The policies and procedures herein are not meant to supercede, or substitute for, other relevant guiding documents. Particularly, you will also want to acquaint yourselves with the department’s Policies and Procedures manual. Other Relevant Guidelines include:

- UM Catalogue
- UM Graduate School Catalogue
- Department of Psychology Handbook (Fall, 2012)
- UM Policy on Sexual Harassment
- UM Student Conduct Code
- Principals of Psychologists and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association (APA)
- Principles of Professional Ethics by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
School Psychology Program Faculty

Greg R. Machek, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Director, School Psychology Program
Skaggs 240
(406) 243-5546
greg.machek@umontana.edu

Margaret Beebe-Frankenberger, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Skaggs 204
(406) 243-6883
mbeebe.frankenberger@umontana.edu

Anisa Goforth, PhD
Assistant Professor
Skaggs 367
(406) 243-2917
anisa.goforth@umontana.edu
School Psychology Ed.S. Program Handbook
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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides school psychology graduate students with information about the procedures, regulations, and requirements for completing a graduate program with a specialization in School Psychology (SPSY) in the Department of Psychology at The University of Montana (UM). All requirements and procedures described in this handbook are current as of August, 2011. There will be changes in the program over time as we engage in continuous improvement based upon accurate and consistent data regarding program performance. The SPSY faculty actively solicits and reviews feedback from our national and state training guideline reviews, professional organizations, practitioners, graduates, and families we serve to ensure the training remains current, relevant and productive.

The handbook is designed to facilitate your experience in the School Psychology (SPSY) Program in an organized, productive, and rewarding manner. There are three levels of requirements for obtaining a degree in psychology with a specialization in school psychology. These are: (a) UM Graduate Division requirements, (b) UM Department of Psychology requirements, and (c) the SPSY Program requirements. You will receive a Department of Psychology Handbook upon admission. Please familiarize yourself with all requirements.

If you have general questions regarding the SPSY program, the Department of Psychology, or The University of Montana, please contact your faculty advisor. We hope your graduate studies in the School Psychology Program at The University of Montana will be challenging, exciting, and educationally profitable.

II. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

A. Mission Statement

Our mission is consistent with that of the National Association of School Psychologists: to promote educationally and psychologically healthy environments for all children and youth by implementing research-based, effective programs that prevent problems, enhance independence and promote optimal learning. The University of Montana (UM) School Psychology Program values and respects human diversity, defined as the rich spectrum of human differences in culture, physical and cognitive characteristics, family configuration, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and exceptionalities. We work together to produce and disseminate knowledge in our field that supports the long-term well-being of our diverse society.

B. Aims

Believing that all children can learn and in the importance of individual and cultural differences and environmental influences, The University of Montana (UM) School Psychology program prepares professionals to utilize a problem-solving approach, in collaboration with children, families, school professionals, and the community, to optimize academic, social/behavioral, and mental health outcomes for children and youth. The program trains school psychologists who are guided by professional ethical principles and who advocate best practices for effective services across the educational continuum, from the individual to systems level. A fundamental aim of the program is to teach our students to promote prevention and wellness services that are
linked to the environmental systems that surround children/youth, including their families and communities.

The program provides professional preparation to develop psychologists who are grounded thoroughly in the principles of human development, behavior, and educational psychology. Attention is directed toward the mastery of skills in assessing the academic, intellectual, and social development of children and adults within specific environments and ecological confines; planning, implementing, and evaluating academic and behavioral interventions; and consulting and training with parents, teachers, related school personnel, and community agencies. Emphasis is placed on analyzing problems at the idiographic level. That is, each individual’s presenting circumstances are considered unique with respect to background information, the personal characteristics of the individual (e.g. gender, cultural heritage), and the expectations for problem solution. Students are trained to be scientist/practitioners; so that students master and employ valid scientific methods, assessment and intervention strategies to prevent and resolve problems. Prevention and intervention services are evidence-based, demonstrate empirical support, and are treated as plausible hypotheses that must be evaluated continuously as part of service provision.

The commitment to human welfare, advocacy, and service to others is an important aspect of the program. The program faculty is committed to a policy of respect for the individual and equity and fairness for all persons. The faculty encourages respect and equal treatment of others regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or physical characteristics. Therefore, students are expected to adhere to a principle of social justice and fairness and to behave toward others accordingly.

C. Professional Competencies

The National Association of School Psychologists recognizes 10 Domains of Professional Practice. The program strives to instill an initial mastery in each of these domains through a sequenced program of study (see Curriculum). The 10 Domains of Professional Practice are:

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 and data collection strategies, and technology resources, and apply results to design, implement, and evaluate response to services and programs.

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.

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.

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 evidenced-based supported 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 implement and evaluate services to support socialization, learning, and mental health.

5. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; and empirically supported 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.

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 multitiered prevention, and empirically supported strategies for effective crisis response.

School psychologists, in collaboration with others, demonstrate skills to promote services that enhance learning, mental health, safety, and physical wellbeing through protective and adaptive factors and to implement effective crisis preparation, response, and recovery.
7. Family–School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; empirically supported 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 facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies for enhancement of academic and social–behavioral outcomes for children.

8. 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, individual, and role differences; and empirically supported 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 advocacy for social justice are foundations for all aspects of service delivery.

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.

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.

