DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Tufts UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM

PRACTICUM
2017-2018
The Practicum

To the Student:

This handbook is intended to address some initial questions you may have regarding field placements. It directs you to a number of forms you will use to document your practicum. Please become familiar with these forms since they will play an important part in your application for licensure. If you have any questions that the handbook does not address, please contact Erin Seaton, Coordinator of Field Placements.

To the Supervising Practitioner:

This handbook is intended to familiarize you with our field-based training policies and procedures. It contains a number of forms that you will complete for your student. The student will return these forms to Erin Seaton at the Tufts Department of Education. If you are a first-time supervising practitioner, then you must complete a W-9 form and return it to Carla Walsh.

You may also mail completed forms regular post to:

Tufts University, Department of Education
Attn: Erin Seaton
Paige Hall
Medford, MA 02155

If you have any questions regarding field placements or the material in this handbook, please contact Erin Seaton at (617) 627-3926 or ee.seaton@tufts.edu.
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Practicum Year Checklist of Forms

- Practicum Agreement
  (Due September 15; submit to University supervisor)

- Professional Learning Plan
  (Due upon completion of first site visit; submit to the University supervisor)

- Candidate Assessment of Performance
  (Due upon completion of final site visit; submit to University supervisor)

- Fall Semester Grade and Mid-year Evaluation
  (Due December 15; submit to University supervisor)

- Spring Semester Grade and Year-end Evaluation*
  (Due April 30; submit to University supervisor)

- Field Placement Log
  (Due June 30; submit to Erin Seaton)

- Student Evaluation of Practicum
  (Due June 30; submit to Erin Seaton)

Return all forms via your student to the University Practicum Supervisor, e-mail or regular mail to:

Tufts University, Department of Education
Attn: Practicum Supervisor
Paige Hall
Medford, MA 02155

To download the forms listed above, visit
http://ase.tufts.edu/education/resources/student/forms.htm
INTRODUCTION

The Tufts University School Psychology Program is committed to training students to provide high quality psychological services in educational settings. Toward this end, our curriculum provides basic course work in psychological and educational foundations, as well as in the development of skills in assessment, intervention, consultation, and research. Academic instruction is carefully integrated with a minimum of 1950 hours of field-based experience over the three years of the program. These field experiences are a central component of the training students receive and allow students to apply acquired knowledge and professional skills in a field-based setting.

The sequence of field-based experiences is designed as a primary vehicle for the implementation of problem-solving practices throughout the three years of the program. Field sites are seen as a key arena where academic learning, careful observation, and critical thinking interface to produce a developing knowledge base in school psychology. Field experiences are carefully sequenced to maximize their integration with academic course work, and to meet the teaching and learning objectives of the program. These specific objectives, as outlined below, are designed to meet the overall goal of proficiency in problem-solving practices. To achieve this goal, students will demonstrate:

- Address the needs of children, families, and schools with respect to issues of race, class, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities.
- Use problem-solving practices leading to data-based decision making and evidence-based interventions at the individual, group, systems, and policy levels.
- Demonstrate skills in the areas of assessment, collaborative problem-solving, prevention, mental health counseling, behavioral intervention, and consultation that are culturally informed.
- Evaluate research evidence (from the professional literature and from their own practice) for intervention planning, program development, and evaluation, with an awareness of the social and political context of all research activity.
- Engage in ethical, legal and responsible practice encompassing a moral and ethical commitment to addressing inequities in schools.
- Integrate coursework, field experiences, research skill, and technology into a developing knowledge base that informs practical solutions to school based problems.
FIELD EXPERIENCES

Pre-practicum

In the first year, students complete a pre-practicum (1 day per week) in a school setting of no fewer than 150 hours supervised by a licensed school psychologist. Concurrently, they enroll in a weekly supervision seminar at the university focused upon culturally competent practice (ED 221: First Year Seminar in School Psychology Practice).

While the purpose of the seminar is to monitor students’ progress as they begin to develop a knowledge base in school psychology, the pre-practicum aims to expose students to the culture and operation of schools, and to familiarize them with the roles and functions of a school psychologist. Students are also able to develop basic skills in observation, assessment, and intervention in a manner that is closely coordinated with coursework. This is accomplished gradually over the course of the year. Initially, students “shadow” their supervising practitioners as they perform their daily activities. Students may observe classrooms, team meetings, parent conferences, teacher consultations, individual assessments, group and individual counseling, and administrative meetings. In conjunction with these observational activities, students may be asked to complete course related assignments in their introductory assessment courses. Facilitation of these assignments by the supervising practitioner is greatly appreciated.

