	3.0
SPS6801	Practicum II: Advanced Practice	3.0
SPS6912	Adv Beh Chng Procdr in Edu&Comm Settings ¹	3.0
Credits		12.0
Summer Semester		
SPS6403	Neuro Basis of Educational Disorders	3.0
ABA502	Measurement & Experimental Design ¹	3.0
Credits		6.0
Third Year		
Fall Semester		
SPS6200	Externship I	3.0
Credits		3.0
Spring Semester		
SPS6202	Externship II	3.0
Credits		3.0
Total Credits		36.0

¹ Indicates coursework that is part of the 18- to 21-credit ABA sequence.

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