D. Student Participation in Governance

Your active participation among a community of learners is an important part of your professional training. There are at least three graduate student organizations on the UM campus, which seek to represent the views and promote the interests of psychology graduate students, and that provide the opportunity to be actively engaged with fellow graduate students.

(1) The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a campus-wide organization created to improve the quality of education for graduate students, communicate and support research interests of graduate students, recommend members for policy making and administrative committees on campus, overall, advocate graduate student concerns. For additional information about the GSA, see their website at http://www.umt.edu/gsa/ or call (406) 243-5375.

(2) The Psychology Graduate Student Association (PGSA) is comprised of graduate students within the Department of Psychology and is the organization that provides graduate student representation at faculty meetings and facilitates an informal social support network for graduate students. Officers are elected on a yearly basis and monthly meetings are held. Students help orient new students and plan social activities. For additional information about the PGSA, please refer to the Department of Psychology Handbook.

(3) The School Psychology Student Organization (SPSO) is comprised of graduate students in the School Psychology Program. This is a student organization that is designed to support collegiality among school-psychologists-in-training, to promote a strong connection to our national and state professional organizations (NASP, APA, and MASP) and to be involved in campus and community activities as representatives of future school psychologists.

III. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

A. Admission to the Graduate School

All applicants to The UM School Psychology Program must make application to both the Graduate School and the program.

Applicants must meet the minimum standards listed in The UM Catalog, The Graduate School, to be considered for admission. Application materials and additional information can be obtained by writing: The Graduate School, Lommasson Center 224, 32 Campus Drive #2592, Missoula, MT. 59812-2592; phone (406) 243-2572; FAX (406) 243-4593; or email grad.school@umontana.edu; or log onto the World Wide Web at: http://www.umt.edu/grad/

B. Admission to the School Psychology Program

Applications for admission to the school psychology specialist degree program are reviewed by SPSY program faculty. Applications for admission to the program are considered once a year.
and must be received in completed form (including letters of recommendation etc.) by January 1st. At that time, the program faculty reviews all of the applications that are complete for each candidate. Applications received after January 1st may be considered for admission, but are dependent upon availability and at the discretion of the Director of School Psychology. Students accepted during the spring semester commence advanced graduate study the following fall semester. Inquiries related to the school psychology program should be sent to the Dr. Greg Machek, Director of the School Psychology Program, Department of Psychology, Skaggs Bldg 143, The University of Montana, Missoula, MT. 59812-2592; phone: (406) 243-6883; email: greg.machek@umontana.edu.

Admission to the program is competitive and limited by available resources. Decisions regarding acceptance are based on the following: (a) undergraduate grade point average (GPA); (b) graduate GPA (if applicable); (c) Verbal, Quantitative, and writing scores on the General Graduate Record Examination; (d) letters of recommendation; (e) previous related volunteer or appropriate work experience; (f) statement of professional goals; (g) a sample of scholarly work (if available); (h) evidence of professional promise; and (i) a personal interview, when possible. An interview is conducted, with a selected pool of final applicants, in person (or by telephone, if the applicant cannot attend an onsite interview). The number of students admitted in any given year is subject to the availability of resources and is reevaluated each year.

Every year, the applicant pool for the school psychology program seems to become more competitive. Typically, an effort is made to select highly qualified individuals who will enrich the program’s commitment to a diverse student population. Students are selected on the basis of their compatibility with the overall goals of the school psychology program and the profession of school psychology. The faculty’s intention is to select students whose professional goals, interests, and expertise match the available resources within the school psychology program. Program attrition rates are low, with a high completion rate among students accepted into the program. The program faculty is committed to offering a high quality program and makes every effort to facilitate student progress.

C. Information about the Program and the Application Process

When an individual is in the process of applying to the school psychology program, the contact person is typically the Director of the School Psychology Program. The Director of the School Psychology Program can provide specific information about the program of study if there are questions that cannot be answered by the materials available on line at the Dept. of Psychology website. Questions about the application process, deadlines, forms, etc., should be directed to the UM Graduate School. Questions about your specific packet (e.g. receipt of materials) should be directed to the clinic office clerk who is responsible for the coordination of application materials from prospective graduate students. The clinic office clerk will ensure that applicants are kept informed about the status of their application for admission. The clinic office staff person can be contacted at (406) 243-2367.
D. Fingerprinting and Background Check

Although fingerprinting and a criminal background check are not required by either The University or Montana or the School Psychology Program, persons working in the public school systems are often required to do present their criminal background check status prior to working in the schools. It is anticipated that the State of Montana, Office of Public Instruction, will soon require all persons who work in schools to be cleared in this manner. Since our graduate students are placed in public school classrooms every semester of training, we ask that newly admitted students arrange to be fingerprinted and submit to a background check through the State of Montana, Department of Criminal Justice. Newly admitted students receive a letter to this effect and directions on how to initiate the background check shortly after an admission offer is accepted. It is expected that this procedure can be completed prior to the fall semester so that placement in the schools can take place. A student cannot be placed in the schools without the background clearance.

In cases in which a background check shows past charges and convictions of concern, the case will be reviewed by a committee composed of the core school psychology faculty, and possibly the legal counsel for the University. Convictions that jeopardize the student’s ability to be placed in programmatic placements or obtain future employment in the field can lead to dismissal from the program.

