

UIUC Counseling Psychology Program Handbook

We have adopted the following four central educational goals in our multicultural scientist-practitioner training model: (1) to provide students with a broad education in core areas related to professional psychology; (2) to educate students about a range of sophisticated and culturally appropriate research methodologies and analytic tools necessary for contribution to professional psychology literature; (3) to train students to be skilled in the provision of a wide range of appropriate psychological services; (4) to encourage the adoption of values associated with being a multiculturally competent, socially responsible, and ethical psychologist.

Follow the links below to learn how you will proceed through the program and the requirements and expectations you will meet.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND SEQUENCE

The Counseling Psychology Program (CPP) is a doctoral level program. Students are admitted into the Ph.D. program. A separate [terminal master's degree](#) is offered in the Master's of Science in Mental Health Counseling. Students may be admitted with a prior bachelor's degree or a master's degree. The College of Education requires students who are admitted with a bachelor's degree to obtain a master's in their pursuit of a doctorate degree. Information about the master's and doctoral requirements and specific APA requirements ensuring a solid grounding in psychological foundations of the discipline is included in this section.

To maintain full-time status, doctoral students must be enrolled in 12 credit hours

(without an assistantship) or 8 credit hours (with an assistantship) semesterly. This requirement pertains to both domestic and international students. International students should consult the International Student and Scholar Services website (<https://iss.illinois.edu/students/f1j1/index.html>). Credit hour requirements, and requirements for completion of online courses, vary by visa type for international students—please consult the International Student and Scholar Services website and the student’s advisor.

Master's Degree Requirements

Students admitted with master's degrees from other programs must show evidence of having completed courses comparable to those required by CPP for a master's degree or fulfill those requirements not met. One exception is that students coming in with a master's do NOT need to complete the Philosophical and Social Foundations Courses in Educational Policy Studies requirement. Decisions about course equivalency are made after you have joined the program and completed at least one semester of coursework. Students need to work with their advisors when considering past course work and academic planning. Students admitted with a prior master's degree must complete an Early Research Project. Sometimes a previously completed master's thesis can be approved by the faculty as meeting the requirements for the Early Research Project. A previously completed master’s thesis may need to be presented to a committee to meet the Early Research Project requirement. If a prior master’s thesis is not applicable, a student must complete a new project. The [College of Education's Graduate Programs Handbook](#) contains information about this research requirement.

Required courses for our master's degree are listed below:

- Counseling Psychology Professional and Ethics Seminar - EPSY 510 (4 hours)
- Vocational Psychology Theories and Assessment - EPSY 511 (4 hours) (or exposure to this material by serving as a Teaching Assistant for EPSY 220)
- Research Methods – EPSY 550 (4 hours) *** Students who were enrolled prior to Fall 2023 may take PSYC 563 to fulfill this research methods requirement. Students enrolled after Fall 2023 are required to take EPSY 550.
- Special Topics in Counseling Psychology - EPSY 590BH (1 hour) – First- and second-year doctoral students are required to enroll and attend. Advanced students are encouraged to attend seminar on days when students are presenting research. Note: Advanced students should not enroll in credit hours if they do not plan to attend weekly—this would result in a non-passing grade.
- Professional Skill Development Workshop in Counseling & Psychotherapy (Counseling Pre-Practicum) - EPSY 419 (4 hours)
- Beginning Practicum - EPSY 520A (4 hours) - 2 semesters
- Theories of Psychotherapy – EPSY 420 (4 hours) (or exposure to this material by

serving as a Teaching Assistant for EPSY 420)

- Two statistics courses: Statistical Methods in Education - EPSY 580 (4 hours) and Applied Regression Analysis - EPSY 581 (4 hours) OR Statistics Methods I - PSYC 406 (4 hrs) and Statistics Methods II - PSYC 407 (4 hrs)
- Personality Assessment - PSYC 567 (4 hours)
- Thesis Research EPSY 599 (at least 2 hours)
- College of Education Foundation Requirements
- Psychological Foundations Courses in Educational Psychology (take 4 hours/generally one course)
 - EPSY 400, 405, 407, or 490 for 2 hours plus 2 hours of a previously named course
- Philosophical and Social Foundations Courses in Educational Policy Studies (take 4 hours/generally one course)
 - EPS 400, 401, 403, 404, 405, 410, 411, 412, 415, 420, 421, 424, or 426

Please note that the Philosophical and Social Foundations Courses in Educational Policy Studies are NOT required for students coming in with a master's.

