

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Q. I ALREADY HAVE A GRADUATE DEGREE IN A RELATED FIELD TO SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY AND ONLY NEED A FEW ADDITIONAL COURSES AND SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP HOURS TO MEET THE STATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS. CAN I FULFILL THESE REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT BEING FORMALLY ADMITTED TO THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM?

A. In general, all students need to be formally admitted into the school psychology program in order to complete coursework leading to certification as a school psychologist. In some cases, an individual needs only a few courses (based on a transcript review conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education) to be certified as a school psychologist in Maryland and some of these courses may be completed as a non-degree-seeking student. (Prior to receiving credentialing as a certified school psychologist, you will also need to earn a passing score on the Praxis II examination in School Psychology). Please note that most assessment courses, all practicum courses, and internship are available only to students accepted into Towson University's School Psychology program. This is in part due to University policy that 700-level courses are restricted to graduate students enrolled in a graduate program (rather than taking courses as non-degree students) and because we cover students engaged in all field experiences under our University's liability insurance. Thus, we require that anyone engaged in field experiences have passed the necessary coursework prior to beginning practicum and internship.

Q. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM?

A. A full-time student can complete the program in three years, including summer sessions. During the third year students complete a full-time internship, which is usually a paid position.

Q. CAN I CONTINUE TO WORK FULL-TIME WHILE ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM?

A. The Graduate Program in School Psychology enrolls students on a full-time basis only; thus it is not possible to work full-time and complete program requirements. As a full-time student, you will complete four courses during Fall semester and four courses during Spring semester of the first and second years. You are also required to take two three-credit courses during the summer session between the first and second year of the program. While most students work part-time during their first two years of the program, students do not work full-time. Typically, students are able to work 20 hours per week and still complete program requirements. Third year students are enrolled in a full-time internship and thus are not able to work in addition to this 35-40 hour per week experience.

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM ON A PART-TIME BASIS?

- A.** While students may not begin the program on a part-time basis, the faculty is aware that, in unusual circumstances, financial, family, or other constraints prevent them from continuing full-time study. In order to ensure that students can fully benefit from their graduate education, students completing the program on a part-time basis must take two courses per semester. They must also take at least one course during each summer and must complete both Practica over two consecutive semesters (Fall and Spring of the same academic year), during the year immediately prior to beginning the internship. They must adhere to all internship guidelines as stated in the Internship Handbook. The Internship may be completed on a part-time basis over two consecutive years. Part-time students may take more than two courses per semester.

Q. CAN I APPLY FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF ADVANCED STUDIES (CAS) BY ITSELF IF I ALREADY HAVE A MASTERS DEGREE IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY?

- A.** If you have already earned a master's degree in school psychology, courses from a previous degree in school psychology must be equivalent to courses in the School Psychology program in order to be accepted toward fulfilling requirements. Courses that have been taken for the previous M.A. will be reviewed for content and currency by the program director. Additionally, you must earn a minimum of 30 units in our School Psychology program to graduate with the CAS, as well as complete the culminating internship. Other requirements will be determined on an individual basis.

Q. CAN I APPLY FOR THE CAS BY ITSELF IF I HAVE A MASTERS DEGREE IN A FIELD OTHER THAN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY?

- A.** Aside from students already possessing a master's degree in school psychology (as described above) you cannot receive either the Master's or the CAS by itself. Our program is a 66-credit program that results in a Master's degree and Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS). (You may also hear this referred to as the "Specialist Level"). We do not admit students for the CAS, alone, or the Master's degree, alone; all 66 credits must be completed. If you have a Master's degree or have completed coursework in School Psychology, some of the classes may be waived at the discretion of the program director, but you will still be required to complete a total of 66 credits. Classes that were part of an earned degree (except for a degree in school psychology) cannot be used toward completion of the MA/CAS.

Q. IF I HAVE A MASTER'S IN A FIELD OTHER THAN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, HOW WILL MY PREVIOUS CREDITS IN PSYCHOLOGY BE COUNTED?

A. Classes that were part of an earned degree cannot be used toward completion of the MA/CAS; therefore, although a few courses may be accepted in lieu of required courses, you must complete 66 credit hours to earn the MA/CAS in school psychology. Although you may have taken a course that has a similar title to one required in the school psychology program, our content is specific to children and adolescents in the school setting. If you have taken a course that you think fulfills a course requirement, a syllabus and course description will need to be submitted for approval by the director. If the course is approved, you will be allowed to take an elective in its place, but must still complete 66 credit hours. Coursework that is outdated in the judgment of the director will need to be retaken.

Q. MAY I TAKE CLASSES BEFORE I AM ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM?

A. In general, school psychology courses requiring special permits may not be taken unless you have been accepted formally into the program. However, a few courses are required by the program that are more “general” in nature and do not usually require special permits. These courses may be taken by non-degree-seeking students and, upon admission, will be credited toward completion of the program. Prospective students take these courses at their own risk; taking them does not guarantee admission into the program. However, please know that taking courses prior to official acceptance into the program will not expedite your graduation date. This is because of the need to take particular courses in sequence and the need to complete a two-semester practicum sequence prior to the internship. Taking courses before entry into the program will allow lighter loads during some regular semesters, and perhaps will allow fewer courses during the summers. Examples of such courses are:

Advanced Experimental Design (687), and with permission from the instructor, Exceptional Child (733).

Q. I HAVE TAKEN ONE OR MORE OF THE PROGRAM OF STUDY REQUIRED COURSES. CAN I TRANSFER THOSE COURSES AND NOT BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THEM AT TOWSON?

A. All course transfers must be approved by the program director. A maximum of 12 transfer credits may be applied to the degree.

In addition the course must:

- be from a regionally accredited university
- be considered a graduate course at its home university
- be a graded course (rather than a Pass/Fail course)
- not have been used in a conferred degree
- fit into the seven-year time period for completion of a master's degree

And the student must:

- earn a B or better in the course
- supply an official transcript (not a grade report) that shows the course, date taken, and grade
- supply an official course description

Q. UPON GRADUATING FROM THE PROGRAM, FOR WHAT CERTIFICATIONS WILL I BE ELIGIBLE?

- A.** The program meets NASP training standards and is NASP approved, so graduates are eligible for national certification (NCSP) upon passing the Praxis Examination in School Psychology (a national examination offered through the ETS). Graduates of the program are eligible for Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) certification as a school psychologist upon passing the Praxis Exam in School Psychology with the score set by MSDE. In order to become certified in other states, it is necessary to have graduate transcripts reviewed by that particular State Department of Education unless that state accepts the NCSP credential.

Q. AM I ABLE TO APPLY TO THE TOWSON SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM IF I WAS NOT A PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR AS AN UNDERGRADUATE?

- A.** Yes. As long as you have completed at least 21 credits in Psychology, including our five prerequisites, you are given equal consideration for our program.