SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, M.S.

For further information: SchoolPsychologyGrad@southernct.edu

Application Deadlines

School Psychology: **January 15** for fall semester

School Psychology Programs

The School Psychology program is nationally recognized by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Students who complete both the Master of Science and Sixth Year Professional Diploma in School Psychology are eligible for certification as a school psychologist in the State of Connecticut as well as the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) credential under the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

Master of Science in School Psychology

Graduate students prepare to work as school psychologists using their knowledge, insight, and skills to promote educational success and to improve the institutions and programs in which they are involved. Connecticut certification as a School Psychologist requires both the Masters and the Sixth Year Professional Diploma, which are offered through the SCSU School Psychology program. The Master of Science in School Psychology is completed first, during which apply for admission to the Sixth Year program.

A School Psychologist is a mental health professional, with broad and specialized training in both psychology and education, who provides psychological services using data-based problem solving processes. As stated by our professional organization, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP):

*School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community (NASP, 2017).*

The school psychologist is certified to provide school psychological services. They bring skills in problem-solving, assessment, consultation, individualized academic and therapeutic interventions, primary prevention, and systems-level change to the schools and the larger community. The school psychologist is sensitive to and appreciative of diversity and maintains the highest standards of practice with a keen awareness of the legal and ethical implications of their work. Preparation includes training in psychological and psychoeducational evaluations, written and oral communication of
assessment results, developing individual educational and behavioral interventions, making recommendations for remedial action, participation in regular and special education programs, consultation, individual counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention, program evaluation, research and other related activities.

**Admission Criteria**

To begin the application process, applicants should visit the online application portal for Southern Connecticut State University. Admissions questions for the School Psychology program can be directed to the School Psychology Program Coordinator.

**Admission to the Program is based upon following criteria:**

1. **Academic background:** applicants to the Master's Program must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0. Applicants to the Sixth Year Program must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0. Although no particular undergraduate major is required, applicants to the Master's Program are required to have taken the following prerequisite courses (completion of these courses is not required to apply to the program but completion is required prior to matriculation, if admitted):
   1. Developmental Psychology or Child Development
   2. Educational Psychology, Theories of Learning, or Cognitive Psychology
   3. Abnormal Psychology, Abnormal Child Psychology, or Psychopathology
   4. Statistics, Psychological Statistics, or Statistics for the Behavioral (or Social) Sciences
   5. Exceptionality or Exceptional Children (must be a state-approved course).

   The full list of courses in Connecticut that meet the criteria for this requirement are posted on the CT State Department of Education's website.

2. The School Psychology program requires that applicants to the Master's Program must submit evidence of having taken the Praxis® Core, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Graduate Record Exam (GRE), or American College Testing (ACT). The Praxis® Core exam is an essential skills test which is administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Scores must be within last 5 years.

3. Recommendations from at least THREE individuals who know the candidate in professional and/or academic setting. At least one recommendation must be from an academic reference (e.g., professor).

4. Personal essay explaining your reasons for wanting to enter the field of school psychology and the SCSU School Psychology program in particular. The typed/word processed essay should be approximately 250-500 words in length.

5. A current professional resume or vita.

6. Admissions interview with the School Psychology program faculty and student representatives, if invited.

**Application Process**
Steps to Admission

For applicants to the Master's Program: In order to be considered for admission to the Master's Program the following fall semester, all admissions materials must be received by January 15th.

In order to apply, please follow the steps below:

1. Make a formal application and submit a non-refundable fee to Southern Connecticut State University's Graduate School. The application can be found and completed online.

2. Follow the directions in the application portal for all application materials. Send official transcripts* from ALL institutions where you have completed coursework. If an applicant is sending official transcripts in hard-copy format, these hard-copies should be sent to:

   Southern Connecticut State University
   School of Graduate and Professional Studies
   501 Crescent Street, WT 105
   New Haven, CT 06515

   *If you have attended SCSU, you only need to indicate this on your application: you do not need to send your official SCSU transcript. All applicants must submit ALL transcripts with their application.