Doctoral Degree Foundations Requirements

In addition to the master's level course work, the following courses are required for the doctoral degree:

- Advanced Practicum - EPSY 520B (4 hours) - 2 semesters
- Dissertation Research - EPSY 599 (4-32 hours)
- Two Advanced Statistics/measurement/methodology courses (these courses are dependent on research area specialization; see [below](#))
 - EPSY 574, 575, 577, 578, 582, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589; PSYC 435, 506, 509; STAT 426; SPED 575, 583
- Diversity Course*
 - Multicultural Counseling - EPSY 515
 - *Other courses may fulfill this requirement but need your advisor's approval.
- Assessment course

- Advanced Seminar in Educational Psychology (Psychological Testing) – EPSY 590 HSF (4 hrs) ***This course is offered over the summer through DRES. Students are advised to take this course in the summer between their second and third years in the program.
- Special Topics in Counseling Psychology - EPSY 590BH (1 hour) – Doctoral students are expected to enroll in this course each semester of their first two years. Advanced students are encouraged to attend on days when students are presenting research but are not required to enroll.
- Internship (EPSY 590E or GC599)

Other courses which are optional and may be of interest to specific students:

- Group Counseling - EPSY 521 (4 hours)
- Supervised Practice in Educational Psychology: Supervision - EPSY 520C (4 hours)
- Psychopathology – EPSY 590A (4 hours)
- Family Therapy – EPSY 590FT (4 hours)
- Treatment of Addictions – EPSY 590AHW (4 hours)

APA Psychological Foundations Requirements

Doctoral students are required to complete, or to have completed, at least one course for each of the following five areas to gain a broad grounding in the science of psychology. The content areas of these courses are required by the American Psychological Association accrediting body because it is critical that professional psychology students receive a broad training in the core foundational areas of the discipline.

The courses listed are examples that meet these requirements. Students are encouraged to work with their advisors to identify (a) courses that meet requirements, (b) courses that overlap with more than one requirement, or (c) previous course work that fulfills the requirements.

History and Systems of Psychology (1 course)

- History and Systems of Psychology - EPSY 492 (4 hours)

Biological Basis of Behavior (1 course)

- Biological Basis of Behavior – EPSY 590 (4 hours)

Cognitive-Affective Basis of Behavior (1 course)

- Adult Learning and Development (also meets the req. for the Master's Personality/Development & Learning Foundation) - EPSY 407 (4 hours)

Social Basis of Behavior (1 course)

- Personality & Social Development - EPSY 405 (also PSYC 465)

Human Development (1 course)

- Personality & Social Development - EPSY 405 (also PSYC 465) (4 hours)

Dysfunctional Behavior or Psychopathology (1 course)

- Supervised Practice in Educational Psychology: Advanced Counseling Practicum - EPSY 520B (4 hours)

Effective Intervention (1 course)

- Supervised Practice in Educational Psychology: Advanced Counseling Practicum - EPSY 520B (4 hours)

Consultation and Supervision (1 course)

- Supervised Practice in Educational Psychology: Advanced Counseling Practicum - EPSY 520B (4 hours)

Evaluating the Efficacy of Interventions (1 course)

- Supervised Practice in Educational Psychology: Advanced Counseling Practicum - EPSY 520B (4 hours)

Counseling Psychology Program Course Planner

The Counseling Psychology Program Course Planner is an excellent tool in which students and advisors work together to create a doctoral plan that meets the student's needs, interests, and goals.

[Course Planner](#)

Other Doctoral Degree Requirements

Teaching Requirement

- In order to provide classroom teaching experience, the CPP requires that sometime during students' graduate career they teach for two semesters via a

paid teaching assistantship (at least 25%). Students typically TA for EPSY 202 (Exploring Cultural Diversity) or EPSY 220 (Career Theory and Practice). If a student elects to TA for another course, the content of the course must incorporate a significant amount of material related to the theories and research on diversity and cultural issues in development and well-being, and the alternative TA assignment must be approved by the faculty advisor.

Professional Membership Requirement

- To help socialize students into the profession of (counseling) psychology, we require students to maintain a membership in at least one professional psychology-related organization while they are enrolled in the program. We encourage students to consult with their academic advisors about which organizations are most consistent with their professional goals. The cost of organizational membership for graduate students is generally nominal and the rewards are numerous, including: subscription to the organizational journal, newsletter, and mentoring, networking and leadership opportunities.

