

Policy on Prior Graduate Work

The counseling psychology doctoral program accepts applications from individuals who have obtained a master's degree and from those who may have other graduate work.

Individuals who enter the program with relevant graduate coursework and those who already possess a master's degree in a relevant field may request the faculty to consider waiving certain course in the doctoral program. In effect, past coursework may contribute to the doctoral program. Students who are seeking course waivers must submit (1) a letter listing the courses in which you are seeking a waiver; and (2) a copy of the syllabus for each course that is being requested. In some cases, faculty may also request evidence of performance in the course (including copies of a paper, a presentation in class, etc.).

Students who possess a master's degree from a psychology department may find some "core course" relevant to the doctoral program, and faculty can evaluate the relevance and quality of previous coursework by reviewing the syllabus. Program faculty may also require the student to meet with a specific faculty member who assist in reviewing the quality and content of the previous course. However, students who enter with a master's degree in a related field obtained in a department other than psychology often find that prior field work (in practica) may not apply to the current doctoral program. It is important that students receive supervision from licensed psychologists at approved sites during the program.

The following courses are not eligible for waivers:

- Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy
- Multicultural Counseling
- Professional Issues/Ethics

Several factors are considered in evaluating prior graduate work. Chief among these concerns are the emphasis on competency-based training expected by the new Standards of Accreditation (SoA) from the Commission of Accreditation at the American Psychological Association. Consequently, program faculty must consider courses in which certain competencies may be assumed according to the SoA guidelines (e.g., to meet the requirement for History and Systems; Discipline-Specific Knowledge Category 1) but others may require considerable detail. Syllabi from prior graduate work that lack primary source materials, do not specify competencies and/or fail to specify topics addressed in each class session are immediately suspect. Behavioral demonstrations of competencies may be required including (but not limited to) graded course assignments (e.g., term papers), de-identified and graded assessment reports, an oral examination by program faculty, and/or faculty observation of the individual administering psychological tests and instruments with a client. Colleagues who teach core courses in the department are asked to review syllabi and other materials for courses that are required as part of the program degree plan but not taught by program faculty. Finally, all review procedures are currently under review and possible revision by the program faculty to ensure the program conforms to SoA guidelines required for accreditation.

Course waiver requests and materials should be emailed to the Director of Training prior to or the day of the September program faculty meeting (that usually occurs on the fourth Monday of the month). Please include subject heading "Course Waiver" in your email. **No late course waiver(s) request will be considered at the next program faculty meeting.** Course waivers are only considered during a student's first year in the program. Undergraduate courses cannot be used as a waiver for graduate courses.