IV. (Ed.S.) Program in School Psychology leading to the Education Specialist Degree

A. Program Description/Goals

The Ed.S. Specialist training in School Psychology is a three-year program that aims at producing psychology professionals in the schools who advocate for children, their families, and schools at all levels of service. Graduates of the specialist program will be trained as proactive agents of change at the systems level as well as at the individual level with the goal of positive academic, social and behavioral outcomes. Program objectives are divided into two types: knowledge competencies and performance competencies. Knowledge competencies will be evaluated through coursework performance evaluations (e.g. exams, projects) and a Comprehensive Examination. Performance competencies will be evaluated through various school-based practica. Specifically, specialist students will demonstrate specific competencies within the following five (5) core areas: (1.) Psychological and Educational Foundations of School Psychology, (2.) Psychometrics, Measurement, and Research, (3.) Methods of School-Based Intervention, (4.) Professional School Psychology, (5.) Supervised Experience.

B. Ed.S. Credit Requirements

Training at the specialist level in School Psychology at the University of Montana includes a fulltime course of study leading to an Ed.S. degree, attained as follows:
1.) Masters (MA) in School Psychology by completing 30 credits of coursework and passing comprehensive examination that is administered during the latter part of the second semester of the second year.

2.) Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree by completing 42* additional credits of coursework, including 12 credits of internship during the third year of training.

See “Curriculum” for specific coursework, practica and internship credits.

*number of additional credits may vary due to minimal change at discretion of program faculty.

C. Ed.S. Training Outcomes

Successful completion of the Ed.S. Specialist School Psychology program results in:

(1) Masters (MA) degree in School Psychology  
(2) Education Specialist (Ed.S) degree in School Psychology  
(3) Eligibility for full licensure in the State of Montana as a Class 6 School Psychologist  
(4) Fulfills requirements for student to apply to be a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), a license that is currently recognized in the majority of states for reciprocity.

V. PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

The SPSY Program plan of study and expected competencies is organized around five core areas (detailed in this handbook). The program for the Ed.S. degree in school psychology has been planned with the primary objective of completing the requirements for licensure in school psychology required by the State of Montana, Office of Public Instruction as well as recognition as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), which will facilitate mobility to other states.

A. Advising

New students are assigned an advisor from the school psychology faculty. All students should contact their advisor prior to the beginning of each semester for information related to program developments, courses, and other program issues. Frequent communication between student and advisor facilitates a well-designed program of study and your professional development. The major professor/advisor serves as a professional mentor for the student and encourages the student toward a timely and meaningful completion of the program. Students may change advisors under certain circumstances and upon approval by the Director of School Psychology.

Please make use of your advisors and do not hesitate to initiate contact with them for any concerns, questions, or guidance. Email is usually the best way to contact faculty. Although we pride ourselves on being immediately accessible, sometimes this is not always possible. Often, faculty will ask you to set up meeting times.
You and your advisor will meet at the end of each semester (or at the very beginning of the subsequent semester), to fill out and go over your semester evaluation. A copy will be kept in your file, as well as given to you.

**B. Academic, Practica, and Internship Requirements**

1. **Course of Study**

   The program of study for the Ed.S. degree in school psychology has four objectives:

   1) to meet the criteria for school psychology training developed by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).
   2) to permit graduates to qualify for licensure as a school psychologist in Montana and many other states.
   3) to offer a varied curriculum that enables the student to develop multiple skills
   4) to develop a professional role as a school psychologist that is unique to the candidate and is based upon the individual’s interests within the scope of professional practice.

   Although specific numbers of credit hours required for program completion are determined by the students’ prior graduate and undergraduate preparation, the UM School Psychology Ed.S. program requires a minimum of 72 graduate semester hours beyond the bachelor’s degree, including credit earned for internship. Students are expected to spend a minimum of two full years in academic study to complete their required coursework, followed by a one-year full-time internship supervised by a licensed school psychologist or a certified school psychologist. Because of the number of credit hours and the intense quality and sequencing of the coursework, students should not expect to finish the program in a timely manner on a part-time basis. Therefore, students are expected to be in full-time study.

   The coursework in the Ed.S. program is divided across five major core areas:

   (1.) Psychological and Educational Foundations of School Psychology
   (2.) Psychometrics, Measurement, and Research
   (3.) Methods of School-Based Intervention
   (4.) Professional School Psychology
   (5.) Supervised Experience

   Appendix A contains the planned coursework sequence for the SPSY specialist training program. Please see section V, Curriculum, of this handbook to see how coursework is designed to apply to the five core training areas as well as to NASP training guidelines.

2. **Practica**

   Students in the specialist program in school psychology complete 600 hours of practica experience over the graduate course of study that includes two types of practica. The first type is associated with the methods in school psychology course and is designed for the student to
sequentially take on the role of a school psychologist concurrent with course study and prior to internship. The second type is associated with specific courses and is designed to afford the opportunity for students to practice specific skill sets.

Students in the specialist program in school psychology must complete four semesters of Psyx587, Methods in School Psychology (Practicum). The practica have been designed to give students practical experience with assessment instruments, intervention, consultation services, and other aspects of school psychology practice including further exposure to the infrastructure of the school system and its political climate. In addition, these experiences emphasize recognizing and dealing with individual differences with respect to culture, gender, and other factors, as well as disabling conditions. Students are required to complete 12 credit hours of field-based practicum, across each of their four semesters. Practicum students typically register for PSYC 587, Methods in School Psychology, for three credits during each semester of practicum.