Research Presentation at Counseling Psychology Division Seminar ([EPSY 590BH](#))

Length of Degree and Residency Requirements

We strive to offer quality training and supervision to our students. We thus have a length of degree and residency requirements to promote students' educational and professional development. To obtain the doctoral degree from our program, we require students to complete:

- At least 3 full-time academic years of graduate study (or the equivalent thereof) plus an equivalent of one full-time year of a pre-doctoral psychology internship;
- At least 2 of the 3 academic training years must occur within our program;
- At least 1 year of the 3 academic training years be in full-time residence at our program.
- Full-time enrollment is required for all years enrolled in the program.

Students who want to have one year of previous graduate study count toward their length requirement for the doctoral degree in our program must provide the transcript and course syllabi of their training to their faculty advisor for review. The faculty advisor will then present the request to the CPP faculty for discussion and final approval.

Research Specialization Requirement

Because research is a critical part of the training offered in the Counseling Psychology Program (CPP), it is important to choose research courses carefully and in a timely fashion. The CPP expects you to begin your research training during your first semester in the program, and strongly recommends that you continue taking courses each semester until you have completed the Research Specialization Requirement.

The purpose of the [Ph.D. Research Requirement](#) is to ensure that all Ph.D. candidates in the College of Education have had sufficient coursework to attain proficiency in at

least one research methodology and are able to conduct independent dissertation research.

The [Research Requirements](#) are intended to provide students with both a broad view of research methodologies and the ability to specialize in one area: quantitative, qualitative, mixed method, and interpretive. It is intended that the choice of a focus area will be consistent with a student's dissertation research. All students will take a Foundational Methods Course, one or more basic courses in one or more methodological areas, and advanced courses in a particular area. All students take two (8 credits total) foundational quantitative statistics courses (which are required for the quantitative research area). Students who want to complete a qualitative mixed method, or interpretative research area will take an additional foundational course in that research area. All students will take two advanced courses (8 credits) within their research area specialization. All students will use a two-stage College-level approval process in consultation with their academic advisers. In the first stage of the process, students should complete the [Research Area Approval Form](#), preferably in their first year in the program. After completing all research requirements, students should submit a revised approval form, noting the requirements were completed. Candidates must maintain a B average for all methodology courses.

Early Research Project

All Ph.D. students shall conduct and present an educational research study by the end of their third full year in their graduate programs. This research should be undertaken with the expectation that it will contribute to knowledge in the area of the student's Ph.D. program. In addition, an important objective of the Early Research Project is to familiarize faculty members with new Ph.D. students and their research interests and to examine ways in which these interests might be pursued in the doctoral program.

By the end of the first full year of doctoral study, or soon thereafter, all Ph.D. students should consult with their advisors about the formation of an Early Research Project (ERP) committee consisting of the advisor and two other faculty members. ERP committee members should be members of faculty who have been admitted to the Graduate College. With the approval of the head or chair of a department, up to one member of the committee may be approved from outside the university. Committee members are expected to provide counsel as the early research project develops. Whenever extended work with a faculty member is anticipated, the student should arrange for independent study credit.

The student shall formally present to their committee a written and oral report on the early research project. For the work to satisfy the ERP requirement for the Ph.D., all three members of the committee must approve and sign the ERP form. The completed [Early Research Project form](#) must be filed with the Graduate Student Services Office.

A student who has completed a master's thesis as part of earlier graduate work may, upon the advice of their advisor, present that research as the ERP. After hearing the

presentation, the ERP Committee may accept the written and oral report as satisfying the early research requirement, or the committee may recommend that the work be revised or that another line of inquiry be pursued for the early research requirement.

A student who enters a master's degree program with the intent of subsequently pursuing the Ph.D. is encouraged to discuss with their advisor the possibility of forming the ERP Committee prior to conducting the master's thesis research (Graduate Faculty Action, December 9, 1988). For all early research involving the use of human subjects, approval for use of human subjects or confirmation that human subjects review is not required must be obtained from the [Institutional Review Board](#). A letter showing approval from the Campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) must be provided to the department contact in the Graduate Student Services Office prior to the scheduling of the ERP. Students should begin the approval process eight weeks prior to the ERP.

Dissertation Research

The College of Education's [Graduate Programs Handbook](#) can provide information about the dissertation requirement, [including setting up a committee, scheduling your oral, and depositing your dissertation](#). The Graduate College also has many resources for understanding the thesis/dissertation process including formatting, deadlines, and requirements on their [website](#).

It is important to remain in close contact with your advisor and committee during the process of your dissertation research. In addition, many advisors provide students with opportunities to participate in thesis and dissertation research groups. These research groups provide students with support, new ideas, and a system of accountability that facilitate students' progress throughout their research.

