

Frequently Asked Questions

We have compiled a list of frequently asked questions. They are grouped under the headings **FAQ about Applying to the Program** and **FAQ About the Program and Faculty**. Garnet-colored words are hyperlinked to more information. Often within this document we reference the Student Handbook, which can be found **here**, under “Materials and Downloads”. We hope that you find this document helpful!

FAQ About Applying to the Program

How do I have information about the program (brochure, application, etc.) mailed to me?

In our efforts to conserve the environment we no longer print hard copy brochures or send information to applicants by mail. Information can be found on line at: **The Combined Doctoral Program in Counseling Psychology and School Psychology website**

How can I check the status of my application?

You can check the status of your application at **https://admissions.fsu.edu/StatusCheck/**. If chosen for an interview, applicants will be invited via e-mail. Admissions decisions are sent out via e-mail on or before April 15th. If you have any further questions please contact Terri Wehnert, Graduate Admissions Coordinator at **twehnert@fsu.edu**.

What are the requirements/procedures for applying as an international student?

Information for international applications can be found at the following website: **https://admissions.fsu.edu/international/admissions/graduate.cfm**. More information can be found in the “Admission Procedures” section of the Student Handbook online. TOEFL scores are required for International applicants who are non-native English speakers. Finalists will be encouraged to arrange either an in-person interview or an interview via Skype.

Can I visit the program prior to my application's acceptance?

Official interviews are granted by invitation only. However, applicants are not discouraged from visiting the campus. Applicants should become familiar with faculty research interests (available on the web site) and directly contact the faculty member(s) with whom they would like to work, with any questions or expressions of interest. The application requires that you identify 1 or 2 program faculty whose research is most compatible with your own research interests.

How does the Department handle previous graduate work completed by an applicant?

Please refer to the “Transfer of Credits” section in the Student Handbook.

How many students do you admit?

Each year we receive more than 80 applications and typically admit between 7-9 students per year.

What are the average GREs and GPAs of successful applicants?

During the past several years, the average GRE score (verbal + quantitative) has been around 1140; undergraduate GPAs are around 3.7. However, please note that the metric for the GRE has very recently changed and these average scores do not reflect the new scale.

If I took GREs many years ago, do I need to retake them?

No, if you have the scores located on a previous transcript, they will be accepted. However, if it has been more than five years and you do not have acceptable proof, you will need to take the test again. ETS purges their files every five years and you will no longer be able to retrieve the scores from them.

Do I need to take the psychology GRE exam?

No, we do not require applicants to take the psychology GRE exam. You are required to take the GRE verbal, quantitative and analytical sections. The program considers your best scores, if you have taken the exam on more than one occasion. If you feel that your scores do not accurately reflect your potential for doctoral work, we encourage you to re-take the GRE exam.

Can I apply if I don't have an undergraduate degree in psychology?

Yes, as long as you have a background in psychology, education and/or a related discipline, including statistics. Please refer to the section, "Admission Prerequisites" in the Student Handbook

What is the deadline for application?

Application materials must be submitted no later than January 15th. However, it is advantageous to complete and submit your application early since the faculty begin reviewing materials and making preliminary admit decisions as early as November 15. We recommend submitting your completed application no later than December 15. Make sure that you have identified 1-2 program faculty whose research is most congruent with your own anticipated research.

What do you give the most weight to in evaluating an applicant's academic background? Research experience? GRE scores? Work experience?

Each application is looked at as a whole; a low undergraduate GPA, for instance, might be balanced by very high GRE scores and very strong recommendation letters and unique work experiences. A key component of your application is the Statement of Purpose. Here, you discuss your professional aspirations, interest in the program, and identify ways in which you are a primer match for the program. . Your Statement of Purpose is an excellent way for the program faculty to get a feel for who you are, how well you would fit into the program and how well your research interests match with the one or two program faculty who you have identified. A template for completion of your Statement of Purpose can be found online at:

<http://www.coe.fsu.edu/content/download/52943/435192>.

What are the demographic characteristics of your doctoral students?

Approximately 65% of our students are female, almost 40% are of ethnically diverse heritage, and roughly 55% enter the program with prior graduate study. The focus of previous education is quite diverse, including psychology, criminal justice, business, music, and the sciences. Prior to

admission, many students have had experience in both applied and scholarly endeavors in psychology and education, and volunteer experiences in the human services field.

Can I enroll in the doctoral program on a part-time basis?

No. The program is designed for at least three years of full-time study. Most students remain in full-time status throughout their academic and internship years. Also, applications are accepted only for a fall matriculation.

What kinds of previous experiences are required for admission?

We look for undergraduate students who have some service learning, volunteer or related work experience (e.g., hotline counselor, teacher, residence hall advisor, camp counselor), and master's students with counseling, teaching, and/or school psychology experience. Research experience (and a passion for research) is highly desirable. If you have not done an independent research project but have helped out on a research team, include that information in your application.

How do I find out if a specific professor is taking new students next year?

It is recommended that applicants become familiar with faculty research interests and directly contact the 1 or 2 faculty members with whom they would like to work, with any questions or expressions of interest. During this initial contact, it is appropriate to inquire whether the faculty member is planning to take a new student in the coming year.

What about financial aid?

We are aware that graduate tuition is expensive. The great majority of our students receive some form of financial assistance in the form of scholarships, and/or teaching or research assistantships within the college or university. Information can be found at the following links: [Financial Aid](#) and [Scholarships](#). The application pool is very competitive. Recipients of these awards over the past few years have typically had GRE scores of 1,250 or higher and undergraduate GPA of 3.6 or higher. We are proud to report that over the past five years, all of our doctoral students have received some form of financial aid.

FAQ About the Program and Faculty

How long will the program take?

