

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY**

*Educational Specialist*

**Application Deadlines: ED.S. – December 1.**

The primary goal of the School Psychology program is to provide rigorous theoretical and clinical preparation of professionals who promote the learning and development of individuals in relation to schooling. Ours is a supportive professional community characterized by rich collaboration among students and faculty. While primarily psychological in nature, the program is housed in MSU's College of Education, a national leader in educational innovation and reform.

Our program is distinguished by:

- ❖ A developmental and contextual understanding of children, their families, and the schools, communities, and cultures within which learning occurs
- ❖ An emphasis on the promotion of children's competence and well-being, prevention of learning and mental health difficulties, and intervention as primary roles for professional practice
- ❖ An emphasis on understanding systems and systems change for the promotion of children's well-being and the benefit of schools and communities
- ❖ The integration of theory, research, and practice in professional preparation including the infusion of practice experiences in core coursework beginning with the first semester of graduate study

We offer the Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees in School Psychology. The doctoral program is accredited by the American Psychological Association and the National Association of School Psychologists. Our graduates typically work in school settings with students, teachers, and parents to assist students who have learning, behavioral, and emotional difficulties. Students in the Ph.D. program also work in clinical or university settings.

### **EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST DEGREE**

The Educational Specialist program prepares individuals to work as school psychologists in school settings and leads to Michigan certification as a School Psychologist. The program includes a planned sequence of coursework in educational psychology and supporting disciplines, complemented by practica and internship experiences.

The program includes a minimum of 60 semester credits beyond the bachelor's degree. Students who have earned a master's degree in a related area (which includes prerequisites to the internship) at an approved institution within the last five years must take a minimum of 30 credits beyond the master's degree.

Students typically take 30 semester credits in the major area of School Psychology, 12 semester credits in related disciplines (usually Psychology or Family and Child Ecology) outside the College of Education, 9 hours in one or more areas of education other than the major area, and 9 credits in practica and internship. The maximum required credits would be in the 60-63 hour range depending on the students' choice of specific elective courses.

## **Admission**

The applicant should have a minimum of 15 credits in education and psychology at the undergraduate level, preferably including child development, theories of personality, abnormal psychology, and the education of exceptional children. Students must also possess skills in computer technology. Applicants are expected to have a bachelor's degree in psychology, special education, or a closely related field. Individuals with master's degrees in psychology or a related field may also apply for admission. We give preference to applicants who have experience working with children, youth, or families in schools or community agencies. An on-site admissions interview is required.

In addition to meeting the university and college requirements for admission, applicants must also satisfy the following criteria:

1. Professional goals and interests are compatible with program objectives and philosophy.
2. Minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (B) in the last two years of undergraduate coursework and a minimum grade-point average of 3.5 in coursework taken at the master's level or beyond.
3. Strong personal recommendations from individuals who are knowledgeable about your academic performance and/or ability to work effectively with people.
4. Satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination. (The College requires that the GRE must have been taken no longer than five years prior to the application for admission.)
5. Writing sample.
6. Evidence of effective interpersonal skills.
7. A teaching certificate is not required, but evidence of experience with children, youth, and families in school, community, or agency settings is desirable.

Applicants should provide a written statement to the effect that they will be available to complete an internship of 1200 clock hours (two 600 clock hour blocks across 30 weeks). To be eligible for employment in states other than Michigan, a greater number of internship hours may be required.

Applications for admission are due **December 1**. Applications are reviewed only once each year, and students are admitted to the program for Fall semester only.

## ***Degree Requirements***

Candidates for the specialist degree in school psychology must achieve a grade-point average of not less than 3.2 during the second half of their program (the last 30 credits) and not less than 3.0 for all work after the bachelor's degree.

### **1. School Psychology**

Students are required to complete several core courses in school psychology, including:

CEP 884	Roles and Functions of School Psychology
CEP 880	Cognitive Assessment
CEP 881	Personality Assessment
CEP 883	Psychology of Classroom Discipline
CEP 885	Behavior Disorders in Children
CEP 886	Psychological Assessment and Intervention I
CEP 887	Psychological Assessment and Intervention II
CEP 888	Theories of Child Psychotherapy
CEP 889	Consultation in School Psychology
CEP 918	School-based Psychological Interventions

(All of the courses in this area have practicum experiences infused with the course requirements.)

### **2. Educational Psychology**

Students are also expected to acquire important foundational knowledge in learning, development, research, measurement, and assessment via the following courses:

CEP 903	Cognitive Development Across the Lifespan
CEP 904	Social-emotional Development Across the Lifespan
CEP 822	Approaches to Educational Research <b>or</b>
CEP 930	Perspectives on Educational Inquiry

## Courses in Related Areas

Students also complete coursework in counseling, psychology, education, and/or family and child ecology, including:

(2) Electives: Two additional electives including a course on families and a course on learning.