Requirements for completion of PSYC 587 include:

- **Year 1; first semester:** four hours per week of direct service at the UM Co-Teach Preschool, under the supervision of the Co-Teach director, plus one hour per week supervisory seminar at Co-Teach and attendance at a weekly supervisory seminar conducted by a member of the program faculty on campus. 
  
  \[ 4 \text{ hours} \times 15 \text{ weeks} = 60 \text{ hours direct service}. \]

- **Year 1; second semester & Year 2; first & second semesters:** eight hours per week of direct service at a school-based sight, under the supervision of a site-based school psychologist, over the course of the second year, plus attendance at a weekly supervisory seminar conducted by a member of the program faculty on campus. Students also receive individual supervision from their field supervisor, typically one to two hours per week, and the University practicum supervisor provides individual supervision on request. 
  
  \[ 8 \text{ hours direct service} \& 4 \text{ hours indirect service for 45 weeks} = 540 \text{ hours} \]

Thus, students receive at least 600 hours of on-site, school-based supervised activities plus many hours of class and individual supervision prior to a school psychologist internship.

The close working relationship between program faculty and students in field practica is maintained primarily through the weekly supervision seminar, where students are responsible for presenting cases and recent journal articles relevant to topics germane to school psychology, describing daily functioning through maintenance of a log, and raising issues of appropriate professional practice as well as questions related to legal and ethical issues, conflicts with field supervisors or other district personnel, etc. In addition, school administrators and a representative sample of professional staff who have had contact with the student may contribute to the evaluation of the student’s performance through formal and informal contact with the university supervisor.

Evaluation of students in practicum is accomplished through a combination of supervisory reports, student reflection papers, seminar performance, and observation during site visitation. Each practicum student must submit a statement of specific goals and objectives at the beginning of each semester, then maintain and submit for monthly review a daily log and, finally, submit a
self-evaluation report describing his/her personal view of the goals he/she has accomplished. In addition, each field supervisor submits a final evaluation report for each practicum student, evaluating the student’s progress toward meeting her or his stated goals (see Appendix C).

The practicum settings in which students are placed are selected because of the availability of direct supervision by a licensed school psychologist. In addition, practicum settings are selected on the basis of evidence that the school/agency and field supervisor will include the following as practicum goals:

a) knowledge of and commitment to high standards of professional and social responsibility as evidenced by adoption of APA and NASP Codes of Ethics;

b) evidence of good professional practice in the use of sound and current assessment, intervention, and consultation skills as well as a willingness to explore better methods of practice and new psychological knowledge; and

c) development of positive working relationships with all facets of the school community as well as the larger professional community.

Practicum students are placed only with field supervisors who have been employed in their current positions at least two years, have appropriate licensure or certification for their positions, and who are active members of state and national school psychology organizations, or in the case of classroom placements for coursework, certification as a teacher/educator.

3. Internship

Each specialist student in school psychology must complete a one-academic-year (10-month), full-time internship in a school setting or other appropriate setting serving school-aged children. Students may also complete a half-time internship over two consecutive academic years. Whether completed on a half-time or full-time basis, the internship must include at least 1,200 clock hours of supervised experience over at least a 10 month period.

The specialist internship must be supervised by an experienced school psychologist with responsibility for the nature and quality of the psychological services provided by the intern. This field supervisor must be an appropriately certified or licensed school psychologist in the state where the internship services are provided. The field supervisor should be responsible for no more than two interns at any one time and provide the intern with at least 2 hours supervision per week. The internship in school psychology will also have a university-based supervisor who will be responsible for maintaining contact with and receiving feedback from the field supervisor (see Appendix D) through evaluations, conducting in person supervisory sessions for the intern, or in the case of interns with placements outside a 50 mile radius of the UM, telephone supervisory sessions and, ultimately, issuing a grade for the internship experience.

The internship must be a planned and organized sequence of training and not just the performance of routine and repetitive functions devoid of individual benefit or professional development. The internship provides the opportunity for the intern to be mentored into the profession by further developing best practice skills and competencies within a full time professional role while under supervision. The UM School Psychology program provides a specific syllabus of guidelines for the internship. Further, the intern must negotiate and submit an internship contract between the internship site (e.g. school district), the intern, and the UM
School Psychology program. The internship placement and supervisor must be approved by the faculty according to guidelines approved by the program faculty.

4. Progress Toward the Degree

The School Psychology Program continuously evaluates student progress and skill development. This is accomplished at various levels in terms of frequency and specificity. A student’s progress is evaluated twice per year: (a) at midyear, the student’s advisor reviews student progress and makes recommendations and sets goals with the student, and (b) at the end of the school year, the progress of each student is reviewed by the School Psychology faculty. This evaluation is termed as the “Annual Evaluation”.

Student progress reviews provide the opportunity for both faculty and student to discuss skill development and ethical practice. As a result, the advisor and student set goals for the each semester in the program. Both reviews incorporate information from graduate instructors, research mentors, and practicum or internship supervisors for the purpose of making judgments about each student’s professional development. The student’s advisor meets with the student to discuss the outcome of the year end evaluation by faculty. For both evaluations, the student is asked to indicate in writing if the evaluation is understood and accepted. If so, the student signs the evaluation. If the evaluation is refuted by the student, the student can make a written comment/response that can be further evaluated by the school psychology faculty.