If you enter with a bachelor's degree, you should be prepared for a minimum of five years of academic study, including a year of internship. If you are starting with some previous graduate study, the answer to this question will depend on how closely your prior study matches our curriculum (see the Student Handbook), and on the sequences of remaining coursework. Experience with previous students entering with substantial graduate coursework in clinical, counseling or school psychology suggests that the minimum time necessary to complete the program is three years of academic study and one year of internship. Students often take 6 years to complete the program in order to take advantage of local clinical practicum opportunities, publish one or more research articles as coauthor with their major professor, and to complete the dissertation.

What is the theoretical orientation of your faculty?

The theoretical orientation of the program faculty is diverse, with representatives or proponents of behavioral, cognitive behavioral, dynamic, trans-theoretical, systems, humanistic, and interpersonal points of view. The program respects a scientific approach to clinical practice, and strongly endorses the application of evidence-based interventions.

What exactly is a combined program?

Since the 1970's, the American Psychological Association (APA) has accredited "combined" programs. A combined doctoral training program in psychology prepares general practice, primary care, and health service psychologists who are competent to function in a variety of professional and academic settings and roles. Florida State University's APA-accredited combined program achieves this goal by intentionally combining/integrating education and training across the two practice areas of counseling psychology and school psychology. The combined program at Florida State is one of ten program accredited by APA nationally as a "combined" program.

What are the strengths of your program?

One unique aspect of our program is that, as a combined program, students are provided a wide breadth of training and intentional exposure to two psychological practice areas, counseling psychology and school psychology, which are woven throughout the curriculum. We feel that the combined training program model prepares our students for a wide variety of professional and academic positions, increasing their career flexibility and marketability.

Program faculty are very dedicated and committed to training. The program supports the highest standards of quality assurance, engages in the ongoing assessment of program outcomes with an eye toward program improvement, and is actively self-reflective. The program faculty embrace a mentorship philosophy in which each doctoral student works closely with her/his major professor from early on in their graduate career. Career planning begins first semester of Year 1 with graduate students participating in a weekly new student orientation seminar led by the DCT.

The program embraces a scientist-practitioner training model and provides multiple opportunities for clinical and research experiences. The program strives to offer a balance of training opportunities that fit well with the scientist-practitioner model, is congruent with each student's individual career goals, and prepares them for competitive internship placements and a successful career in professional psychology.

With regard to research experiences, the curriculum and opportunities to participate in faculty research provide for early and rich exposure to and experience in the science of psychology. Many students present their research at regional and national meetings and publish their research in peer review journals.

With regard to clinical experiences, students are exposed to a variety of primary, campus-based practicum sites devoted to clinical training, service and research. Information for some of the on-campus practicum opportunities can be found at the following websites:

[Career Counseling Center](#)

[Adult Learning Evaluation Center \(ALEC\)](#)

[Multidisciplinary Center](#)

These sites offer a rich variety of clients and clinical experiences. Students also are exposed to clinical training in a variety of off-campus, community and school based practicum settings. In these off campus practicum sites, students obtain diverse clinical experiences under the supervision of licensed psychologists and other licensed health care providers.

How does this program differ from the clinical psychology program offered by the Department of Psychology at Florida State University?

Both our program and the psychology department's program are APA-accredited doctoral programs designed to train psychologists who can combine scientific inquiry with clinical practice. Our program is a combined counseling psychology and school psychology program designed to prepare students for the practice of counseling psychology, school psychology or both specializations in a variety of settings, and to contribute to the advancement of the profession through research and scholarly contributions. The program offered by the Department of Psychology is in clinical psychology. We encourage you to learn about the clinical psychology program in the Department of Psychology directly from their website and admissions materials.

What is the relationship between the doctoral program and the master's programs?

We have several Master's/EdS degree programs, [School Psychology](#), [Mental Health Counseling](#), [Rehabilitation Counseling](#), and [Career Counseling](#). On the program web site you can access the [Master's/EdS Student Handbook](#). The handbook describes in detail these programs.

The doctoral and master's programs have separate admissions. In terms of admissions, applicants must fill out a separate application for each program to which they would like apply. Students enrolled in the doctoral program do not earn a "master's-along-the-way." There is some overlap in coursework, although students in the doctoral program are required to take advanced courses that are not available to students in the master's program.

Students in the Master's/EdS programs can apply to the doctoral program, although there is no assurance or guarantee that they will be admitted. Approximately 2-3 students each year from the Master's/EdS program are admitted into the doctoral program.

How successful are students at obtaining internships?

Our students have been very successful at obtaining funded offers from among the most prestigious internship sites nationwide. Most students are matched with one of their top choices. Internship sites range from university counseling centers, to hospitals, to community mental health centers, to forensic centers, and in some instances, to school districts for students specializing in school psychology. The program strongly encourages students to apply and attend an APA-accredited internship.

What kinds of jobs do graduates get?

The majority of our graduates work in clinical or school settings, although quite a few have taken academic positions. In a recent alumni survey, we found that graduates of the combined program held employment in the following settings:

- Medical center
- VA hospital
- Child psychiatric facility
- Military
- University counseling center
- Academic teaching position
- School district/system
- Police department
- Campus multidisciplinary center
- Government agency
- Consulting
- Private practice

Will I be eligible for licensure?

Graduates of our program are eligible for licensure as a psychologist in Florida. Florida has statutes which specify the specific requirements for licensure as a psychologist and school psychologist (see Chapter 490: Psychological Services; www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index).

Will I be able to be licensed in other states?

Although the program was designed with Florida regulations in mind, graduates of the program have had no difficulty successfully applying for licensure in other states. Many of our graduates are licensed and practicing as psychologists in other states. The program encourages applicants to check the specific licensure requirements for any state that they might wish to practice as a psychologist in.