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## School Psychology **Direct to the Doctorate**

Some entering students have taken a considerable number of graduate hours in school psychology and related fields. The school psychology faculty believe there are so many exciting learning opportunities at A&M, both within and outside the EPSY Department that we do not want students to take courses that cover content previously mastered. On the other hand, we want to be sure that all graduates of our program possess both the scientific and theoretical perspectives, practice knowledge, and competencies necessary to fulfill the roles we anticipate for our graduates, as well as content covered in program examinations on completion of coursework (preliminary examinations) and licensure exams. The Minimum Course Requirements for Texas A&M University Doctoral Training Program in School Psychology (in the SPSY Student Handbook) serves as a worksheet for students to complete, in consultation with their advisor.

If a student believes he or she has met a course requirement in previous graduate course work, the student meets with a faculty member who teaches the course in question; for courses that are not required, this may be done with your advisor. With faculty approval, students may exempt out of required courses based on previous graduate course work or experience that is determined to be equivalent to the required course. Exempted courses do not earn units and do not count toward the total units needed to graduate if they have already been applied to a graduate degree. For those students who have taken graduate hours elsewhere, but those courses did NOT count toward a degree (i.e., the student left a prior program before the degree was awarded), the student is able to transfer in up to 12 hours for the M.Ed., and then an additional 12 hours for the Ph.D. The same course credits, however, cannot be counted toward more than one degree.

Exempting a course fulfills that course requirement and permits the student to take another course in its place. Exemptions are granted by individual faculty members who will require evidence of appropriate previous graduate work and some may require demonstration of competency through an exam or other means. Each request will be reviewed on an individual basis by the appropriate faculty member. Syllabi and examples of required work from previous graduate courses are helpful in this conversation. Faculty members have the option of requiring that the student demonstrate essential course competencies (e.g., by taking an examination, demonstrating a skill) prior to waiving a course requirement. If that faculty member

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believes the student has performed successfully in a course that is substantially equivalent, the faculty member indicates approval for waiving that course requirement by completing a "Request to Waive or Transfer Credits for a Core Course" form. Once completed by the course instructor, this form is maintained in the student's educational file. If the course in question is taught outside the Department of Education Psychology, the student's advisor can make a determination as to whether s/he have met this requirement through prior course work and initial the form. **Undergraduate courses cannot be used to replace or waive out of *any* graduate courses or content.**