Family courses may be selected from the following:

Fall:	FCE 801	Family Ecosystems
	FCE 845	Foundations of Family Study
Spring:	FCE 814	Parent Education (odd yrs.)
	FCE 8432	African American Families
	FCE 847	Theories of the Family
Summer:	FCE 845	Foundation of Family Study
	FCE 891	Topics: Families with Special Needs Children

Learning courses may be selected from the following:

Fall:	CEP 805	Learning of Mathematics
	CEP 806	Learning of Science
Spring:	CEP 819	Prosem in Psych. Bases Literacy
	CEP 902	Learn School Subjects

### 3. Practicum and Internship

In addition to the course requirements and practicum experiences infused in selected, required courses, candidates for the Specialist degree in School Psychology also complete a semester-long Practicum (CEP 894B) and a 1200 hour Internship (CEP 893B) in approved settings. At least 600 of the 1200 Internship hours must be completed in a school setting.

### 5. Comprehensive Exam.

All students are required to pass a comprehensive examination which is given in August at the beginning of fall semester. No more than two retakes are allowed. The exam, which is usually given at the same time as when doctoral comprehensives are administered, covers the following areas: principles of measurement, individual assessment, behavior disorders in children, interventions, learning disabilities, consultation, professional roles and functions, ethics, and law.

### 6. Residency Requirement.

Students are also required to complete a residency requirement of enrolling in at least 6 credits on campus for two consecutive semesters. All requirements must be completed within five calendar years from the time that the student first enrolls. Credit will not be allowed for courses taken more than five years prior to the granting of the degree.

For more information, please visit our web sites:

School Psychology Ed. Specialist Program: <http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/schpsych/>

College of Education: <http://www.educ.msu.edu>

## **Program Questions & Answers**

- Q** *I was wondering if your program makes exceptions to the policy of needing 15 Psychology credits undergrad. I took 2 classes in Psychology as an undergrad. I have also been teaching for the past three years. Could I be considered for your program?*
- A** We would still consider our application, but you would probably need to take some additional courses in psychology to meet the prerequisites for courses in our program.
- Q** *Can I successfully complete the program on a part time basis?*
- A** Students who take 4 courses each semester complete the Ed.S. degree in three years, including a year long internship. Because of the high number of courses, we encourage students to be full-time. We do have a few students who have completed the program on a part-time basis (taking two courses each semester). Most come with a Master's degree, and they have fewer courses to take overall. The most challenging aspect is completing the internship, as you would have to be able to complete 1200 hours on a full-time basis. At this time, we do not have financial support for Ed.S. students, so this should figure into your decision.
- Q** *What are the requirements for the GREs. Which tests are required? Is a Psychology GRE subject test required as well? Do you know if it is required for Masters Programs in School Psychology at other schools?*
- A** We do not require the subject matter test in Psychology for admission to the Ed.S. program in school psychology. This requirement varies however, among school psychology programs, so you will need to check with each one.
- Q** *Is a teacher's certification a requirement for admission into the program? Do you offer a terminal masters program as well as the doctoral program?*
- A** A teaching certificate is not required, but we strongly recommend experiences working with children and youth in educational, community, or clinical settings. We offer a terminal Ed.S. (educational specialist degree), which is the entry-level degree for school psychology.
- Q** *Approximately how many people are accepted in to the School Psychology Program each year? Also, I am not a College of Education student. Will I still be able to apply to the program?*
- A** We receive a minimum of 35 applications just for the Ed.S. program. In 2002 we enrolled 5 students in the Ed.S. program and 6 in the Ph.D. program.
- While experience in education is helpful, you do not need to be a student in education. A strong background in psychology is important. If you can take any courses in special education or learning and motivation, those would be helpful. Having experience in schools either as a volunteer or through work experiences would also strengthen your application.
- Q** *Can I get a bachelors in Education and then a Masters in this program?*
- A** The program is a graduate program only and requires a bachelor's degree in psychology or education. We offer two degrees, the Ed.S., which is 60 semester credit hours, or the Ph.D. in School Psychology.

