Counseling Psychology Program
APA ACCREDITED

Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling
College of Education
Auburn University

For additional information, be sure to read our FAQs and Program Policies as well as other program documents on our Program’s webpage http://www.education.auburn.edu/graduate-degree-cert/counseling-psychology-ph-d/

Revised: 1-25-2015

“Counseling psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty in professional psychology. It focuses on how people function both personally and in their relationships at all ages. Counseling psychology addresses the emotional, social, work, school and physical health concerns people may have at different stages in their lives, focusing on typical life stresses and more severe issues with which people may struggle as individuals as a part of families, groups and organizations. Counseling psychologists help people with physical, emotional, and mental health issues improve well-being, alleviate feelings of distress and resolve crises. They also provide assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of more severe psychological symptoms.”

Program Type: We operate from a scientist-practitioner training model. In addition, students in our program complete four or more years of didactics, supervised practicum, and a dissertation in the area of Counseling Psychology. Students also complete a year-long full-time internship after they have completed all required coursework. Counseling Psychology as a field is primarily focused on applied activities that involve direct services. APA describes such activities as being the function of Health Service Psychologists. Health Service Psychology includes psychological practice in mental health issues as well as practices that may interface with more traditional health care settings (Belar, 2014). Additional information on training in health service psychology can be found at:

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Program Goal: The goal of the Auburn University program is to facilitate students’ development of a high level of competency in the discipline of counseling psychology consistent with the scientist-practitioner model within the framework of health service psychology (with an emphasis on addressing mental health care needs of consumers). We use the term “scientist-practitioner” for a number of reasons. First, it is the term that has traditionally described the majority of APA-accredited training programs in counseling psychology. The term suggests that counseling psychologists are typically trained to be scientists as well as practitioners, and especially that they value the integration of science and practice. We endorse this model, and toward that end we require coursework in both research and practice. Throughout the curriculum we emphasize the
integration of science and practice. Surveys show that nationally, the majority of counseling psychology graduates will take jobs in settings involving the direct delivery of psychological services. In this regard, the counseling psychology program at Auburn is quite similar to the typical training program. Following graduation, the large majority of our graduates choose service delivery settings for their first job. At Auburn, we have set up the coursework in a way that allows students to focus more strongly on either the practitioner or the scientist aspect of training.

Regardless of which type of training the student wants to highlight more, the recommended courses to gain extra training opportunities make up a small portion of the total coursework. We do not consider these choices (i.e., electives) to diminish the importance of the integration of science with practice. The faculty is committed to the role of science in the education of psychologists and all students complete foundational coursework to prepare them to be counseling psychologists operating from a scientist-practitioner perspective. Although interest in the delivery of psychological services may vary across student and faculty groups, our identification as a scientist-practitioner program includes the following training objectives and competencies:

Objectives and Competencies for the Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University

Objective 1: To provide our students with a grounding in scientific psychology. Students are expected to demonstrate:

Competency 1: A thorough understanding of core areas of psychological science
Competency 2: A thorough understanding of research design concepts applied in the psychological literature
Competency 3: An ability to conduct independent research.

Objective 2: To provide our students with the ability to link psychological theory, research, and practice. Students are expected to demonstrate:

Competency 1: The ability to use theories relevant to Counseling Psychology, including the ability to conceptualize clinical cases
Competency 2: Knowledge of the empirical literature bearing on the student’s psychological interventions.

Objective 3: To train our students in the application of Counseling Psychology (primarily in conducting counseling and therapy)

Competency 1: Ability to use psychological assessment effectively
Competency 2: Skill in conducting psychotherapy

Objective 4: To provide our students with knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and social contexts in which human problems and solutions can be found. Students are expected to demonstrate:

Competency 1: Knowledge and appreciation of human diversity and the social context of their clients’ problems
Competency 2: The ability to respect the diversity of their clients and apply knowledge in this area in culturally consistent practice
Objective 5: To train our students in the understanding and application of the legal, ethical, and professional issues in Counseling Psychology. Students are expected to demonstrate:

*Competency 1: Knowledge of current legal, ethical, and professional issues*
*Competency 2: The ability to self-monitor their professional behavior*

Students are exposed to a variety of theoretical orientations.

**Program Requirements:**

1. **Coursework:** Described in the program sequence document and below under the curriculum description.

2. **Practicum:** Students are required to complete at least two years of practica. The first year of practicum occurs at the Auburn University Counseling Center. Practicum sites for the second year currently include several different types of placement in a public community mental health center, additional university counseling centers, two VA hospitals, a rehabilitation facility, a general hospital, and a private community mental health center. Other sites may also be available. In addition to supervision provided by training sites, the faculty provides both group and supplemental individual supervision as needed during the first year of practicum, and group supervision during the second year. Students remaining on-campus for their fourth year frequently seek out additional clinical experiences because many students find that they need a greater number of clinical hours and experiences than the minimum requirements of the program (standards required for program completion) to be competitive for internship.

