



Psychology Department
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, Illinois 61920-3099

Office: 217-581-2127
Fax: 217-581-6764
Web: <http://psych.eiu.edu/>

EA-CLAS-21-22 Effective Immediately
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TO: Council on Graduate Studies

FROM: Dr. John Mace, Chair

SUBJECT: Executive Action

DATE: August 16, 2021

EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2021

Request to make the GRE admission requirement optional for the School Psychology graduate program. This procedure was in place temporarily this past year (AY 2020-2021; see attached.)



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EXECUTIVE ACTION REQUEST

TO: John Mace, Chair
FROM: Margaret Floress, School Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator
DATE: August 16, 2021

ACTIONS REQUESTED

To make the GRE admission requirement optional for the School Psychology graduate program.

Rational: This practice was put in place during the 2020-2021 school year due to limited testing center availability related to COVID-19 and due to applicant financial hardships related to COVID-19. Our applicant pool was much larger this past year, possibly due to the pandemic and possibly due to making the GRE optional. Most school psychology programs in Illinois (there are 8 other programs) moved to a GRE optional application process this past school year (2020-2021) and plan to continue this practice in the future. Therefore, we hope that continuing to make the GRE optional will lead to a larger applicant pool and allow our program to continue to be competitive with other school psychology programs in Illinois.

Effective Date: Fall 2021

Current Catalog Copy:

Program Overview: The primary purpose of the School Psychology Program at Eastern is to educate and prepare candidates to become competent school psychologists who support school children to achieve their learning potentials and to develop adaptive psychological and social skills. The School Psychology Program at Eastern (referred to as the Program) is a three-year graduate program, specifically designed to meet the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) training and accreditation standards, leading to the Specialist in School Psychology degree. Training is also specifically tailored to meet licensure requirements established by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Accreditation: National Association of School Psychologists, Illinois State Board of Education, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

Admission Requirements: Admission to the program is competitive and requires sound undergraduate academic preparation (see prerequisites below). Requirements include GPA (>3.0), GRE (>50th percentile on the verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing), a strong and well thought out personal statement, and strong letters of recommendations that speak to the applicant's potentials for success in graduate school and personal qualities.

Required	Highly Recommended
Introductory Psychology	Psychological Measurements
Experimental Psychology/Research Methods	Adolescent Psychology
Statistical Methods	Cognitive Psychology
Child Psychology	Exceptional Children
Abnormal Psychology	Theories of Personality or
Learning, Behavior Therapy or Behavioral Analysis	Theories of Psychotherapies

To be considered for acceptance into the Program, applicants must also be admitted to Eastern's Graduate School. Admission to the Graduate School does not guarantee admission to the program; candidates must meet the School Psychology Program admission criteria to be admitted to the program.

In an unusual situation where the above criteria are not met, the applicant **may** submit a petition to the program committee for program admittance. Admittance **may** be granted based upon the individual circumstances set forth in the applicant's petition. In rare cases, a student may be admitted provisionally. For example, a candidate with good credentials may lack prerequisite course(s). In such a case, the candidate is admitted if he or she is able to fulfill the prerequisite course the summer prior to the beginning of the fall semester. In other cases, a candidate who shows the potential for success in graduate school, but does not fully meet the admission criteria, **may** be given the opportunity to join the program. Regardless of the reasons for the provisional admission, the student will be closely monitored and supported. The student's status will be reviewed at the end of the first semester and a determination to retain or exit the student may be made at any time during the first year (see Retention and Program Exit below).

Proposed Action for Admission (below is consistent with procedures used during the AY 2020-2021):

Admission Review Procedures

Step 1: School Psychology Faculty will individually review school psychology applications based on the following admission criteria: a) undergraduate academic preparation (see six prerequisite courses), GPA, personal statement, letters of recommendation, and application questions (e.g., additional languages, research interests).

Step 2: The school psychology committee will meet to collectively create a) a list of applicants to offer admission (including graduate assistantship), b) a list of applicants to offer admission, c) a list of applicants for a waitlist, and d) a list of applicants who are denied admission.

Step 3: The school psychology faculty will examine whether any of the students denied submission submitted GRE scores. If a student who was denied admission submitted GRE scores, those scores will be evaluated to determine whether the scores are inconsistent with other application materials to the extent where the committee would offer the applicant admission or place that applicant on the waitlist.