After a period of observation, students begin to participate more directly as deemed appropriate by the supervising practitioner. As the year proceeds and the student’s abilities develop further, they begin to function somewhat more independently. For example, students might co-lead a group with a supervisor, collaborate in screenings and assessments of children for purposes of problem-solving or progress monitoring, or begin an individual counseling case.

Upon completion of the 150-hour pre-practicum and thirteen courses, students are awarded the masters degree.

Practicum

During the second year of the program, students enroll in ED 231-232: Practicum in School Psychology. The practicum requires a minimum of 600 hours in a school setting under the supervision of a licensed school psychologist. Students are at their field site on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for approximately 20 hours per week from September through the end of the school year. When students begin the practicum, they will have completed 12-13 courses in theory and practice, as well as having accumulated at least 150 hours of supervised pre-practicum experience.

The aim of the practicum is for students increasingly to perform the roles and functions of a school psychologist under close supervision as they further develop skills in assessment, intervention, and consultation. Students work in both regular and special education settings, and are expected to develop an awareness of the special needs of persons with exceptionalities. Every effort is made for students to have experiences with children of different racial, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
The practicum is completed in conjunction with ongoing coursework in assessment, intervention, consultation, human exceptionalities, behavior management, professional issues, and childhood emotional disorders. All practicum students are supervised concurrently at the university in small groups for one and one half hours per week and in their field sites for 1-2 hours per week. The practicum also familiarizes students with the roles, responsibilities, and functions of other pupil service personnel, and orients students to the organization and operation of multidisciplinary teams and schools.

**Internship**

In the third year, students enroll in ED 257-258: Internship in School Psychology. This course is a 1200-hour full-time internship, which is typically completed in a school setting under the supervision of a licensed school psychologist. However, 600 hours of the internship may be completed in a clinical setting under the supervision of an appropriately licensed psychologist. The internship is seen as a capstone experience during which the intern begins to function independently as a school psychologist as he or she demonstrates increasing competency in assessment, intervention, and consultation over a wide range of situations.

Internship sites must be approved the faculty of the school psychology program. Approval is contingent upon a site’s capacity to adequately provide the full range of experiences necessary to meet the program's training objectives for interns. The professional learning plan for interns is a means by which the intern, field supervisor, and university supervisor collaboratively can determine and monitor the intern’s professional development. These training goals are informed by the NASP Practice Model and are clearly established prior to the beginning of the internship year. Progress toward achieving the training goals is assessed at the mid-year and year-end site visits. Each of the three site visits during the internship year includes the intern, the supervising practitioner, and the university supervisor (or designate). The professional learning plan also provides the basis for the intern's evaluation of the training experience. Upon completion of the internship and the third year of the program, students will be awarded the Ed.S. and will be eligible for the initial license as a school psychologist in Massachusetts. Students must meet all other provisions established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for licensure including, but not limited to, passing a physical examination.

**NOTE:** The forms in this handbook include the material necessary to adequately document the satisfactory completion of your practicum. If you have any additional questions regarding these forms or the material in this handbook, please contact your university supervisor.
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS (603 CMR)

To: Supervising Practitioners and
Candidates for School Psychology Licensure

Subject: Amended Regulations for Licensure as a School Psychologist
(Effective April 26, 2005)

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST (Levels: All)

1) Initial License
   a) Completion of a master’s degree or higher in school psychology from a program
      approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).
   b) Completion of an advanced practicum of 1200 hours, 600 of which must be in a
      school setting.
   c) Passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills test (MTEL).

2) Professional License
   a) Possession of an Initial License.
   b) Three years of employment as a School Psychologist.
   c) Completion of one of the following:
      1. Passing score on the National School Psychology examination.
      2. Achievement and maintenance of a certificate or license from one of the
         following:
         a) The Massachusetts Board of Allied Mental Health Professionals, as an
            educational psychologist.
         b) The National Association of School Psychologists, as a school
            psychologist.

NOTE: The School Psychology License is renewable every five years.
The National Association of School Psychologists has identified six professional work characteristics that are essential to becoming an effective school psychologist. Evaluations of these professional work characteristics are also part of the requirements for becoming a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). These professional work characteristics are:

1) Respect for human diversity
2) Effective communication skills
3) Effective interpersonal relations
4) Ethical responsibility
5) Adaptability
6) Initiative and dependability

At the end of each term, all students’ progress in the program is routinely reviewed by the full faculty. As part of this review, the professional work characteristics are considered as demonstrated both in the classroom and at the field site as evaluated by the field site supervisor. Finally, when applying for the NCSP credential, the program director must attest to your competency in these areas based upon input from the faculty and the field site.
THE PRACTICUM

GUIDELINES FOR FIELD PLACEMENTS

The Tufts University School Psychology Program emphasizes the importance of field-based training in its mission to train competent and effective school psychologists. Successful field-based experiences are essential in achieving the specific training objectives of the program.

