

UM-SYSTEM PRESIDENT'S CRITERIA
UM-St. Louis Proposed Educational Specialist in School Psychology

Impact on Other Programs

The curriculum for the proposed UM-St. Louis Ed. S. in School Psychology degree program builds directly upon the requirements for the recently approved Graduate Certificate in School Psychology. The College of Education at UM-St. Louis has offered courses leading to the School Psychological Examiner certification since its inception; however, the evolving nature of the field of school psychology has rendered the limited testing role of the School Psychological Examiner obsolete and created an increased demand in the St. Louis area for certified School Psychologists who are capable of providing a comprehensive range of psychological services. For example, the Special School District of St. Louis County, the largest single employer of school psychologists in the St. Louis area with a staff of 135, no longer hires School Psychological Examiners and exclusively interviews certified School Psychologists. In response to these market trends, the Graduate Certificate in School Psychology program was developed to replace the School Psychological Examiner certification program with a post-master's option for students seeking to re-specialize as a school psychologist. However, the Educational Specialist in School Psychology (Ed. S.) degree is the nationally recognized entry level credential for school psychologists, and no degree option exists for students who do not already possess a master's degree. Furthermore, the Ed. S. in School Psychology degree is needed in the event students relocate, as the Graduate Certificate in School Psychology and certification in Missouri as a School Psychologist may not be sufficient to qualify for certification in other states. The proposed Ed. S. in School Psychology program will have a positive impact upon existing course offerings in the College of Education through increased enrollment and represents a logical, cost-effective, and necessary extension of the newly approved Graduate Certificate in School Psychology program.

Market Analysis

At this time in Missouri an immediate need exists for a minimum of 106 additional school psychologists to bring the student to school psychologist ratio in line with the national average of 1,900:1; a total of 533 school psychologists are needed to achieve the NASP recommended ratio of 1:1000:1. Using a projected annual graduation rate of 6-10 students from UM-Columbia, it will take at least 11 years to generate these 106 school psychologists. However, the already existing shortage of school psychologists is projected to reach crisis proportions over the next 10 years as 50% of currently practicing school psychologists reach retirement age. If the projected 50% of 368 presently certified School Psychological Examiners and School Psychologists in Missouri retire in the next 10 years (and assuming zero population growth), 184 vacancies must be filled just to maintain the current state ratio, 290 are needed to reach the national average, and an astounding 717 school psychologists will be needed to achieve the NASP recommended ratio. These projections indicate a need for at least 19 graduates in the state every year for the next 10 years just to maintain the already inflated state ratio, 29 per year to reach the national average, and 72 per year to achieve the NASP target ratio. Collectively, the state faces an annual deficit of 13 to 69 new school psychologists with a corresponding student ratio of 3,691:1 in 10 years. Local retirement projections from St. Louis Public Schools and the Special School District of St. Louis County indicate a need of at least 30-40 school psychologists in the next five years with 91

projected vacancies over the next 10 years. Additional personnel will be needed in the surrounding counties that are not within proximity of the UM-Columbia program. An urgent need exists to address this school psychologist shortage or local districts risk losing significant educational funds for noncompliance with federal education mandates and initiatives such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and No Child Left Behind.

Business Plan

Financial projections for the first five years of the Educational Specialist in School Psychology degree program include all anticipated costs associated with the development, implementation, marketing, and accreditation of the proposed program. While total expenditures consistently fall in the range of \$173,228-\$208,992, total revenues increase from a low of \$226,377 to a high of \$262,469 for Year 5 and beyond. The UM-St. Louis College of Education already has one tenure track school psychology faculty member on staff and plans to fill a vacant position within the Division of Educational Psychology, Research and Evaluation with a second school psychology faculty member immediately upon approval of the program. The College of Education also has allocated one existing graduate assistantship position for use during the first two years of the Educational Specialist in School Psychology program. Hence, no new funds are needed to support the program. The combined revenues of \$152,464 from institutional resources committed to the program and \$73,913-130,769 from projected educational fee revenue exceed program costs by \$51,413-81,577 during each of the first five years of the program. The minimum revenue required each year from educational fees to meet expenditures for graduate assistantships not covered by institutional funds ranges from \$20,764 to \$62,292. Thus, a minimum combined enrollment of 11 full-time students is needed to fund the three graduate assistantships planned for Year 4 and beyond. Given the state and local need for school psychologists and the potential costs to society, the proposed Ed. S. in School Psychology degree program offers a cost-effective and self-supporting alternative to a possible loss of millions of dollars in federal education funding and private litigation for public schools in the St. Louis area.