

# PSY - School Psychology Online Program

---

*Education Specialist and Master of Science in Education  
School Psychology Program (Online)*  
Director: Robert J. Dixon  
349A Graff Main Hall; 608.785.6893  
Email: [rdixon@uwlax.edu](mailto:rdixon@uwlax.edu)

[www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/school-psychology-online/](http://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/school-psychology-online/) (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/school-psychology-online/>)

The UW-La Crosse School Psychology Online Program offers an integrated program of study resulting in a Master of Science in Education en route to an Education Specialist degree. This program is designed for in-service educators holding an educator license who are seeking to retrain as school psychologists and is offered online and asynchronously to allow school personnel to pursue this advanced degree and still work in the school. The combined degrees require three years of study, across fall, winter, and summer semesters, a one-year internship during the fourth year, completion of a capstone project, and the passing of either the Praxis II School Psychologist content knowledge test (#5402) or UWL comprehensive examinations. Successful completion of all program requirements for the 61 semester credits prepares candidates for licensure as a school psychologist in Wisconsin. Candidates interested in becoming licensed in other states are encouraged to check the respective state's licensing rules. Students earn a 30-credit Master of Science in Education (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/schoolpsychologyonline/master-science-education-degree-online/>) degree before completing the remaining Educational Specialist (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/schoolpsychologyonline/education-specialist-degree-online/>) degree requirements.

The UW-La Crosse School Psychology Online Program is part of the Department of Psychology and the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities and is affiliated with the School of Education and Graduate & Extended Learning. Upon completion of all program requirements, students are eligible for licensure as a school psychologist in Wisconsin. Graduates of the program are employed in public schools or in educational agencies that serve public schools.

The School Psychology Online Program prepares graduate students for licensure as school psychologists through academic course work, 500 hours of supervised school practica, and a one-year, 1,200-hour school internship. The school psychology knowledge base includes areas of professional school psychology, educational psychology, psychological foundations, educational foundations, social justice, and mental health.

The School Psychology Online Program adheres to state and national training standards for school psychology. Graduate students develop professional competencies that meet Wisconsin Pupil Services Standards and NASP training standards (2020), which include data-based decision making; consultation and collaboration; academic interventions and instructional supports; mental and behavioral health services and interventions; school-wide practices to promote learning; services to promote safe and supportive schools; family, school, and community collaboration; equitable practices for diverse student populations; research and evidence-based practice; and legal, ethical, and professional practice. Over the course of their UWL training,

graduate students will maintain an evolving portfolio that documents professional growth and achieved competence in each of the 10 NASP domains. In addition, students will be evaluated each semester in professional behavior competencies that reflect dispositions in the field.

The emphasis of this program is to prepare school psychologists who are effective teacher, parent, and school consultants by providing extensive hands-on experiences in a mentor relationship. The program also emphasizes a pupil services model that addresses the educational and mental health needs of all children, from early childhood through high school.

Graduate students engage in authentic clinical experiences in K-12 schools and apply their evolving school psychology knowledge, skills, and dispositions while in their school site. During their third year, students spend two days per week working in schools under the direct supervision of experienced school psychologists. During these school practica, students develop professional skills in assessment, consultation, intervention, counseling, case management, and in each of the NASP standards. Many of the core courses require projects that are completed in the schools.

## Program Admissions

Information about how to apply is available on the program website (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/school-psychology-online/application-process/>). In addition to meeting all the requirements established for general graduate admissions, students must also meet School Psychology Online Program and School of Education<sup>1</sup> requirements before admission to the program. These additional requirements are described on the individual program catalog pages herein. Students are also expected to participate in a virtual interview as a component of the selection process. Admission is competitive and meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the program.

<sup>1</sup> The WI Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requires that candidates for admission to a teacher education, administration, or pupil services program successfully pass a criminal background check (CBC) as one criterion for admission. By applying for admission to one of these programs, candidates agree to provide the necessary personal information to UWL in order to initiate their CBC, and to complete their portion of the process prior to the deadline specified in their admission letter. Candidates are responsible for all costs associated with their criminal background check(s). Admission decisions by programs are contingent upon CBC clearance by the UWL Office of Field Experience or designated graduate program representative.

## Program Length

The Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.) degree in the School Psychology Online Program is typically a two-year program. The Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree in the School Psychology Online Program is typically a two-year program. Students must complete both programs to earn the Ed.S. degree. The program length is based on how long the required UWL coursework would take to complete for a full-time student who does not need to complete any prerequisite coursework. Program length may be extended if students attend part-time (if approved by program) or due to the requirements of an individual student's plan of coursework, research or capstone project.

## 2024-25 Faculty/Staff

*The following is the graduate faculty and staff as of the publication date of this catalog. This list will not be updated again until the next catalog is published in July.*

### Associate Professor

Robert J. Dixon (<http://www.uwlax.edu/profile/rdixon/>), Ph.D., NCSP, LP

### Adjunct Faculty

Check the School Psychology Online Program webpage (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academics/grad/school-psychology-online/our-people/>) for the current list of adjunct faculty.