With these objectives in mind, each year of field-based training aims to accomplish certain goals. The second year, 600-hour practicum is required for initial state licensure. Successful completion of the practicum earns two course credits (ED 231-232) that are required for the M.A./Ed.S. program. Practicum students should have developed a beginning knowledge base in school psychology following the completion of 12 to 13 courses and a 150-hour pre-practicum in the first year of the program. Courses taken concurrently with the practicum include:

- ED 238  Advanced Approaches to Counseling: Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions in Schools
- ED 246  Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Assessment
- ED 254  Developmental Psychopathology in Educational Settings
- CD 191  Developmental Psychopathology and Adaptation
- ED 256  School-Based Consultation
- ED 275  Seminar in Advanced School Psychology Research
- ED 244  Assessment and Intervention for Learning Problems in the Classroom

These courses provide more advanced, skill-focused content in assessment and intervention, collaborative problem solving, consultation, and single subject designs during the practicum year in preparation for the internship.
## Areas of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Course Sequence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social, Psychological, and Educational Foundations of School Psychology Practice</strong></td>
<td>ED 230 Foundations of Learning, Cognition, and Academic Intervention&lt;br&gt;ED 160+ Social and Cultural Foundations of Education&lt;br&gt;ED 236 School-Based Mental Health&lt;br&gt;ED 253 (or CD 156) Biological Bases of Behavior&lt;br&gt;ED 254 Developmental Psychopathology&lt;br&gt;ED 142 Education of the Exceptional Child</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement and Assessment</strong></td>
<td>ED 241 Foundations and Contemporary Practices in Psychoeducational Assessment&lt;br&gt;ED 243 Assessment of Cognitive Abilities&lt;br&gt;ED 246 Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Assessment&lt;br&gt;ED 244 Assessment and Intervention for Learning Problems&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-Based Prevention and Intervention</strong></td>
<td>ED 140 Behavior Management in the Classroom&lt;br&gt;ED 237 Common Factors in Counseling&lt;br&gt;ED 238 Advanced Approaches to Counseling&lt;br&gt;ED 252 Group Dynamics in Educational Settings&lt;br&gt;ED 256 Consultation in the Schools&lt;br&gt;ED 249 Social Justice in Schools&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professional School Psychology</strong></td>
<td>ED 255 Professional Practice, Ethics, and the Law in School Psychology</td>
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<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>ED 274 Methods of School Psychology Research&lt;br&gt;ED 275 Seminar in Advanced School Psychology Research</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field-Based Learning in School Psychology</strong></td>
<td>ED 221 Pre-practicum and Seminar&lt;br&gt;ED 231/232 Practicum and Seminar&lt;br&gt;ED 257/258 Internship and Seminar</td>
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<sup>1</sup> ED 244 is an integrated course focusing on assessment for intervention.  
<sup>2</sup> ED 249 is an integrated course focusing on issues of school psychology practice and intervention in contexts of cultural diversity.
Course Sequence by Year in School Psychology

Year I
Fall Semester (5.5 course credits)
- ED 230 Foundations of Learning, Cognition, and Academic Intervention
- ED 237 Common Factors in Counseling: Initial Interviewing and Basic Clinical Skills
- ED 241 Foundations and Contemporary Practices in Psychoeducational Assessment
- ED 255 Professional Practice, Ethics, and the Law in School Psychology
- ED 142 Education of the Exceptional Child
- ED 221 First Year Seminar in School Psychology Practice (half course)

Spring Semester (5.5 course credits)
- ED 243 Assessment of Cognitive Abilities
- ED 236 School-Based Mental Health
- ED 140 Behavior Management in the Classroom
- ED 253 Biological Bases of Behavior in Educational Settings
- One course in Social and Cultural Foundations of Education (ED 160 series)
- ED 221 First Year Seminar in School Psychology Practice (half course)

Summer I (2 course credits)
- ED 252 Group Dynamics in Educational Settings
- ED 274 Methods of School Psychology Research

Summer II (2 course credits as needed)
- ED 249 Social Justice in Schools
- Foundations course as needed (ED 160 series)

Year II
Fall Semester (4 course credits)
- ED 231 Practicum in School Psychology
- ED 238 Advanced Approaches to Counseling: Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions in Schools
- ED 246 Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Assessment
- ED 254 Developmental Psychopathology in Educational Settings
  or
- CD 191 Developmental Psychopathology and Adaptation

Spring Semester (3 course credits)
- ED 232 Practicum in School Psychology
- ED 256 School-Based Consultation
- ED 275 Seminar in Advanced School Psychology Research

