

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School Psychology Program

SPSY 672 Schools as Systems Practicum
3 Credits, Fall, 2018
Fridays, Center for Psychological Services, 203B, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

Recommended corequisite: SPSY 671.

University Catalog Course Description

Provides contextual understanding of how districts, schools and classrooms operate; job responsibilities of the school psychologist; role of colleagues in the schools; special education process; various team structures and functioning; MTSS implementation; systems-level initiatives; organizational change; program evaluation; and use of data for school/student improvement. Requires semester-long practicum in the schools shadowing a school psychologist, and weekly class meetings. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a practicum and seminar format. Students spend 8 hours per week in the schools and attend seminar weekly.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Learn about the various roles school psychologists have in schools
2. Understand how school psychologists collaborate with others as parts of teams.
3. Become familiar with roles and responsibilities of other people who work closely with the school psychologist (e.g. administrators, department chairs, reading specialists, speech language pathologists, OTs, behavior specialists)
4. Articulate and describe MTSS and how schools implement services at each level, particularly prevention efforts/tier 1 services for academics and behavior.
5. Become familiar with how schools use data to monitor and measure educational outcomes
6. Identify and understand school-wide practices to promote learning
7. Identify and understand preventative and responsive services in school
8. Learn about the special education eligibility process
9. Become familiar with system change and program evaluation issues in education

Professional Standards

This course contributes to the development of knowledge and skills in the following National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) professional standards:

II. Data Based Decision Making

IV. Direct and Indirect Services: Student level services

Element 4.1 Interventions and instructional support to develop academic skills

Element 4.2 Intervention and mental health services to develop social and life skills

V. Direct and Indirect Services: Systems level services – schools

Element 5.1 school wide practices to promote learning

Element 5.2 preventative and responsive schools

VI. Direct and Indirect Services: systems level services – family school collaboration services

VIII. Research, Program Evaluation, Legal, Ethical and Professional Practice

Element 8.1 Research and program evaluation

Element 8.2 Legal and ethical professional practice

Required Texts

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Brown-Chidsey, R. & Bickford, R. (2016). *Practical handbook of multi-tiered systems of support: building academic and behavioral success in schools*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. ISBN: 9781462522484

Blackboard articles as assigned.

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 9781433805615

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

- Students are expected to spend 8 hours in a school building each week shadowing a school psychologist. This can be broken into 4 hours over 2 days, or all 8 hours can be done in one day. A log will be turned in documenting the hours spent in the school, signed by the supervising psychologist and the student. 30 points.
- Shadowing write-ups: Students are expected to complete a two-page write-up based on the given topic noted in the class schedule. Your writing should include information you have learned in your school by talking with various people in various roles in the building (or in your district). The write-up should be about two pages, double spaced, regular margins, 12 pt font. Include how you sought the information in your school building (e.g. who did you speak to?), what you found out, how it relates to your personal experiences and readings, and your reaction to what you learned (one paragraph should suffice for this last part). 10 write-ups, 5 points each, for a total of 50 points.

- Discussion Leader: Each week student(s) will lead small group discussion of that day's reading. Students will sign up on the first day of class for dates to lead discussion. On that date, discussion leaders will provide a list of discussion points to the group. Lead two discussions, 5 points each (10 points total).
- Final Reflection: Students will be given a vignette about a problem at the school level (e.g. truancy, bullying, school climate, behavior problems, suicide prevention, parent involvement, reading scores, etc.). The goal of this reflection is to think about school-wide preventative and responsive services, and how your school (and school district if applicable) has handled/would handle this issue, given what you've learned over the course of the semester. 5 pages, double spaced. 10 points.

Other expectations

- As this is a seminar, students are expected to attend all classes, come on time, remain throughout class, and contribute regularly and thoughtfully to class discussions.
- Complete readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss the reading as well as your experience in the schools thus far. This is the time to participate fully in related activities, ask questions, engage with your peers, and discover how things are done across schools and school systems.
- Professional dispositions are to be displayed at all times while interacting with the instructor and other students. **Cell phones are not to be used during class. Laptops are to be used for instructional purposes only.**

Log of school hours – 30 pts

Shadowing write ups – 50 pts

Discussion lead – 2x5 pts = 10 pts

Final reflection – 10 pts

Total = 100 pts

Grading Scale (Please note: A course grade less than B- requires that you retake the course. A grade of “F” does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 [B average] to remain in good academic standing.)

A+ = 99-100; A = 93-98; A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82

C = 70-79

F = below 70

Professional Dispositions

As you will be spending time in a school building, it is expected that you will follow NASP ethical standards, all applicable procedures relevant to your school district, and laws regarding school practice.

See also <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Class	Date	Topic	Shadowing write-up suggestions	Readings/Assignment Due
1	8/31	Introduction to course, shadowing expectations and assignments, discussion lead sign up, syllabus		
2	9/7	Leadership and change		Fullan Chs. 1 & 2 Discussion Leaders (1): Nicole
3	9/14	Leadership and change		Fullan Ch. 3 Discussion Leaders (2):
4	9/21	Leadership and change Allies for the school psychologist	With whom does the school psychologist work closely? Identify 2 to 3 people and interview; describe collaboration and relationship, why it's important.	Fullan Ch. 4 Discussion Leaders(2): Shadowing Write-up
5	9/28	Leadership and change Understanding and developing family-school connections	Determine how your school connects with families to support learning (e.g. what activities are planned throughout the year?) Interview parent liaison and learn how he/she works in your school.	Fullan Ch. 5 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing Write-up
6	10/5	Leadership and change Understanding and developing school-community partnerships	Find out what agencies and community service providers exist near your school. How do these agencies assist children/families in the community? How does the school and psychologist partner with them?	Fullan Chs. 6 & 7 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing Write-up
7	10/12	School teams, team members, roles and responsibilities MTSS	What are the teams that operate in your school? Who is on them? Roles? Describe. Describe MTSS in your school	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 6 & 7 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing Write-up

8	10/19	Using data to monitor progress and outcomes in MTSS	Who gathers and analyzes data for MTSS in your school? Describe this process	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Ch. 8 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing Write-up
9	10/26	School wide practices to promote learning and behavior Tier 1	What initiatives/programs exist in your school that support learning and behavior for all students?	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 2 & 4 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing Write-up
10	11/2	Tier 2 and 3 for learning and behavior	What are tier 2 and 3 services for academics, behavior and mental health in your school?	Mellard, et. al. (2010) Shadowing Write-up
11	11/9	Special Education eligibility process	Describe how this process works in your school and who plays what role in this process	Shadowing Write-up
12	11/16	SIPs and using data for continuous school improvement	Meet with and administrator or someone on the SIP team. What goals do they have for their school, and how are they measured?	Shadowing Write-up
13	11/23	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Holiday		
14	11/30	Program evaluation/outcome effectiveness	What are your district's goals for school psychology, how are they communicated, implemented and measured?	Shadowing Write-up
15	12/7	Wrap up, course evals		Final reflection due

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .