

**To: Council on Graduate Studies**

**From: Dr. Assege HaileMariam**

**Date: DRAFT March 16, 2015**

**RE: Completion of the Masters in School Psychology in Route to the Specialist in School Psychology**

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### **Introduction and Rationale**

School psychology programs in Illinois such as Northern Illinois University grant the Master of Science in Psychology in route to the Specialist in School Psychology. Because Eastern Illinois University does not currently grant MS in Psychology in route to the Specialist degree, the Program and the Program's graduates are both disadvantaged. The Program's graduates are disadvantaged on the pay scale when they enter the profession. Although our graduates earn 77 credit hours, employers do not recognize the degree as Master's plus; therefore, Eastern's graduates must enter their first position at a lower compensation rate. The Program is disadvantaged because candidates now recognize that their entry-level salary will be lower when completing the stand alone Specialist degree at Eastern, and as a result Eastern is losing highly qualified applicants to other programs. The completion of the MS in School Psychology in route to the Specialist in School Psychology will increase the program's competitiveness for top applicants and provide candidates who complete the degree with maximum opportunities for entry-level compensation upon degree completion.

### **Request**

Offer the Masters in School Psychology in route to completion of the currently offered Specialist in School Psychology at Eastern Illinois University.

### **Proposed Program**

#### **Masters in School Psychology**

**Program Mission:** The Masters in School Psychology is required as the first step toward completion of the Specialists in School Psychology which is the requirement for the preparation of competent professional school psychologists who serve children, teachers, and parents in an age of societal, educational, and professional change. Candidates who successfully complete the MS in School Psychology at Eastern Illinois University have the option to continue on and complete the Specialist Program or may consider the alternative of pursuing a doctoral degree.

**Accreditation:** The school psychology program is fully approved by the Illinois State Board of Education and fully recognized by the National Council Accreditation of Teacher Education. Students are guaranteed state certification upon successful completion of the specialist's degree and the state licensure examination. In addition, the program has been approved by the National Association of School Psychologists, which guarantees candidates a national certification upon passing the examination for the Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSP).

**Admission Requirements:** To be eligible for degree candidacy, applicants must meet all of the requirements for admission to the Graduate School (see “Admission to Graduate Degree and Certificate Programs”). Prior to consideration for acceptance, the applicant must provide evidence of admission to the Graduate School and submit test scores for the GRE (general) test. In addition, the departmental application and three letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant’s abilities and promise in the area of school psychology should be provided to the School Psychology Committee. A personal statement of reasons for wanting to enter the profession, related strengths and experiences, as well as long-term goals, is also required. If the following entrance requirements are met, the applicant may be eligible for acceptance into the MS in School Psychology Degree Program in route to the Specialist in School Psychology Program.

- A 3.0 (4.0 scale) grade point average in all undergraduate courses and a 3.25 in undergraduate psychology; **OR**
- A composite (verbal, quantitative, analytical writing) score at the 50th percentile or higher on the Graduate Record Exam - General Aptitude Test;” **OR**
- A score at the 50th percentile or higher on the psychology portion of the Graduate Record Exam.

**Program Prerequisites:** Applicants must present a transcript from an accredited institution showing completion of the following courses: introductory psychology; statistical Methods; child psychology/Human Development; Abnormal Psychology, Learning or Behavior analysis/Modification.

Candidates with a Master’s Degrees other than in psychology will be considered for admission as long as they meet the admission requirement and program prerequisites described above.

**Degree Requirements for the Master of Science in Psychology:** Degree requirements include those outlined for the Master of Science degree by the Graduate School see “Requirements for the Master’s Degree”). The Master of Science in School Psychology requires a minimum of 35 semester hours at the graduate level.

**Psychological Foundations: Total Credits: 9**

- PSY 5170 - Theories of Learning. Credits: 3
- PSY 5300 - Advanced Child Development. Credits: 3
- PSY 5500 - Child Psychopathology. Credits: 3

**Professional School Psychology: Total Credits: 3**

- PSY 5030 – Ethics, Law, Diversity, and Professional Practice of School Psychology. Credit 3

**Psychological Assessment: Total Credits: 10**

- PSY 5020 - Advanced Measurement Principles. Credits: 3
- PSY 5021 - Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Assessment Credits: 3
- PSY 5022 - Individual Intellectual Assessment. Credits: 4

**Research and Statistics: Total Credits: 7**

- PSY 5710 – Research Design and Statistical Analysis I. Credits: 4
- PSY 5711 - Research Design and Statistical Analysis II. Credits: 3

**Intervention: Total Credits: 3**

- PSY 5040 - Theories of Psychotherapy. Credits: 3

**Field Experience: Total Credits 3**

- PSY 5890 – Field Study or Practicum. Credits: 1 to 12

## **Residency**

A minimum of 21 semester hours of the non-thesis option is required in residence. Residence is defined as credit for courses taught by Eastern Illinois University faculty. Also, a minimum of 22 semester hours of the non-thesis option must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

## **Time Limitation**

The final 32 semester hours of the approved program must be completed within a six-year period preceding the date of the awarding of the degree.

## **Academic Progress**

Students must maintain a minimum of a 3.25 grade point average for retention in the program. Failure to maintain a 3.25 average during one academic semester will result in probation during the following term. Failure to achieve a 3.25 average during the probationary term will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

## **Comprehensive Examination**

Candidates in the Master's in School Psychology are required to pass the comprehensive competency test administered by the program faculty.

## **Practicum/Internship**

Early in the student's program, a 150-clock-hour placement in a classroom is made to acquaint the student with the operations of a public school.

## **Thesis**

Thesis is not required for the Masters in School Psychology Degree. Thesis is required for candidates who advance into the Specialist in School Psychology Program.

## **Graduate Assistantships**

Candidates for the Masters in School Psychology will compete for Graduate Assistantship similar to other programs.

### **Academic Standing for Graduate Assistants**

Graduate assistants must meet the GPA, enrollment and other requirements in order to continue assistantship eligibility.

In summary, candidates who enroll in the Master's in School Psychology program are individuals who are pursuing a specialist or doctoral degree in school psychology, i.e., their goal is to earn at least the entry level degree, Specialist, to practice in the public school setting. Therefore, the requirements for the Master's program are identical to the requirements for the Specialist's program, up to 35 credit hours. The majority will continue with the Specialist program, and a few will exit the program with a Master's in School Psychology to pursue a doctoral degree.

## **The Specialist in School Psychology**

**Program Mission:** The Specialist in School Psychology is the requirement for the preparation of competent professional school psychologists who serve children, teachers, and parents in an age of societal, educational, and professional change. Candidates who successfully complete the Master of Science in Psychology at Eastern Illinois University have the option to continue on and complete the Specialist Program or may consider the alternative of pursuing a doctoral degree. The Specialist or its equivalent is recognized by the National Association of School Psychologists and most states, including Illinois, as the appropriate entry-level degree for the practice of school psychology.

**Accreditation:** The school psychology program is fully approved by the Illinois State Board of Education and fully recognized by the National Council Accreditation of Teacher Education. Students are guaranteed state certification upon successful completion of the specialist's degree and the state licensure examination. In addition, the program has been approved by the National Association of School Psychologists, which guarantees candidates a national certification upon passing the examination for the Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSP).

**Admission Requirements:** To be eligible for degree candidacy, applicants must meet all of the requirements for admission to the Graduate School (see "[Admission to Graduate Degree and Certificate Programs](#)"). Additional admission requirements include successful completion of the Master of Science in School Psychology at Eastern Illinois University. In an unusual situation where the above criteria are not met, the applicant may submit a petition to the school psychology committee for review. Probationary admission may be granted based upon the individual circumstances set forth in the applicant's petition.

### **Degree Requirements**

Degree requirements include those outlined for the specialist's degree by the Graduate School (see "[Requirements for the Specialist's Degree](#)"). The Specialist's Degree in School Psychology requires a minimum of 66 semester hours at the graduate level that may include 35 semester hours completed for the Master of Science in Psychology and minimally 31 additional semester hours toward completion of the Specialist Degree. The plan of study leading to state certification and the specialist's degree includes the following:

#### **Psychological Foundations: Total (minimum) Credits: 12**

##### ***Specialist Requirements***

- PSY 5550 – Neuropsychology: Brain-Behavior Relationships. Credits: 3

##### ***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5170 - Theories of Learning. Credits: 3
- PSY 5300 - Advanced Child Development. Credits: 3
- PSY 5500 - Child Psychopathology. Credits: 3

#### **Professional School Psychology: Total Credits: 6**

##### ***Specialist Requirements***

- PSY 6970 – Seminar: Special Topics in School Psychology. Credits: 3

***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5030 – Ethics, Law, Diversity, and Professional Practice of School Psychology. Credits: 3

**Psychological Assessment: Total Credits: 13**

***Specialist Requirements***

- PSY 5023 – Psycho Educational Assessment of Preschool Children. Credits: 3

***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5020 - Advanced Measurement Principles. Credits: 3
- PSY 5021 - Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Assessment Credits: 3
- PSY 5022 - Individual Intellectual Assessment. Credits: 4

**Research and Statistics: Total Credits: 10 to 13**

***Specialist Requirements***

- Specialist's Thesis. Credits: 3 to 6

***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5710 – Research Design and Statistical Analysis I. Credits: 4
- PSY 5711 - Research Design and Statistical Analysis II. Credits: 3