Annual Evaluation Outcomes and Notification

There are three possible outcomes from the annual review and evaluation process: exemplary progress, satisfactory progress and unsatisfactory progress (aka, failure to make adequate progress.)

Failure to Make Adequate Progress

(More information on adequate progress is contained in the Psychology Department Policies and Procedures handbook; please familiarize yourself with it).

Students determined to have failed to make adequate progress toward timely completion of their degrees or because of failure to obtain the necessary professional competencies receive a summative evaluation of unsatisfactory progress. Students in this situation are not considered to be in good standing in the program. In such instances, a formal annual evaluation letter will be issued to the student by the advisor and will address the specific concerns noted, and specific competencies, accomplishments, or other indicators of progress that are necessary to become a student in good standing. Students who receive an unsatisfactory evaluation should meet with their advisor soon after receiving their evaluation letter, for the purpose of discussing the concerns and developing a plan for addressing the concerns.

In most instances, the plan for addressing the concerns which led to the unsatisfactory evaluation is accomplished through the construction of a Remediation Agreement. This agreement is developed in writing by the student and the advisor to specifically address the concerns of the School Psychology faculty. Each Remediation Agreement is specifically designed to reflect the
concerns for an individual student. Faculty concerns about knowledge competencies may be addressed through an agreement to take additional coursework in specific areas. Professional competencies such as work completion habits, or assessment skills may be addressed by removing incomplete grades or completing additional assignments within one semester. Each agreement lists the specific area of concern, the source of the information, the plan to remediate the problem, the evaluation plan and responsibilities and timelines.

Failure to complete a Remediation Agreement may result in receiving a non-passing grade in a course or termination from the School Psychology program.

Other instances in which a student may be reviewed for dismissal from the program are one or more of the following:

a) more than one “I” (incomplete) grade per semester for the most recent year of study and/or an “I” grade beyond one year.
b) a failure in any course taken for graduate credit (a grade of C or lower).
c) serious ethical violations, unprofessional conduct, or academic fraud.
d) conviction of a felony.
e) serious failure to progress in coursework, to the extent that a majority of the school psychology faculty questions the student’s potential for completion of the program and maintaining the standards of performance of the profession.

Notification Process for Student Dismissal

In instances when the annual evaluation process coupled with appropriate remediation procedures do not result in the student making satisfactory progress, or when one or more of the above instances detailed above occur, the student may be dismissed from the program. Dismissal or termination decisions are made jointly by the program faculty and the full department faculty, after a careful examination of student progress and efforts to address concerns that have been noted by the faculty. In such instances, the student will be notified of the decision of the full department faculty through a formal letter that includes a description of how the student may access university and college due process procedures.

Such reviews are handled with regard to due process and the student’s rights to confidentiality. The procedures for due process are described in the Department of Psychology Handbook. For a full description of the process, please see the Department of Psychology Student Handbook Fall, 2012.

C. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS – SPSY Ed.S. PROGRAM

The comprehensive exam (Comps) is intended to assess the student’s knowledge base from graduate school training to that point. It serves as a culminating experience that ties together major training themes and concepts before the student goes on to their internship in the third year.

The comprehensive examination is taken during the Spring of the student’s second full year in the program, typically in mid-to-late April. It covers content from all courses up to that
point; specifically all coursework listed on the SPSY MA/Ed.S level program flowchart for years one and two as well as the application of skills during four semesters of field-based training at various practica sites.

The School Psychology faculty is responsible for organization and evaluation of candidate performance on the Comps. One School Psychology faculty member will be designated as the Chair of the Comps Committee and process for all candidates taking Comps that semester. The Chair will be responsible for collecting questions from psychology and education department faculty. The chair will approve the final draft of written Comps questions in collaboration with other school psychology faculty, distribute “Study Questions” to candidates, set dates for the written and oral examinations, and supervise administration of written and oral examinations.

The Comprehensive Examination is comprised a written examination. The Written Comprehensive Exam (Comps) covers the 10 domains as set forth in the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Training Guidelines:

1. Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability
2. Consultation and Collaboration
3. Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills
4. Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills
5. School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
6. Preventive and Responsive Services
7. Family–School Collaboration Services
8. Development and Learning
9. Research and Program Evaluation
10. Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

Students will be prepared in all 10 domains through program coursework and practica, but are also responsible for knowledge of the literature base pertaining to any of the domains up to the date of the written Comps.

Student Preparation for Comprehensive Exam

To aid in preparing for the written examination, the Comps chairperson will disseminate a list of “Study Questions” which have been collected from the psychology and education departments, and which have been edited and approved by the School Psychology faculty. These study questions will be distributed approximately six weeks prior to the Comps written examination date. Written Comprehensive Exam questions will be drawn from this list. Once “Study Questions” are distributed, students may ask for clarification of a question. However, students may not ask faculty to review their prepared answers. “Study Questions” are confidential. At NO time are these questions to be shared with another student outside of their cohort (e.g. second year students currently studying for their upcoming comps MUST NOT share study questions with first year school psychology students). If a student is found to have either intentionally or non-intentionally shared “Study Questions”, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Written Comprehensive Exam Procedures
Written Comps will be conducted over a 7 hour period during one day. Students are not allowed to bring any study aids or other materials with them. No electronic media of any sort may be brought to the exam. Students will be provided with a blank USB “flash drive” on which they can store their responses. Students will be provided department computers when completing the written Comps. If these computers are laptops, they will be outfitted with a conventionally sized external keyboard and mouse.