Students are encouraged to pursue their own interest areas for their dissertations. The dissertation requirement is an opportunity for students to pursue their interests while bringing together the theory they have learned and quantitative and methodological skills they have developed in their course of study.

Practicum Placements

Practica in the Counseling Psychology Program is designed to help students integrate theory, research, and practice. These practica cover both theoretical and applied aspects of counseling psychology, and typically include opportunities for assessment, direct interventions with clients, consultation with other professionals, and psychoeducational services.

[Practicum Manual](#)

Beginning practica are designed for students in their first year of practicum training in the CPP, which typically occurs during both semesters of the second year of the program. In beginning practicum a student learns about ethical and legal issues, basic counseling processes, and developing a coherent approach to treatment based on science and theory. Students with previous practica at other universities are normally

required to complete this practicum. Exceptions to this rule must be recommended by the Practicum Coordinator.

Advanced practica are designed for students in their second or higher practicum, which students generally take in their third and possibly fourth year of their program. In advanced practicum, students learn about psychopathology, diagnosis, advanced counseling process, and developing a case conceptualization that utilizes current theory and scholarship. Specialty practica are generally suitable for students in their third or higher placement and sometimes require special course preparation as well.

Practicum consists of three major activities:

(1) Weekly seminars

The weekly 3-hour seminar is taught by one of the Counseling Psychology faculty and typically involves discussion of readings relevant to the practice of counseling psychology, case presentations, writing topic papers as well as client reports, and presentations on clinical topics.

(2) Placement in an agency

Placement in an agency usually involves 10 to 20 hours per week in the setting. Students may carry a caseload of 1 to 10 clients depending on the agency's expectations, student experience, and service requests. Each site offers opportunities to work with different clients and offer different services.

(3) Individual Supervision

Individual supervision is received from a psychologist or other qualified supervisor at the placement agency and involves a minimum of 1 hour per week of face-to-face contact. Additional supervision is available as needed and other staff are available for consultation. Students are expected to audio or video tape at least some of their sessions and review these tapes weekly. Some sites also offer group supervision.

Internship

A full year of a doctoral psychology internship is required. We strongly recommend that the internship take place in an APA-accredited internship facility. Two years of half-time internship may be substituted if necessary.

The internship year is an opportunity for students to apply their clinical skills and make the transition from student to professional. Internship sites differ with respect to population served, setting, and rotations. Students are strongly encouraged to be playful in their practicum placements to gain experience in the areas that will lead to an internship that matches their clinical interests and career goals. Many internship sites also allow students to pursue research activities, but the main focus of this training year is clinical.

In order to apply for internship, a student must have completed his/her preliminary orals (i.e., dissertation proposal). In addition, we recommend that by November of the application year, students collect their dissertation data. To encourage dissertation completion prior to or during internship, students who return to campus to complete their dissertations after internship will be given lower priority than other students for departmental financial support.

In the rare event that a student elects to apply to a non-APA-accredited psychology internship, he or she must submit the [Request for Non-APA Accredited Internship form](#), which can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink. The form must be completed in collaboration between the student and advisor and submitted to the DCT/Chair of the CPP. The request form includes a checklist to assist in assessing the fit of the internship site to be completed by the DCT. The checklist aligns with the criteria provided by the National Registry for Health Service Providers in Psychology. Following these guidelines facilitates the CPP's review of the proposed internship, but compliance with these guidelines does not ensure that a student will successfully achieve licensure (even if the non-APA-accredited internship is perfectly suited to the student's professional goals and preparation for entry-level practice). Deviations from these guidelines are not allowed.

Minimal Acceptable Achievement in the Doctoral Program

Although we expect excellence from our doctoral students, there are minimal thresholds students must achieve to progress through the doctoral program and they include the successful completion of:

- Required courses with a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or above.
 - Note: If a student is nearing a 2.75 cumulative GPA, they will be advised to work closely with their advisor to address grade concerns.
- Thesis or early research requirement
- Qualifying examination – special field
- Qualifying examination – general field
- Two years of practicum experience at an approved training site
- Two semesters of teaching (as a teaching assistant or graduate instructor)
- Preliminary oral examination
- Dissertation
- Doctoral psychology internship at an APA-accredited site

Each year we ask students to complete a [student annual progress review form](#). We use this form to help assess the minimal acceptable achievement in the program; we also consider students' transcript and supervisor evaluations of their teaching and/or clinical work.