3. Upload your mandated admissions testing requirement to the same portal to which you logged in to apply.

4. Upload your personal essay to the same portal to which you logged in to apply.

5. Upload your professional resume or vita to the same portal to which you logged in to apply.

6. Have THREE recommenders upload their recommendations directly into the system via a personalized link sent to them when you applied. At least one recommendation should be from someone who can speak to your academic skills.

Criminal Record Check/Fingerprinting

Applicants considering the School Psychology program must be aware that, upon program completion, they must apply for certification from the State Department of Education. Part of that process involves a background check.

Special Education Course Requirement

Connecticut state regulations require the completion of a course in special education for all applicants seeking certification (i.e., students enrolled in our School Counseling and School Psychology programs). The regulations mandate this course be comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of children with disabilities, including gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods of identifying, planning for, and working effectively with children with disabilities in the schools.
Almost every university and community college in Connecticut offers a course that satisfies this requirement. Applicants may take this course at Southern (SED 481 or SED 482) or at another institution. The full list of courses in Connecticut that meet the criteria for this requirement are posted on the CT State Department of Education's Web site.

Applicants to the School Psychology program may still apply if they have not yet satisfied this requirement, however, all admitted applicants must submit an official transcript with a record of having satisfied the special education course requirement prior to matriculation in the program. If the course was complete prior to the fall of 1998 or if the course was completed out of state, an applicant may also be required to submit a copy of the course syllabus to the university. After this submission, a review will determine if the course satisfies the requirement.

Students who are granted admission to the program and have not yet fulfilled all of the course requirements will be given "Conditional Acceptance" until these requirements are met. Many students opt to take the Special Education Course Requirement course in the summer prior to beginning their School Psychology program.

Program Sequence - 40 Credits

As sequencing changes, it is highly recommended that students meet with their program advisor to finalize a list of requirements for graduation.

The School Psychology program offers two graduate degree programs. The Master of Science Degree in School Psychology is achieved after one full year of study (including full-time summer study). The Sixth Year program prepares students for eligibility for the Sixth Year Professional Diploma (a specialist level credential). The Sixth Year Program is only offered on a full-time basis and includes one year of full-time coursework followed by a year-long full-time internship. The two degree programs, upon completion, are designed to meet both the requirements for CT state certification and national certification (N.C.S.P.) in school psychology. Graduates of the two programs will be prepared for employment as school psychologists in public schools or other related organizations and agencies.

The Master's Program is designed to be accessible to working students and includes classes offered in late afternoon, evenings and weekends. Some classes will also contain web-based components of training. The Sixth Year Program also includes late afternoon, evening and weekend coursework along with practica fieldwork during the school day followed by a year-long full-time internship. Students must complete the program on a full-time basis.

Course Requirements

CSP 532 – Physical Bases for Behavior and Personality – 3 credits
CSP 533 – Individual Assessment I & Lab – 4 credits
CSP 539 – Developmental Psychopathology in Schools – 3 credits
CSP 540 – Introduction to Assessment in Counseling & School Psychology – 3 credits
CSP 550 – Counseling Skills & Techniques – 3 credits
CSP 568 – Counseling and Life Span Development – 3 credits
CSP 569 – Theories of Counseling – 3 credits
CSP 574 – Applied Behavioral Interventions in Schools, Classrooms and Counseling Settings – 3 credits
CSP 578 – Social and Cultural Diversity – 3 credits
CSP 622 – School Curriculum for Helping Professionals – 3 credits
CSP 641 – Ethical and Professional Conduct in School Psychology – 3 credits
CSP 670 – Psychology in the Schools – 3 credits
CSP 691 – Research & Evaluation in Schools and Clinical Mental Health Settings – 3 credits

**Comprehensive Examinations**

Students in the Master's program are required to pass a written Comprehensive Examination. The written comprehensive examination is administered following completion of all Master's program coursework, typically at the conclusion of the final semester of the student’s first year of study.