Students are warned not to share written materials with other students taking exams at the same time and not to discuss questions with anyone during the day of the written Comps process (e.g. restroom breaks, etc.). Students are permitted to leave the examination area for bathroom breaks and to get drinks, but all materials (flash drive, computer) must remain in the testing room. Violation of any of the above may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the written Comps process.

The designated 7 hour time period is inclusive of bathroom and eating breaks. If you need to eat/snack, it should be done in the room in which you are taking the exam. Please let the Comps chairperson know when you will be using the restroom.

Comprehensive Examination Grading

Performance on the Comprehensive Examination will be evaluated by the school psychology faculty. All faculty will grade the responses on a five point scale. An averaged score on any question/component that is below a 3 will be subject to remediation. The faculty utilize the following scale: Pass, Pass with Requirements, Remediation, and Fail. These are defined as:

The Written and Oral Comps will be evaluated by the Comps Committee utilizing the following scale: Pass, Pass with Requirements, Remediation, and Fail.

Pass:
The written exam and oral examination process was satisfactorily completed. This can include cases where certain unsatisfactory aspects of the written examination were noted, but addressed satisfactorily in the oral examination component.

Remediation:
–The written exam, or a portion thereof, was deemed as “deficient.”
–“Deficient” is defined in respect to written comps as answers to question(s) that were inadequately answered. For example, there may be an inadequacy of accuracy or of support of the answer that was given.
–In the event the written exam is deemed “deficient,” the committee will indicate in writing: (1) the specific deficient areas; (2) a plan to remediate the deficiencies; and (3) a time frame in which to complete the remediation plan.
–Work may continue on current coursework and grades earned, but the candidate may not go on internship until remediation of deficiency status is complete. In the event an internship position has already been secured, the school-based internship supervisor will be informed in writing by the director of the school psychology program (copied to the candidate) of the status.
Fail:
– The written exam was deemed as “severely deficient,” thus, “failed”.
– “Severely deficient” is defined in respect to the written comps as an answer(s) to a question(s) deemed as inadequate or incorrect to the extent that answers demonstrated a severe lack of breadth and depth of required knowledge.
- The committee will indicate in writing: (a) the specific deficiencies; and (b) provide a general recommendation to address deficiencies; and (c) a time frame in which to correct the deficiencies, not to exceed one semester.
– Work may continue on current coursework and grades earned, but the candidate may not go on internship until remediation of deficiency status is complete. In the event an internship position has already been secured, the school-based internship supervisor will be informed in writing by the director of the school psychology program (copied to the candidate) of the status.
– In cases for which the student is deficient in all areas of the exam, one repeat of the written Comps is permitted. If the student fails to pass the second written comprehensive exam, the student will be dismissed from the program immediately.

Candidates or faculty may appeal the decision about the exam to the full faculty. The intent to appeal must be issued to the Director of School Psychology in writing within one calendar week after the student is notified of the status. The written notification of appeal must contain the justification for the appeal.

Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination process, the Application for Graduation must be retrieved from the office, signed by the committee chair and returned to the office.

D. Education Specialist (Ed.S.) Degree Completion Process

1. Master of Arts (MA) Degree Process

Students completing the Master of Arts (MA) Degree in School Psychology as part of the school psychology program must complete 30 credit hours of coursework and successfully pass the (previously discussed) comprehensive examination taken in their 4th semester (second semester of second year).

Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination and 30 credits of coursework requirements, the school psychology director will sign the MA graduate paperwork and submit to the graduate school for the MA in School Psychology award.

No later than three weeks into the semester in which the student expects to complete the requirements for the Masters degree, the student must apply for the MA. degree in School Psychology. To apply, the student must notify the UM Graduate School of the intention to obtain the degree prior to the deadline published in the University of Montana Schedule of Classes. Next, the student must complete a program contract form (available from the Graduate School), and list the 30 credit hours which will form the MA. degree program coursework. The UM Registrar’s Office will then audit the student’s academic record to insure that the courses were completed as stated, all fees are paid, no incomplete grades are recorded, etc. Any deficiencies
will be reported to the Graduate School and must be cleared before the master’s project presentation can take place.

Once the student has been cleared by the Registrar and the degree paperwork has been signed by the Graduate Dean and returned to the Department of Psychology, the student is eligible to take the Comprehensive Examination.

2. Education Specialist (Ed.S.) Degree Process

After successful completion of the MA degree, students continue in the program toward attainment of the Ed.S specialist degree. The student then completes any remaining coursework and supervised experiences required for certification in school psychology and the Ed.S. degree. Subsequently, the student applies for receipt of the Ed.S. degree through the Graduate School using the same procedure as for the MA degree (no later than three weeks into the semester in which the student expects to complete the requirements for the EdS degree), and by the published deadline. The Registrar, again, audits the student’s academic record to insure that the courses were completed as stated, all fees are paid, no incomplete grades are recorded, etc. Any deficiencies will be reported to the Graduate School.

