



Brief Program Description

Administered by the Department of Student Development and Pupil Personnel Services, the graduate licensure programs in School Psychology at the University of Massachusetts prepare professional school psychologists who are oriented toward working effectively with others in the identification, analysis and resolution of social and educational problems involving school age children and adolescents. Our programs emphasize a contemporary scientist practitioner approach to school psychology featuring both prevention and intervention-oriented problem solving approaches to professional practice.

Who May Apply

Typically, students enter with a bachelor's degree and a background in psychology, education, and/or special education; however, it is not unusual for applicants to hold master's degrees in related fields.

Admission Process and Criteria

Admission to the program in School Psychology is competitive. That is, many more applications are received than there are available positions. Approximately ten students are admitted each year from a pool of 100 to 120 applications.

Candidates may obtain applications from the School of Education or apply online at:

http://www.umss.edu/gradschool/prospective_student_online_application.htm.

The yearly application deadline is January 15, for admission the following September. Candidates for admission will be evaluated on GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, previous related experience, fit with the School Psychology program, and a well-written personal statement. Candidates interested in the School Psychology program are strongly urged to read all program material and to visit the campus to meet with program faculty and students.

Course of Study

Professional development in the School Psychology program is grounded thoroughly in individual, systemic, and principles of human behavior and development, as well as theories of learning and instruction. Students develop the skills necessary to assess academic and social development within specific contexts such as families, schools, and communities. They learn to plan, implement and evaluate contextually sensitive

intervention and prevention programs that enable them to consult and support the child rearing and instructional efforts of families, teachers and related school personnel. Emphasis is placed on understanding and analyzing problems at both a general and individual level. However, each individual problem situation is considered unique with respect to its background information, the personal characteristics of the parties involved (e.g. gender, cultural heritage), and the expectations for resolution.

School Psychology students at the University of Massachusetts are trained to be scientists and practitioners. Embedded in this model is the use of scientific methods, valid assessments and intervention strategies used to prevent and resolve problems. Interventions are treated as plausible hypotheses that must be evaluated continuously as part of service provision. Each School Psychology student's course of study is individualized to allow development of special expertise and interests. In addition to required research, practicum, and internship activities, all School Psychology students take coursework from within the following domains: Historical and Educational Foundations of School Psychology; Psychometrics, Assessment and Research Methods; Empirically Valid School-based Intervention and Consultation; and Professional School Psychology.

Typically, students take coursework from faculty across the School's programs (e.g., Early Childhood Education, Special Education, School Counseling, Social Justice Education, and Research in Educational Methods) and from other Departments outside the School (e.g., Psychology, Sociology). The School Psychology program offers a Ph.D. program (110 semester hour credits minimum), and a Master's/Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study program (64 semester credit hours minimum). A doctoral program of study typically takes 4 to 5 years to complete, including a 1-year internship experience. A Master's/CAGS program of study typically takes 3 years, including a 1-year internship experience. Professional practitioners who already have a master's degree and wish to pursue a School Psychology credential can do so through application, admission, and matriculation through the Master's/CAGS program on an individualized basis.

Advising

Upon formal acceptance into the program, students are assigned advisors who help develop initial programs of study and research interests. Students may change advisors during their course of study if they find that their research interests are more closely aligned with another member of the faculty.

Career Opportunities and Job Placement

Faculty assist students in selecting appropriate practicum and internship placements that will help prepare them for their careers. Faculty also advise students regarding potential career opportunities. Well-trained school psychologists are in high demand in public schools throughout the country. Graduates of the School Psychology Program at both the CAGS and/or doctoral level have been highly successful in finding professional employment.

Program Special Information

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst Ph.D. program in School Psychology is one of only four such doctoral programs in the New England region that is accredited by the American Psychological Association. The Ph.D. and M.Ed./CAGS programs are approved by the National Association of School Psychologists and the Massachusetts State Department of Education.

For more information, please contact:

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LICENSURE INFORMATION AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL): The MTEL is required for licensure by the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The test has two parts: the Communication and Literacy Skills (C&LS) test and the Subject area test(s). The University's policy is that:

- Undergraduates must achieve a passing score on the C&LS test as a prerequisite for admission.
- Post-baccalaureate and graduate students must achieve a passing score on the C&LS test in their first semester of study.
- All students must pass the Subject test(s) (if one has been developed for that licensure field) before enrolling in the practicum.

Licensure Application Process: The Educator Licensure Office (ELO) in the School of Education coordinates the licensure application process for all University Educator Preparation program students who have completed all licensing requirements. The ELO provides information to guide students in using the Electronic Licensure and Recruitment system (ELAR), a system in which students apply for educator licenses online. The ELAR system requires a student to apply for his/her license online (including the payment of license fees) and send an official copy of his/her transcript to the ELO in Room 130 Furcolo Hall (being sure that the transcript includes the "Institutional Recommendation for Educator Licensure"). After individuals have applied online, the ELO endorses/recommends candidates for licensure via ELAR. The University Licensure Officer also assists students in completing applications for licensure in other states, as necessary.

Career and Job Search Assistance: The School of Education, in collaboration with Career Services, sponsors a Job Fair for prospective educators. The Job Fair draws school districts from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont and New Hampshire. In addition, Career Services provides information and registration for the Massachusetts Educational Recruiting Consortium (MERC), a recruitment fair attended by school districts from across the nation.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual preference, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical handicap, political belief or affiliation, membership or non-membership in any organization, or veteran status, in any aspect of the admission or treatment of students or in employment.