Summer I (1 course credit)
- ED 244 Assessment and Intervention for Learning Problems in the Classroom

Summer II (2 course credits as needed)
- ED 252 Group Dynamics in Educational Settings
- Foundations Course as needed (ED 160 series)

Year III
ED 257 and ED 258 Internship in School Psychology

The M.A. is awarded following completion of 13 courses and pre-practicum. The Ed.S. is awarded following completion of 11 courses post masters, practicum and internship.
Recommended Activities for the Practicum

As deemed appropriate by the supervising practitioner, practicum students are assigned their own cases. With guidance from the supervising practitioner, the practicum student is expected to perform all of the necessary functions throughout the pre-referral and referral process for those children. Supervising practitioners are encouraged to model these activities for the student before students engage in any activity themselves.

Students are expected to acquire knowledge and skills in several areas, including:

- a) the use of problem-solving methods to address children’s school-based problems
- b) educational and psychological assessment (10-12 cases maximum)
- c) intervention strategies (2-4 individual cases and 2-4 groups)
- d) consultation (2-4 projects)
- e) interpersonal/professional skills
- f) ethical standards and practices

The supervising practitioner and the university supervisor jointly evaluate students three times during the year to plan and assess progress in skill acquisition. At the end of each semester, the supervising practitioner submits a grade for the field-based portion of the practicum. This grade is then combined with assessments of the student’s participation in the practicum seminar and the quality of practicum related projects to arrive at a final grade for the practicum. The determination of the final grade is the responsibility of the university supervisor.

Supervision

All practicum students are closely supervised, both in the field and at the university. The university supervisor is a member of the faculty who is a licensed psychologist and/or licensed school psychologist. University-based supervision focuses upon the integration of field-based experience and classroom learning, while monitoring the acquisition and application of skills and professional knowledge. To this end, students are required to meet the following requirements:

- **Case Study:** Each student is required to develop a case study of a child using a problem-solving process. Case material should include a summary of the work with the child to date and a current formulation of the case. A written case report will be due at the end of the second semester.

- **Cognitive Assessment Reports:** Each student is required to submit one cognitive assessment report to the practicum seminar supervisor at the beginning of the first semester, and one cognitive or psycho-educational report in the middle of the second semester.

- **Portfolio:** Each student is required to develop a second-year portfolio demonstrating growth in the integration of classroom-based knowledge and field-based experience. Please see the portfolio guidelines for specific details.

Field-based supervision focuses upon the day-to-day responsibilities for the children in the schools with whom the students are working. Supervising practitioners must possess the
necessary background, training, and credentials appropriate to supervising practicum activities. Minimally, this background involves licensure in Massachusetts as a school psychologist and at least three full years of experience. Program faculty members are responsible for providing appropriate orientation to supervising practitioners unfamiliar with the Tufts program.

Two and a half hours per week of direct supervision is recommended to assure the acquisition of the desired skills and knowledge. Minimally, this includes one hour per week of field-based supervision, and one and a half hours per week of university-based supervision. No more than two practicum students may be assigned to a single supervising practitioner. In recognition of their professional commitment, supervising practitioners receive a $500 stipend per practicum student per year, and one course voucher from Tufts University per student upon completion of the training year.

For practicum (second year) students, there will be three site visits per year, each of which will include the supervising practitioner, the student, and the university supervisor. The first visit will occur at the beginning of the school year (September or early October), and will involve a discussion and clarification of the program’s training objectives and the student’s learning goals that will be used to guide and assess the student's progress. The second visit will be mid-year (February), and will focus upon the student's progress toward achieving the competencies as defined in the program objectives and the student’s goals. The third visit will be at the end of the year, and will be the final assessment of the student’s satisfactory attainment of the knowledge and skills required for advancement to an internship. Both the supervising practitioner and the university supervisor must attest to the satisfactory completion of the practicum.

**Evaluation**

The practicum experience is evaluated to assess student progress in the acquisition of professional skills and knowledge. This assessment will be accomplished via site visits, written evaluations, and the assignment of letter grades. In addition, we gather information to determine the suitability of the experience in terms of various training characteristics, such as setting, age range, and quality of supervision, professional development opportunities, and diversity.

Also at the end of the practicum year, each student must meet individually with the program faculty to receive approval to proceed to the third-year internship. This is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate competence as a reflective practitioner working within a problem-solving framework. Following this meeting, the faculty determines that all coursework required prior to the beginning of the internship has been completed, assesses progress in skill development during the practicum year, and reviews the student's portfolio. If the student is not approved for the internship, the student will receive a written plan for remediation of existing deficiencies.