Completion of the internship, including submission and grading of the internship professional portfolio, is a further requirement to attain the Ed.S. degree. Students sign up for 6 credits, per semester, of Psyx588 for their internship. While on internship, the student will receive evaluations from their primary supervisor and consumers of their work. The Director of School Psychology Training will hold monthly supervision sessions with the student (either onsite, or by telephone) to keep track of their experience. The Director will also maintain monthly contact, and solicit formative feedback, from the student’s primary onsite supervisor.

Finally, the student is required to sit for the National Credential in School Psychology (NCSP) examination prior to award of the Ed.S. degree. The student must arrange to take the exam during the internship year (or before: we encourage students to sit for the exam during the summer before they go on internship, when academic content is still fresh). Failure to pass the exam must be reported to the University of Montana School Psychology training director. A remedial approach will be agreed upon by program faculty and may entail repeated attempts at passing the PRAXIS examination. Detailed information on examination procedures and dates can be obtained from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) website, www.nasponline.org. The student must provide a copy of test results to the School Psychology program director. The NCSP exam and subsequent application for the NCSP license provides the graduate with access to licensure in many states. It also serves as evidence of student competency in the school psychology profession.

Upon completion of all coursework, the NCSP exam, internship, and any other program requirements, the school psychology program director will sign the final paperwork for the Ed.S. specialist degree to be awarded and posted to the final transcript.

NOTE: Under no circumstances will the Ed.S. specialist degree be awarded without completion of all program requirements. Please be advised that students must continue paying fees as a graduate student until the final degree is attained.
V. CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

A. Coursework Sequence. A coursework sequence plan will be reviewed with you by your advisor in the early part of the first semester. Changes can be made to the plan given the courses that are offered during your training period. However, school psychology faculty ensure that the coursework you take will prepare you for a career as a school psychologist by being in accordance with national training guidelines, as set forth by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA).

B. Curriculum Applied to NASP Training Domains

School psychology candidates demonstrate entry-level competency in each of the following domains of professional practice. Competency requires both knowledge and skills. The UM School psychology programs ensure that students have a foundation in the knowledge base for psychology and education, including theories, models, empirical findings, and techniques in each domain. The School psychology program also ensures that students demonstrate the professional skill necessary to deliver effective services that result in positive outcomes in each domain. The domains below are not mutually exclusive, thus are integrated into graduate level curricula, practica, and internship. The description of the NASP definition of their 10 competencies that are addressed through coursework and practical experiences is listed in the “Program Competencies” section, above.

C. Course Grading

The school psychology faculty has a consistent system of grade assignment to be used for evaluating performance in all coursework taught by school psychology faculty.

Grading System

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>60% - 63%</td>
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<td>0% - 59%</td>
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</table>

VI. Professional School Psychology Organizations
As a professional school psychologist, each student is expected to maintain knowledge of current trends and developments in the field of school psychology. One way to do this is through various national and state professional organizations. Students are encouraged to be involved in these organizations and to become familiar with the procedures and philosophies of the various associations.

A. National Organizations

The two major voices in the area of school psychology at a national level are:
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)  www.nasponline.org
- American Psychological Association (APA), Division 16.  www.apa.org

Other important professional organizations are:
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the oldest national organization on behalf of children with exceptionalities.  www.cec.sped.org
- American Educational Research Association (AERA) www.aera.net
- Association of Behavior Analysis (ABA) www.abainternational.org

B. State of Montana Professional Organizations

In addition, state organizations provide regional philosophies and procedures. That state organization in Montana is the Montana Association of School Psychologists (MASP). The state organization associated with CEC is the Montana Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC) which is very active in promoting advocacy for children with exceptionalities in Montana as well as providing professional development opportunities throughout the year. Finally, the State of Montana, Office of Public Instruction (OPI), provides professional development workshops and trainings throughout the school year. Many of these trainings are offered to graduate students on a free or reduced fee basis. Contact, student membership fees, and publications associated with membership are provided below.

VII. Program Accreditation and Training Guidelines

The doctoral and Masters/Ed.S programs are fully approved and accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The doctoral program will be accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) upon successful matriculation of our first graduating cohort.

Both training programs are designed to meet the training guidelines set forth by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), American Psychological Association (APA), and the State of Montana Public Education Personnel Preparation Standards (PEPPS).

VIII. What is a School Psychologist? (Resource: NASP)
What Is a School Psychologist?

Resource: This NASP handout was developed by Arlene Silva, University of Maryland school psychology graduate student intern at the NASP office (summer 2003), with contributions from NASP staff and leadership.

Who Are School Psychologists

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

School psychologists are highly trained in both psychology and education. They must complete a minimum of a post-Master’s degree program that includes a year-long internship and emphasizes preparation in mental health, child development, school organization, learning styles and processes, behavior, motivation, and effective teaching.

School psychologists must be certified and/or licensed by the state in which they work. They also may be nationally certified by the National School Psychology Certification Board (NSPCB).

What School Psychologists Do

School psychologists work to find the best solution for each student and situation and use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and district-wide support systems.

School psychologists work with students individually and in groups. They also develop programs to train teachers and parents regarding effective teaching and learning strategies, effective techniques to manage behavior at home and in the classroom, working with students with disabilities or with special talents, abuse of drugs and other substances, and preventing and managing crises.

