

Data Based Decision Making School Psychology Program

The School Psychology program faculty use a variety of data to make programmatic decisions. These include data from individual courses via the student evaluations of teacher and course effectiveness as well as program specific instruments. Once students complete the school psychology program, they are asked to give feedback on the program in the form of a written questionnaire. This form asks students to rate the program on a numerical scale as well as list aspects of the program they felt were beneficial and aspects that could be improved. The information obtained from this evaluation is discussed by the school psychology program faculty and used to make adjustments to the program curriculum as well as individual courses. As outlined in the graduate student handbook students are also required to complete three performance based evaluations. These include taking the National Praxis exam in school psychology, completion of a portfolio (which is reviewed by program faculty) and completion of a thesis. Data from all these sources is evaluated annual by program faculty to help determine needed curriculum changes. In addition to these formal pieces of data, site supervisors for students' practicum and internship are asked for feedback on the program and this information is also utilized in making decisions. Based on the data gathered from these sources several change have been made in the past several years including the following:

- 1) A new intervention course (Advanced Academic and Behavioral Interventions) was added based on feedback from students and site supervisors that more training in this area was necessary.
- 2) Two new 1-credit courses (Theory and Practice in School Psychology) were added to deliver information that was necessary but not being covered in other courses (based on review of syllabi and feedback from students school-based supervisors). These courses cover more in-depth legal/ethical issues as well as special topics in school psychology (e.g., evaluation of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders).
- 3) Additional hands-on experience in understanding school systems were included in several courses (based on feedback from students and on-site supervisors). For example, students shadow two school psychologists in the Introductory to School Psychology course and assist a school psychologist conducting an intervention case in the Advanced Academic and Behavioral Interventions course.
- 4) Course content and activities were updated based on changes in best practices in school psychology (based on review of portfolio, syllabi, NASP requirements, recent literature, and feedback from students and on-site supervisors). One example is the incorporation of the response to intervention approach in several courses (i.e., Psychoeducational assessment, consultation, practicum). Another includes a focus on family preventative programs (e.g., a presentation of a program in practicum).
- 5) Incorporated additional training activities on diversity in several classes based on review of portfolio and syllabi, and feedback from students). In addition to readings and

discussions in this area that were incorporated in coursework, students are required to seek and report work on cases with culturally and linguistically diverse students in the practicum and internship courses.