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

SPSY 672-001 Schools as Systems Practicum
3 Credits, Fall, 2022
Thursday 1-3:40, Thompson L003
Fairfax Campus

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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.

Course Delivery Method
This course will be delivered face to face using a discussion format.

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, counselors, social workers, 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 leadership, 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/domains:

Domain 1. Data Based Decision Making
Domain 2. Consultation and Collaboration
Domain 3. Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports
Domain 4. Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions
Domain 5. School Wide Practices to Promote Learning
Domain 6. Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools
Domain 7. Family, School and Community Collaboration
Domain 8. Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations
Domain 9. Research and Evidence Based Practice
Domain 10. Legal and Ethical and Professional Practice

Required Texts

Murphy, C. & D'Auria, J. (2021). *The influential school leader*. Taylor & Francis. ISBN: 9780367415112 (Note: this book is online in the library)

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

Blackboard articles as assigned.

Recommended Text
American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author. ISBN: 9781433805615

Course Performance Evaluation
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

- Log: Students are expected to spend 6 to 8 hours each week shadowing a school psychologist. The 6 to 8 hours do not have to be completed in one day. The log should include an entry for each day in the school. Include the date, arrival/departure time, total hours spent in the school that day, and a brief summary of your activities. Total hours overall must be included at the end of the log, and it must be signed by the supervising psychologist and the student. You may create an excel sheet to document your activities and calculate your hours. 30 points.

- Shadowing journal: Students are expected to complete a journal entry based on their school experiences that week. There are suggested topics for the journal entry in the class schedule each week. However, going with a topic that is out of sequence for your journal entry is acceptable. Your journal entry should include a brief summary of what you did and a response to the topic prompt for that week. The journal entry should be about two pages, double spaced, regular margins, 12 pt font. For the response to the topic prompt, think about how you sought the information (e.g. who did you speak to?); what you found out; how it relates to your personal experiences, readings, and class discussion; and your reaction to what you learned. 8 write-ups, 5 points each, for a total of 40 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. Discussion leaders will provide a list of discussion questions and points to the group; this should be posted online in the discussion forum. 10 points total.

- Final Reflection: This reflection focuses on Domain 5 of the NASP practice model. It challenges you to think about the practices that your school implements (at a system level) to increase the effectiveness and supportiveness of the overall learning environment. Some examples of these practices include universal screening, school-wide discipline practices, a system of instructional support for teachers to improve student learning, social emotional learning initiatives, depression screening and suicide prevention, etc. Consider what large-scale issues or problems your school has experienced. What systemic initiatives have taken place, and why were they needed? What difficulties did your school face and how did they manage/solve the problem? The ultimate goal of this reflection is to think about how your school or district has identified and approached a system-wide issue, what they have done or attempted to do to address it, and if the approach is working (or not). Students are to relate their reflection to readings and class discussion. Three to five pages, double spaced. 20 points.

Other expectations
- As this is a discussion based seminar, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive 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 journal (8 entries, 5 pts each) = 40 pts
Discussion lead = 10 pts

Final reflection = 20 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 = 93-100; A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
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/polices-procedures/

Class Schedule

Class/Date	Topics	Readings/Assignment Due
1 8/24	Introduction to course, syllabus, shadowing expectations and assignments, discussion lead sign up	
2 8/31	Perspectives within the school system	Murphy & D'Auria chs. 1&2 Discussion Leader: Nicole
3 9/7	Conditions for change	Murphy & D'Auria chs. 3&4 Discussion Leader:
4 9/14	Conditions for change Describe your practicum placement	Murphy & D'Auria chs. 5&6 Discussion Leader:

5 9/21	Leadership guidance Role of the school psychologist What is the role of your school psychologist? What is the balance of job responsibilities? Allies for the school psychologist With whom does the school psychologist work closely? Interview that person, and/or social worker and school counselor and describe collaboration and relationship, why it's important.	Murphy & D'Auria chs. 7&8 Discussion Leader:
6 9/28	Case studies in leadership and change Administration: Interview an administrator, what is their understanding of school psychology/SP role? How do they work with the school psychologist? What is easy, what is difficult about being a leader? What lessons did you learn, and what ideas can you adopt as a school psychologist?	Murphy & D'Auria chs. 9&10 Discussion Leader: Shadowing journal #1
7 10/5	**Today's class is online. Login info will be provided.** Prevention in the schools What types of prevention efforts exist in your school? What initiatives/programs support learning and behavior for all students? Think about academic, mental health, behavioral.	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 1, 2, 3 Discussion Leader: Shadowing journal #2
8 10/12	Risk factors, community partnerships Core instruction and learning standards (learning goals) What are the risk factors that affect your school's population? How does your school address this? How does your school build relationships in the community? Describe some of the learning objectives that have been targeted for improvement in the school.	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 4, 5 Discussion Leader: Shadowing journal #3

9 10/19	Teams in schools Use of data What teams exist in your school? (e.g. grade level, content specific, local screening, school improvement) How is data managed and used by your school teams?	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 6, 7, 8 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing journal #4
10 10/26	Effective instruction for all students Observe a class and interview a gen ed teacher Describe the method(s) of instruction that you observe.	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs.14, 15 Discussion Leader: Shadowing journal #5
11 11/2	ELLs How does your school support ELLs? Reaching critical mass Does the data in your school suggest 80% success at Tier 1? Why or why not?	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs.16, 17, 18 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing journal #6
12 11/9	Universal screening and problem solving Describe the universal screening that is used in your school. How are children identified if not succeeding? What is the problem-solving process in your school?	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 19, 20 Discussion Leader: Shadowing journal #7
13 11/16	Progress monitoring, using data, and Tier 3 Describe your school's process from screening to sped eligibility. How do children move across tiers, and how are these decisions made? What services are provided at these tiers? What are your district's goals for school psychology, how are they communicated, implemented and measured?	Brown-Chidsey & Bickford Chs. 21, 22, 23 Discussion Leaders (2): Shadowing journal #8
11/23	NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK	
14 11/30	Wrap up, final thoughts and discussion of experiences	**Final reflection due 12/7** **Logs due 12/14**

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 https://ds.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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/.

- 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/ .

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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