### Graduate degrees

- School psychology - MSED: online (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/schoolpsychologyonline/master-science-education-degree-online/>)
- School psychology - Ed.S.: online (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/programrequirements/schoolpsychologyonline/education-specialist-degree-online/>)

---

## Courses

SPY 700 Cr.3

### School Psychology: Role and Function

This course will guide students in identifying and explaining the roles and functions of school psychologists, as well as the "lenses" (i.e., historical, diversity, developmental and relational) they should consider in interpreting the ways in which school psychologists engage in these roles and functions. Students will also learn about the strategic goals the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) uses to promote the importance of, and advocate for, school psychologists. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 717 Cr.3

### Child and Adolescent Mental Health for School Psychologists

This course provides overview and application of high incidence mental health disorders, specific to the school-based practitioner. Includes the study of etiology, symptoms and school-based treatment of mental health disorders in children. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Consent of instructor. Offered Summer.

SPY 725 Cr.3

### Research and Program Evaluation in Schools

This course is designed to increase competencies in understanding and applying educational research and provide skills to successfully participate in school wide evaluation and improvement efforts. Prerequisite: STAT 145 or equivalent; admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Summer.

SPY 751 Cr.3

### School-wide Practices for Academics, Behavior, and Mental Health in a MTSS Model

This course is designed to introduce future practitioners to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and the application to the school environment. Specific topics will focus on the universal or core interventions addressing the broad areas of academics (i.e., Response to Intervention or RTI), behavior/class management (i.e., Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports or PBIS), and the mental health needs of students. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 752 Cr.3

### Academic, Behavioral, and Mental Health Interventions

Students will learn methods of systematic data collection and how to translate assessment results into empirically-based interventions. Students will also learn how to develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of appropriate academic, behavior, and mental health interventions for children with different abilities and needs. Prerequisite: SPY 700. Offered Spring.

SPY 756 Cr.3

### Early Childhood Assessment

This course will provide an in-depth review of best practices of formal and informal assessment techniques in early childhood. Students will learn procedural considerations in assessing the five early childhood developmental domains: cognition, physical, communication, social-emotional, and adaptive. Issues of test development, standardization, reliability, validity, and report writing will also be explored. The challenges of assessing young children and meeting the ongoing needs of the child and family will be addressed. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 757 Cr.3

### Psychoeducational Assessment I

This course begins with a review of the history of psychological assessment, psychometric principles, and general assessment and testing practices. Building upon this foundation, the bulk of this course is designed to develop student mastery of the standardized administration of current major individual cognitive and achievement measures. Students will also gain beginning experience in written and oral interpretation of current major cognitive and achievement measures. Lect. 2, Lab 2. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 758 Cr.3

### Psychoeducational Assessment II

This course further develops student skills in psychoeducational assessment. Students will learn various theoretical models that advance assessment processes grounded within an equity and social justice framework, including but not limited to: methods of cognitive assessment within the response-to-intervention framework, assessment procedures for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) and/or various ability statuses. To meet these goals, students will be introduced to additional measures of cognitive ability and learn advanced interpretation skills. Prerequisite: SPY 757. Offered Spring.

SPY 759 Cr.3

### Assessment of Students with Emotional/Behavioral Needs

This course guides students in how to conduct a comprehensive assessment of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral needs. Students learn how to apply problem solving, eligibility and equity lenses to the creation and implementation of an assessment plan that includes file reviews, interviews, observations and behavior rating scales. Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills through written exams, assessment reports summarizing the results of observations and behavior rating scales, and simulated role plays in which they explain assessment plans or results to mock parents. Prerequisite: SPY 757, SPY 775; admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Spring.

SPY 761 Cr.1

### Orientation to Supervised Practicum in School Psychology

This class covers basic knowledge that will prepare the student for Supervised Practicum in School Psychology I (SPY 762). The skills include: orientation to the school setting, information on legal and ethical requirements, and the initiation of professional skills and accountability. Prerequisite: SPY 757. Offered Winter.

SPY 762 Cr.3

### **Supervised Practicum in School Psychology I**

This is a 200-hour, supervised field experience in the application of school psychology professional skills in a school setting. The applied skills include: data-based decision-making; assessing behavioral, intellectual, cognitive, and academic functioning; and designing and implementing cognitive, academic, and behavioral interventions. Prerequisite: SPY 757; acceptance into the School Psychology Program. Offered Spring.

SPY 763 Cr.3

### **Supervised Practicum in School Psychology II**

This is a 250-hour, supervised field experience in the application of school psychology professional skills in a school setting. The applied skills include data-based decision-making, psychoeducational assessment, counseling, and consultation. Prerequisite: SPY 762. Offered Fall.