- Q *I currently have a Bachelor's degree with a Psych minor. I would like to obtain an advanced degree but at this point and time I cannot stop working to go to school full time. I was reading through some of the info on the web site and I understood it to say that you could enter the program with a Master's degree. Would that be an option for me at this time? Maybe get a Master's degree and then apply for the School Psych Program? Also, is any part of the internship a paid position in any way?*
- A If you enter the program with previous graduate experience we take that into account in planning your program – in other words, some courses may “transfer” to our program from other graduate studies. Most internships are not paid but we are working with school districts to develop paid placements.
- Q *I am curious to know if classes are offered at our extension sites or if all study is done in East Lansing. I work full time and would need to continue to do so. Are the courses offered in the evening?*
- A Nearly all of the coursework for the Ed.S. and Ph.D. in school psychology need to be completed on campus. There are some courses that are offered from time to time in Birmingham at our off-campus center. We are currently developing several on-line courses that will allow students to take some of the required courses on the web. Some of our courses are at 4 p.m. and later, but students have practicum requirements where they are in the schools for 4 to 8 hours per week. The Ph.D. program is a full-time program which means that students must take at least 6 credits per semester. Most students enroll in 12 credits each semester. We do have some students who work full-time and are doctoral students in our program.
- Q *What fulfils the criteria of the writing sample?*
- A There is no specific format. We are looking for evidence of skills in academic writing and analysis. Therefore, a formal writing sample is most informative (e.g., a research paper, literature review, research report). The writing sample could be a paper that you've written for a course (doesn't need to be a psychology paper and we certainly don't need to see the grade!).
- Q *Is there a special form for letters of recommendation?*
- A No but the letters should be written on letterhead.
- Q *I am a psychology major and haven't taken any education courses, although I have a lot of experience in schools. Is that still acceptable?*
- A Yes. Most of our students are psychology majors with experience in working with children, youth, and/or families. You would be able to take additional courses in education if needed.
- Q *I was a little unclear about the written statement stating that we could complete an internship of 1200 clock hours. What does that include?*
- A Simply that you “understand and are able to complete an internship of 1200 clock hours.”
- Q *What is MSU's program centered around?*
- A It is focused on the comprehensive role of psychologists to provide preventive, competence promotion across intellectual, academic, mental health, and socio-emotional areas of functioning.
- Q *Does MSU accept transfer credits into the School Psychology program?*
- A Up to 10 credits may be accepted if approved by the faculty and not more than 5 years old.

## PERSONAL GOAL STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

In the initial paragraph of your personal statement clearly specify the degree program to which you are applying (PhD or EdS) and the rationale for this decision. This rationale should include a description of your vision of the opportunities afforded by the degree you are seeking and an overview of your goals upon completion of the program.

The remaining paragraphs of your personal statement should concisely and effectively provide support for your interest in the MSU program and the skills and competencies that you think would fit well into the program's philosophy. Discuss how your academic and personal background prepares you to be successful in this rigorous and demanding graduate program. This should include a discussion of your undergraduate field of study, your performance within these courses, evidence of your experience with children, youth, and families across multiple settings, and other information to help the committee in its review of your application for admission.

As a general guide, the committee has found that applicants typically need two to three pages to succinctly communicate how their past experiences are likely to lead to future success within our program. Your personal statement should close with a brief summary of your background and goals.



DEPARTMENT APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSION
School Psychology

Application Deadlines:
Ed.S. - DECEMBER 1.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM

Application for: Fall Semester 20

Type or Print Legibly!

Ms.
Mrs.
Miss
Mr.

Last Name First Name Middle

PID (if previous MSU student) Birth Date

E-mail Address:

Permanent mailing address:

Phone (include international code)

Day:
Evening:
FAX:

Temporary (current) mailing address:

Phone:

Day:
Evening:

Last Date to receive mail at this address:

FAX :

Check program for which you are applying:

School Psychology
Ed.S

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM**

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) – Date taken or planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Scores (if known): Verbal \_\_\_\_\_ Quantitative \_\_\_\_\_ Analytical \_\_\_\_\_

TOEFL Score (Total) \_\_\_\_\_ **(THIS IS A REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS)**

Do you have teaching experience? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in years & level: K-12 \_\_\_\_\_ community college/2 year \_\_\_\_\_ 4 year Institution \_\_\_\_\_

**Degrees earned (or in progress)**

<u>Institution and location</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Field of Study-Major/Minor</u>	<u>Date earned/expected</u>
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Undergraduate GPA last 2 years:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Overall Undergraduate GPA:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Overall Graduate GPA:

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSION  
School Psychology**

**Application Deadlines:  
Ed.S. – DECEMBER 1.**

**DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM**

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**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS REQUIRED:**

(Please use this as a personal checklist)

**University Admissions Application**

Application Fee:  
\$50.00

**Departmental Application**

**Statement of Goals**

Statement Format is on the website

**Two (2) official copies of transcripts**

from all previous institutions attended.  
These must be sent directly from the  
institution; please contact the  
Registrar's Office at the institutions  
you attended for appropriate  
procedures and fee information.

**Three Letters of Recommendation**

Must be submitted on letterhead  
stationery of recommender's school or  
company.

**Graduate Record Examination**

Information on testing may be obtained  
from the:

MSU Counseling Center  
Testing Office  
207 Student Services Building  
East Lansing, 517-355-8385

**Vita or Resume**

List professional experience, awards,  
honors, publications, presentations,  
professional affiliations, and  
professional development activities.

**Writing Sample**

A writing sample is required for all  
Ph.D. and Ed.S. programs.

**[Conviction Disclosure Form](#)**

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**PLEASE SEND ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS TO:**

Ayodele Webb, Admissions Secretary  
CEPSE  
Michigan State University  
447 Erickson Hall  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1034 USA  
[cepadmis@msu.edu](mailto:cepadmis@msu.edu)