Evaluation of Academic Progress

We want each of our students to succeed and excel in the CPP and as professional psychologists. To assist in student learning and professional development, we provide

regular feedback to students about their strengths and areas of growth. This is done through traditional means such as coursework and practica evaluations and is also achieved in other ways. For example, each student is evaluated annually by the CPP faculty as a method of providing students with a fair assessment of their progress in the program and the integration of their knowledge is assessed via the completion of the qualifying examinations.

Student progress is assessed every spring semester. Students complete both an electronic self-evaluation detailing academic progress for the Department of Educational Psychology and a brief [student annual progress review form](#) for the CPP. The advisor and CPP faculty assesses the progress report and provides an evaluation of each student's strengths, areas of growth, and progress in the CPP in writing their advisor. Students also receive a brief review letter from the department. In addition to the annual review, the department requires an official letter about students' satisfactory progress in the program at the end of their second year.

When a decision is made that a student is not making satisfactory progress, the student, the advisor, and the Director of Graduate Studies will be informed in writing by the department. Steps for remediation will be identified and relayed to the student by the advisor in person and in writing. In the rare event that the student is unsuccessful at completing the remediation steps, he or she may be placed on probation and/or dismissed from the program. The student has the right to appeal this decision and should use the [Graduate College's Policy and Procedures on Grievances by Graduate Students](#).

Qualifying Examinations

Qualifying examinations are a College of Education requirement and are usually taken after the completion of the master's thesis, often at the end of the second or third year of study. The intent of the qualifying examination is to assess the student's ability to analyze and synthesize major ideas in the field. For the [Counseling Psychology Program, qualifying examinations](#) consists of two broad fields: General Field and Special Field (see below). Completion of a series of tasks is required for the General Field (i.e., national presentation, manuscript submission, research statement). A written examination is administered for the Special Field. Students have five days to write this examination. A student must complete a master's thesis or early research project before taking the written portion of the examination.

General Field:

- National Presentation of an Empirical Study
- Submission of a Manuscript Describing an Empirical Study or Theoretical Paper to a Peer-Reviewed Journal
 - Note: Students need not be first author on the submitted paper, but need to have been an active and substantive participant in the knowledge generation and writing process.
- Completion of a Research Statement

Please submit this [General Qualifying Examination Form](#) once you have completed all of the tasks listed above associated with the general field.

Special Field:

- Counseling Theory and Practice
- Vocational Psychology
- Psychological Assessment
- Professional Issues

The faculty also expect the students to be knowledgeable about issues of diversity (e.g., sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity/race, religion, gender, disability), which are infused throughout the examination.

The Qualifying Examination readers determine the exam format and the breadth of coverage. Thus, the format (e.g., short answer, long essay, number of questions) and coverage may vary from one exam to the next. For more information see the [Counseling Psychology Program Qualifying Examinations](#) document.

Policies & Procedures

There are a number of campus and College of Education policies and procedures that are designed to protect the interests of graduate students. These policies and procedures cover issues related to grievances, petitions, appeals, and other actions. If there comes a time when a student has a grievance, he or she should consult first with his or her advisor or, if there is a conflict with the advisor, with the Chair and Director of Training. These individuals will assist the student in resolving the issue. For further steps, consult The Graduate College 's grievance policies at [Policy and Procedures on Grievances by Graduate Students](#) document.

For more information about the policies related to obtaining a graduate degree in the College of Education (e.g., student petitions, transferring credit, changing graduate college departments, etc.), please see the College of Education [Graduate Programs Handbook](#). The following two websites are also helpful in finding out more about policies, procedures, and resources available to graduate students: [Graduate Programs Handbook](#) and [Handbook for Graduate Students and Advisors](#).

Fellowship and Funding Opportunities

There are a number of [funding sources](#) for graduate students. For more information visit the following websites:

- <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/edpsy/financialaid/index.html>
- <http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/fellowship/fellowGCstudents.html>
- <http://www.apa.org/students/funding.html>

Diversity Statement

The Counseling Psychology Program and its faculty view issues of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice as core values of being an ethical and competent counseling psychologist. We adopt a pluralistic framework in our training in which multicultural issues are infused throughout our curriculum and training, including coursework, research and practice opportunities, and evaluation. As a faculty, we promote social justice through the adoption of anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-homophobic policies and practices on campus, in the surrounding community, and in our profession. For example, we have taken public stances to support partner benefits for same-sex couples in the university and to condemn the racially offensive campus mascot, which was retired several years ago. The Counseling Psychology Program endorses and operates from the values articulated in the university's [Diversity Values Statement](#), which Counseling Psychology Program faculty provided campus leadership to produce.