In addition, most school psychologists provide the following services.

Consultation

- Collaborate with teachers, parents, and administrators to find effective solutions to learning and behavior problems.
- Help others understand child development and how it affects learning and behavior.
- Strengthen working relationships between teachers, parents, and service providers in the community.

Evaluation

- Evaluate eligibility for special services.
- Assess academic skills and aptitude for learning.
- Determine social-emotional development and mental health status.
• Evaluate learning environments.

Intervention

• Design, implement and evaluate outcomes of academic, social/behavioral, or mental health interventions, linking assessment data with intervention and outcomes.
• Work directly with children and their families to help resolve problems in adjustment and learning.
• Provide training in social skills and anger management.
• Help families and schools manage crises, such as death, illness, or community trauma.
• May provide psychological counseling to help resolve interpersonal or family problems that interfere with school performance.

Prevention

• Design programs for children at risk of failing at school.
• Promote tolerance, understanding, and appreciation of diversity within the school and community.
• Develop programs to make schools safer and more effective learning environments.
• Collaborate with school staff and community agencies to provide services directed at improving psychological and physical health.
• Develop partnerships with parents and teachers to promote healthy school environments.

Research and Planning

• Evaluate the effectiveness of academic and behavior management programs.
• Identify and implement programs and strategies to improve schools.
• Use evidence-based research to develop and/or recommend effective interventions.

Where School Psychologists Work

The majority of school psychologists work in schools. However, they can practice in a variety of settings including:

• Public and private school systems
• School-based health centers
• Clinics and hospitals
• Private practice
• Universities
• Community and state agencies, and other institutions

Growing Up Is Not Easy

All children and adolescents face problems from time to time. They may:

• Feel afraid to go to school
• Have difficulty organizing their time efficiently
• Lack effective study skills
• Fall behind in their school work
• Lack self-discipline
• Worry about family matters such as divorce and death
• Feel depressed or anxious
• Experiment with drugs and alcohol
• Think about suicide
• Worry about their sexuality
• Face difficult situations, such as applying to college, getting a job, or quitting school
• Question their aptitudes and abilities

School psychologists help children, parents, teachers, and members of the community understand and resolve these concerns. The following situations demonstrate how school psychologists may typically approach problems.

**Family Problems**

The teacher noticed that Carla, an able student, had stopped participating in class discussions and had difficulty paying attention. The school psychologist was asked to explore why Carla’s behavior had changed so much. After discovering that Carla’s parents were divorcing, the school psychologist provided counseling for Carla and gave her parents suggestions for this difficult time. Carla’s behavior and self-esteem improved, and she felt more secure about her relationship with her parents.

*School psychologists can be trusted to help with delicate personal and family situations that interfere with schooling.*

**Reading Problems**

Tommy’s parents were concerned about his difficulty in reading. They feared that he would fall behind and lose confidence in himself. In school the teacher noticed that Tommy understood what was presented in verbal form, but that he needed the help of his classmates to do written work. After observing Tommy and gathering information about his reading and writing skills, the school psychologist collaborated with his parents and teachers to develop a plan to improve his reading and writing. The plan worked, and both Tommy’s reading and his self-esteem improved.

*School psychologists can help prevent future problems when they intervene with learning problems early on.*

**A Potential Dropout**

David was a high school student who often skipped class. He had very poor behavior and had been suspended from school on various occasions for fighting. After establishing a relationship with David, the school psychologist taught him simple techniques to relax and to control his aggressive behavior. David’s mother and his teacher worked together on a plan designed by the school psychologist to establish limits and to improve communication.
School psychologists recognize that changes in the school environment and at home can improve the quality of life for children and their families.

NASP represents and supports school psychology through leadership to enhance the mental health and educational competence of all children.

Resource

The National Association of School Psychologists:
Suite 402, 4340 East West Highway,
Bethesda, MD 20814;
(301) 657-0270;
www.nasponline.org

APPENDIX A

EdS Coursework Sequencing

Ed.S. EVEN Fall Entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST YEAR</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Course ID</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<td>Psyx 587 Practicum (Ed Asmnt)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summer EVEN</strong> Can take in summer semester to reduce load: Education Across Cultures Inclusion and Collaboration (elective*) Intro to SPED Law and Policy (MUST Take this course during the summer)</td>
<td>3</td>
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**SECOND YEAR**

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<td>Child and Adolescent Interventions</td>
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<td>Psyx530</td>
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<td>Consultation &amp; Collaboration</td>
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</table>
**Electives do not substitute for any core classes – these are “extra”**

**These courses are also offered during some summer some summer sessions and can be taken then to lighten your regular semester load. Please check with the course catalog and/or the C&I office to confirm the summer offerings.**

***Please note that for students entering in the fall of an even year, C&I 514 will need to be taken during one of the summer sessions as it is not offered during the spring of your second year. Occasionally, options for equivalent classes that cover our multicultural perspective emphasis are offered and can be taken.

### Ed.S. – ODD Fall Entry

**FIRST YEAR**

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<th>Semester</th>
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<th>Course Title</th>
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Third Year

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*Electives do not substitute for any core classes – these are “extra”

** These courses are also offered during some summer sessions and can be taken then to lighten your regular semester load. Please check with the course catalog and/or the C&I office to confirm the summer offerings.
***Offered intermittently; may need to switch with a spring course