**Intervention: Total Credits: 12**

***Specialist Requirements***

- PSY 6050 – Behavior Therapy with Children & Adolescents. Credits: 3
- PSY 6660 – Theories and Application of Psychological Consultation. Credits: 3
- PSY 6980 – Psychotherapeutic Interventions in the Schools. Credits: 3

***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5040 - Theories of Psychotherapy. Credits 3

**Field and Clinical Experience: Total Credits: 21**

***Specialist Requirements***

- PSY 6890 – Advanced Practicum in School Psychology-Assessment. Credits: 3
- PSY 6890 – Advanced Practicum in School Psychology-Consultation and Counseling. Credits: 3
- PSY 6999 – Internship in School Psychology. Credits: 12

***Previously Completed MS Courses***

- PSY 5890 – Field Study or Practicum. Credits: 3 (1 to 12)

**Residency Requirement**

The residency requirement is fulfilled by enrollment for at least eight semester hours in a single semester or at least six semester hours in each of two terms (semester or summer sessions of at least eight weeks duration).

**Time limit**

The final 42 semester hours of the approved program must be completed within a six-year period preceding the date of the awarding of the degree.

**Academic Progress**

Students must maintain a minimum of a 3.25 grade point average for retention in the program. Failure to maintain a 3.25 average during one academic semester will result in probation during the following term. Failure to achieve a 3.25 average during the probationary term will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

**Comprehensive Examination**

Students must complete the Illinois State Board of Education licensure and the National Association of School Psychologists national certification examinations prior to graduation.

**Practicum/Internship**

Four types of field/clinical experiences are built into the program. Early in the student's program (Master's program), a 150-clock-hour placement in a classroom is made to acquaint the student with the operations of a public school. This is followed by a semester of clinical assessment practicum in the school system for 150-clock hours. During the final semester of course work, students are enrolled in a field practicum in which they complete 150 hours in the schools practicing consultation and counseling skills. This practicum is taken concurrently with consultation and psychotherapy classes. The field experience component culminates in a full school year internship (a minimum of 1,200 clock hours) in a site which meets the requirements set forth by the Illinois State Board of Education. During this time the student works under the direct supervision of a practicing school psychologist in a school setting and receives periodic supervision from a faculty member of the school psychology program.

**Thesis**

Each student must complete an acceptable empirical research project following departmental and University guidelines. The final approval of the project rests with the student's graduate committee. Regulations governing the writing of the thesis are available in the Graduate School Office.

**What are the qualifications of those who will teach the required courses?**

All faculty hold a doctoral degree, and they have been approved by the Graduate School to teach at the graduate level.

**What are the program's learning objectives? How will you assess them?**

The program learning objectives are based on the 10 Training Standards of the National Association of School Psychologists, presented below. These learning objectives are assessed at the classroom level by faculty (grades), in practica by faculty and field supervisors (ratings), portfolio evaluation by faculty (ratings) and student self-assessment, thesis proposal/defense by faculty (ratings), internship by faculty and field supervisors (ratings), and state (Illinois School Board of Education) and national (National Association of School Psychologists) licensure examination results. The program has a culture of assessment that has been recognized by Provost's Assessment Award and the National Association of School Psychologists. The following standards are aligned with course/practica/internship objectives:

## 10 NASP Training Standards

**STANDARD 1: Data-Based Decision Making and Accountability:** School psychologists have knowledge of varied methods of assessment and data collection methods for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes.

**STANDARD 2: Consultation and Collaboration:** School psychologists have knowledge of varied methods of consultation, collaboration, and communication applicable to individuals, families, groups, and systems and used to promote effective implementation of services.

**STANDARD 3: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills:** School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence based curriculum and instructional strategies.

**STANDARD 4: Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills:** School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health; behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills; and evidence-based strategies to promote social–emotional functioning and mental health.

**STANDARD 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning:** School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote academic outcomes, learning, social development, and mental health.

**STANDARD 6: Preventive and Responsive Services:** School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response.

**STANDARD 7: Family–School Collaboration Services:** School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children’s learning, socialization, and mental health; and methods to develop collaboration between families and schools.

**STANDARD 8: Diversity in Development and Learning:** School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role differences; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity.

**STANDARD 9: Research and Program Evaluation:** School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation methods sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings.

**STANDARD 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice:** School psychologists have knowledge of the history and foundations of school psychology; multiple service models and methods; ethical, legal, and professional standards; and other factors related to professional identity and effective practice as school psychologists.

Source: NASP (2010): <http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010standards.aspx>.