SPY 764 Cr.3

### **Supervised Practicum in School Psychology III**

This is a 250-hour, supervised field experience in the application of school psychology professional skills in a school setting. The applied skills include: data-based decision-making; assessing behavioral, intellectual, cognitive, and academic functioning; and in collaboration with others, designing and implementing cognitive, academic, adaptive, social, and behavioral interventions for students of varying abilities, disabilities, strengths, and needs. Prerequisite: SPY 763. Offered Spring.

SPY 771 Cr.3

### **Application of Multicultural Psychology**

This course is an introduction and application of multicultural psychology theory, research, and practice. It aims to develop students' multicultural competence (i.e., knowledge, awareness, and skills) in order to prepare them to live and work with individuals from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. It also aims to increase students' understanding of, and commitment to, social justice in their personal and professional lives. Prerequisite: SPY 700. Offered Spring.

SPY 772 Cr.3

### **Counseling and Therapy Methods**

Focus on an integrative framework for major theoretical views and methods for use in counseling and therapy. Includes lab and field supervised experiences in individual and group therapy. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 773 Cr.3

### **Advanced Counseling and Therapy Methods**

This course is designed to expand on previous therapeutic methods and skills through participating in additional helping relationships in a school setting. Students will be expected to advance their clinical skills by exploring practical and ethical components of critical incidents in schools. Special emphasis will be placed on designing, facilitating, and evaluating group counseling experiences across development stages. Prerequisites: SPY 772; enrollment in School Psychology Program. Offered Spring.

SPY 775 Cr.3

### **Behavioral Assessment and Management**

Students will learn functional behavioral assessment, behavior management techniques, and how to design effective behavioral interventions. Specific topics also include systematic data collection and measuring progress and outcomes. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program. Offered Fall.

SPY 776 Cr.3

### **Psychological Consultation and Collaboration**

This course emphasizes theory, research, and applications of psychological consultation and collaboration in a school setting. Students will acquire skills for consulting and collaborating with teachers, parents, and related professionals. Additional topics include organizational systems, organizational development, pupil services, prevention, crisis intervention, home/school/community collaboration, program assessment, and needs assessment. Prerequisite: admission to the School Psychology Program or the Special Education Program. Offered Spring.

SPY 795 Cr.1-3

### **Directed Studies**

Directed readings or presentation of material not available in formal departmental courses. Repeatable for credit - maximum three. Offered Occasionally.

SPY 796 Cr.1-3

### **Professional Topics and Practices in School Psychology**

Contemporary topics emphasizing current research, developments and issues in school psychology. Repeatable for credit. Offered Occasionally.

SPY 797 Cr.3-6

### **Internship in School Psychology**

An intense and diverse professional experience in school psychology for a minimum of 600 hours for 3 credits under the supervision of an experienced school psychologist and a university supervisor and within training guidelines defined by the training program. Activities include assessment, interventions, consulting, counseling, pupil services, and applied projects. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: completion of all other SPY course work except for SPY 801; a passing score on the national school psychology examination or UW-La Crosse comprehensive examinations. Students must have earned grade of "B" or better in SPY 803. Offered Fall, Spring.

SPY 800 Cr.1-3

### **Specialist Thesis Proposal**

This course is designed to help students complete a thesis proposal and the initial stages of writing a thesis. Topics include resource utilization, ethical issues, protection of human subjects, proposal development, research design, data analysis, scientific writing, and APA-style writing. Repeatable for credit - maximum six. Prerequisite: SPY 700; SPY 725 (may be taken concurrently). Pass/Fail grading. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SPY 801 Cr.1-6

### **Specialist Thesis**

Students complete an independent research project and thesis under the direction of three graduate faculty members. Topics must be in an area related to school psychology and be approved by the student's thesis committee. A minimum of six thesis credits is required. A maximum of six credits applicable to degree. Repeatable for credit - maximum 10. Prerequisite: SPY 800 and consent of instructor. Students must register for at least one credit of SPY 801 each semester, beginning the first semester of their third year and continuing until thesis is approved. Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SPY 802 Cr.1-3

### **Research/Specialist Project**

This is one of two components of the capstone requirement for the education specialist degree. Students complete a project on an approved topic related to School Psychology. Students may opt to complete: (a) a research project culminating a poster/presentation at an appropriate conference or outlet or (b) a comprehensive research proposal with an extensive literature review and defend to a committee. Prerequisite: SPY 725 (may be taken concurrently). Offered Fall, Spring, Summer.

SPY 803 Cr.1

**Case Conceptualization Project**

This course is one of two components of the capstone requirement for the education specialist degree. Students will present to a committee a written and oral case defending methodology and outcome of a child evaluated in a school setting. Prerequisite: SPY 764 (may be taken concurrently) and approval of the program director. Consent of department. Offered Spring, Summer.