School Psychology Assessment Plan

The School Psychology Program and its students are evaluated using a variety of assessment tools, with a number of these being required by the National Association of School Psychologists. Below is a description of the assessment methods utilized.

National Praxis Exam in School Psychology

The completion of the Praxis School Psychology test #5402 is required for all candidates and must be taken prior to beginning internship. The purpose of this test is to assess knowledge of the professional practice at the entry level in the field of school psychology.

Content Knowledge / Course Grades

The USU school psychology program has designed its curriculum, including practicum and internship experiences, to be consistent with the NASP graduation preparation standards and elements. Learning objectives for each of the 22 required courses plus thesis credit requirement summarizes content knowledge and/or skills that adhere to the NASP standards and program goals and objectives. Level of candidates’ mastery of the learning objectives in each course is summarized by a letter grade. Specific assignments vary among courses and are primarily determined by course instructors although core faculty review course syllabi and provide input to instructors to ensure program requirements are met.

Practicum Field Supervisor Evaluation

As part of all practica field supervisors complete a Practicum Evaluation Form to assess students' knowledge, skills and professionalism at the end of each semester. For practica in the schools (Psy 6810 and Psy 6380) the supervisor rates the performance level exhibited by a supervisee for each item using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Below expected level, 2 = Beginning practicum level, 3 = Immediate practicum level, 4 = Advancing Internship readiness level). The scale is designed to monitor student growth in performance in professional activities over time to match the increasing training of knowledge and skills covered in courses each semester. Thus, students are expected to increase rating scores that indicate improved applied knowledge and skills during professional experiences each semester. A core school psychology faculty also conducts two visits per year with each practicum student and his/her supervisor to review student progress. For the Psy 7380 practicum completed in a non-school setting, the standard clinical evaluation form is used where skills are rated on a 1 to 5 scale with the expectation that most students will receive ratings of 3 (average for level of training).
**Practicum Portfolio Evaluations**

Students complete a Practicum Portfolio at the end of the two-semester Practicum in School Psychology course (Psy 6380) consisting of six work samples: psychoeducational assessment report, intervention case study report, culturally responsive practices in-service presentation, ethical decision making case reflection, family support reflection, and professional self-assessment. Each portfolio product is evaluated by the course instructor (a core faculty) against specific mastery criteria. The purpose of this portfolio is to ensure that students produce work samples as expected with support before requiring students to more autonomously produce similar internship portfolio work samples.

**Internship Field Supervisor Evaluation**

As part of the internship courses (Psy 6950 Fall and Spring semesters of third year), field supervisors complete the USU School Internship Evaluation Form to formally assess the students’ knowledge, skills and professionalism at the end of each semester. This is conducted after several informal evaluations that are used to support interns and help plan for appropriate intern experiences. These include student check-ins, several class meetings, and at least two site contacts with interns and field supervisors. Similar to the practicum procedures, the field supervisor completes and discusses the evaluation with the student before sending the completed evaluation form to the school psychology program coordinator. The field-based assessment for school-based internship is similar to the practicum evaluation to assess a candidate’s skill, knowledge and professionalism levels across all NASP standards with more complex and diverse supervised experiences. One difference on the internship form is that the supervisor rates the performance level exhibited by a supervisee for each item on the evaluation form using a seven-point Likert scale to monitor student expected growth in performance and required supervision over time. The Likert scale on the internship form is: 0 = insufficient opportunities or data to make rating on an item at this time, 1 = below expected level, 2 = beginning practicum level, 3 = intermediate practicum level, 4 = advancing internship readiness level, 5 = proficient Intern Competence and 6 = independent professional competence. The school psychology program coordinator also conducts at least two visits per year with each practicum student and his/her supervisor to review student progress.

**Internship Portfolio Evaluations**

Core Faculty assessments of candidate’s performance abilities are conducted via a review of an Internship Portfolio that is required in the Psy 6950 Internship in School Psychology (6 credits) course. This portfolio is designed to assess candidates’ pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills, and disposition based on work samples completed during internship that require integration and application of all completed coursework. Candidates complete and submit the following work samples, and a vita, to the program faculty course instructor at the
end of the internship year: (1) psychoeducational assessment report, (2) positive academic outcome case study, (3) positive behavioral/well-being outcome case study, (4) consultation evaluation, (5) culturally responsive practices in-service presentation, (6) family support case study, (7) ethical decision making reflection, and (8) professional self-assessment. Other portfolio work samples are direct products of interns’ work in schools during internship. These products are evaluated by the core faculty instructor based specific mastery criteria

**Impact on Child Learning**

A minimum of two Consultation/Intervention Cases are completed by students and evaluated by School Psychology faculty to evaluate the degree to which students are able to work with a school system and families to provide evidenced based practices that produce measurable positive outcomes. Each Intern completes one case showing improved academic outcomes and a second case showing improved social-emotional and behavior outcomes during the School Psychology internship (Psy 6950). Interventions are implemented to address individual, small group, or classwide academic and/or behavioral, social or emotional problems that may be due to a skill and/or performance deficit. At the end of the internship year, students turn in a written report for each case study as part of the Internship Portfolio. The case studies are evaluated by a School Psychology faculty member using the Scoring Guide.

**Thesis**

Students are required to successfully complete a research-based thesis and enroll in a minimum of 6 semester hours of thesis credits (Psy 6970). The purpose of the thesis is to provide an opportunity for students to apply research knowledge gained in the program to better understand or resolve important needs within the professional practice of school psychology. The thesis research project involves the selection of a problem, a review and critical analysis of the literature and relevant research, the development of a sound research plan and methodology, data collection, and interpretation and discussion of findings.