Established in 1968, the School Psychology Program’s mission is to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to become school psychologists. Our graduates provide a broad range of school psychological services, including assessment, consultation, and intervention to students, parents, and teachers from preschool to high school age. Training includes challenging, stimulating coursework and intensive, supervised experiences in the schools. The School Psychology Program leads to licensure as a professional educator with an endorsement for school psychology through the Illinois State Board of Education or national certification as a school psychologist (NCSP) with passing scores on the respective exams.

**Admission Requirements**

Admission into the Specialist in School Psychology degree program requires a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution with at least 15 semester hours (sh) in Psychology. Incoming students are expected to have completed coursework in each of the following areas: General Psychology, Statistics/Experimental Research Methods, and Learning/Cognition. Students may, however, satisfy any undergraduate deficiencies during the course of the Program.

All students must meet the general admission requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75. The aptitude portion of the Graduate Record Examination is also required.

**Degree Requirements**

The Specialist in School Psychology degree requires successful completion of a minimum of 66 sh of coursework, which includes four semesters on campus, one summer session, and a full-time, nine-month supervised internship (1,200 hours) with a school district. School Psychology students must also successfully complete case studies documenting mastery of the 10 domains of training for a competent school psychologist.

The 10 domains of training followed by the program were approved by the National Association of School Psychologists and include (1) data based decision making and accountability; (2) consultation and collaboration; (3) interventions and instructional support; (4) intervention and mental health services to develop social and life skills; (5) school-wide practices to promote learning; (6) preventive and responsive services; (7) family-school collaboration; (8) diversity in development and learning; (9) research and program evaluation; and (10) legal, ethical, and professional practice.

The curriculum is designed to provide students with a thorough grounding in basic psychological knowledge, effective communication skills, professional skills for applying their knowledge, awareness of values and ethics, and time for application and reflection.

The School Psychology Specialist Program is also approved by the Illinois State Board of Education; so students are responsible for passing all required exams, which currently include both the Test of Academic Proficiency exam (400) and content area exam for school psychology (183).

**Career Opportunities**

Most Specialist in School Psychology program graduates enter the workforce as school psychologists in public schools. School psychologists perform a wide array of roles and functions, including assessment, intervention, staff development consultation, and counseling. Approximately 10% of Western’s School Psychology Program graduates have gone on to complete doctoral-level training at other institutions.

**Faculty Expertise**

The Department of Psychology has more than 25 full-time doctoral faculty members. These faculty members represent a wide range of subdisciplines within psychology, enabling the Department to provide a well-rounded background in psychology.

Four of the Department faculty have primary affiliations with the School Psychology Program and include certified school psychologists who have a wealth of experience. These faculty members provide extensive supervision for students in their coursework and through the practicum experiences spread over the first two years. Faculty also monitor completion of internships for students.
Graduate Assistantships
All School Psychology graduate students are eligible to apply for a graduate assistantship. Graduate assistantships are awarded through a competitive process, and all full-time assistantships receive a stipend and a tuition waiver. Often, first-year students can secure assistantships within the department, and second-year students can find assistantships at other campus locations.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.

Distinctive Features
• The School Psychology program offers students the opportunity to integrate coursework with field-based experiences from their first semester on campus. Throughout the four-semester practicum sequence, students develop their assessment, consultation, counseling, and intervention skills while being placed in area rural schools. Field-based placements, predetermined by faculty, afford specialist students the experience of being supervised by an on-site school psychologist while continuing to be exposed to current research and best practice approaches in their educational training.
• The School Psychology program has full approval from the National Association of School Psychologists. This approval allows students to sit for the Praxis exam to obtain the Nationally Certified School Psychologist credential with a passing exam score.

For admissions process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact the Graduate Coordinator, School Psychology Program, Department of Psychology, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1593, psychology@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/psychology.

“Thanks to the rigorous training in theoretical foundations of psychology, human development, education, assessment, and intervention that I received from the School Psychology Program at WIU, I am able to adapt to the numerous demands of the ever-changing fields of school psychology and special education. Attending the School Psychology Program at WIU is one of the best decisions I have ever made!”

– Jennifer G. Garcia, SSP, 2006, NCSP
School Psychologist, Onslow County Schools, NC

Jennifer Garcia