3. **Doctoral written and general oral examinations:** All counseling psychology students take a comprehensive written examination that spans three half-days. Students will have completed most of their coursework prior to taking the examination. The written examination is constructed and evaluated by the counseling psychology faculty and covers the following three major areas:

   **A. Research:** This section includes research design and statistical testing.

   **B. Counseling Theory and Practice:** This section includes the theory and practice of individual and group counseling, counseling diverse populations, career counseling, and career development.

   **C. Ethics and Professional Issues in Counseling Psychology:** This section includes major professional issues in the field of psychology in general and counseling psychology in particular, as well as ethical and legal practices.

In addition to (and as a part of) the written examination described above, students are required to complete a psychotherapy project which involves submission of a case analysis and a presentation to the Counseling Psychology Faculty. Following the presentation, faculty may approve the project, require revisions to the written materials, require submission of a new sample of psychotherapy, and/or require remedial work before the student is afforded an opportunity to revise their psychotherapy project. The psychotherapy project must be submitted and passed within 1 year of the first attempt at the written examination.
The general oral examination cannot be held until the psychotherapy project has been completed and approved by the Counseling Psychology Faculty. The general oral examination is required for advancement to formal doctoral candidacy. It is conducted by the student’s committee and follows the successful completion of the written examination and psychotherapy project.

4. **Internship**: The pre-doctoral internship experience is designed to be an opportunity for the student to work as a clinical service provider while under supervision. The internship is a one-year full-time experience and usually requires geographic relocation on the part of the student. It is up to the student, in consultation with his or her advisor and the Director of the training program, to apply to internship sites that have high training standards and which offer training consistent with the student’s professional goals. Students apply for internship during the fall semester prior to starting their internship in the subsequent summer of fall term. A student may not apply for internship until the student has completed and passed the psychotherapy project, written preliminary exams, and the general oral examination. These things must be completed and passed no later than October 1 in the academic year during which the student applies to internship. In addition, for students who entered the program during or after the fall term of 2013, a student must have an approved dissertation prior to applying for internship. For those students who entered during or after fall of 2015, the student must have also held the dissertation proposal meeting not later than October 1 in the academic year during which the student applies to internship. The internship may not begin until after the student has successfully completed all coursework and the previously stated requirements for application to internship itself. Students are expected to seek and choose an internship site accredited by the American Psychological Association. See our program policies for further discussion about what is required regarding internship [http://www.education.auburn.edu/files/dept_serc/cop_policies.pdf](http://www.education.auburn.edu/files/dept_serc/cop_policies.pdf).

5. **Dissertation**: This is an independent, major research project planned and implemented by the student in consultation with the advisor and dissertation committee. The dissertation should involve an original research question, be appropriately ambitious in scope, and contribute to the knowledge base in the field. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been used.

For a complete list of requirements which must be met to remain in good standing in the program and earn the Ph.D., see our Program Policies [http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_policies.pdf](http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_policies.pdf) -- especially Policy #25 -- Minimum Levels of Acceptable Achievement.

**Administrative Structure**

The Ph.D. degree program in counseling psychology at Auburn University, accredited by the American Psychological Association since 1988, is administratively housed in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling (SERC) in the College of Education. This department was formed effective fall semester, 2008, when the Department of Counselor Education, Counseling Psychology, and School Psychology and the Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education merged. The Department (SERC) offers a number of degree programs (both Master’s and Doctoral, as well as undergraduate) in addition to the Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. Within the Counseling Psychology program, major policy decisions, student admission decisions, and required curriculum are set by the core Counseling Psychology Program faculty. All students are required to participate on a full-time basis.

Students may be considered for admission and enter with either the bachelor’s or master’s degree (applying as either post-bachelor’s or post-master’s applicants). At the current time, those who
enter with the bachelor’s degree do not obtain a master’s degree in route to the Ph.D. Although the program is working toward obtaining approval to offer a non-terminal master’s degree (which would only be available to students in the counseling psychology doctoral program), this option is not yet available.

Curriculum Description

The curriculum consists of the following:

1. **General Psychology Core.** These courses are typically taught by faculty in the Department of Psychology, but may also include courses in our own department or courses in departments such as Pharmacy or Human Development and Family Studies.

2. **Counseling Psychology core.** These courses are typically taught by the members of the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling and most often by core members of the Counseling Psychology Program Faculty.

3. **Research Courses.** These courses are typically taught by the faculties of the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling, and the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology. Students may also take some courses in this area in other departments such as Human Development and Family Studies or Psychology.

Below, we have outlined the current list of required courses. **However it is important to understand that the following list is subject to change.**

I. **Psychology Core**

- History of Ideas in Psychology or Great Ideas in Psychology
- Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior or Cognitive Psychology
- Biological Bases of Behavior
- Social Psychology

II. **Counseling Psychology Core**

- Contemporary Issues in Counseling Psychology (Includes ethical and legal issues)
- Introduction to Counseling Practice
- Counseling Theories
- Counseling Diverse Populations
- Advanced Measurement Theory
- Psychological Assessment of Adults
- Advanced Assessment and Diagnosis
- Intellectual Assessment (and lab, 6 credits total)
- Career Development and Vocational Appraisal
- Counseling Applications of Life-Span Development
- Group Counseling
- Advanced Theory (several courses to choose from, each emphasizing a different theory)
- Counseling Psychology Practicum (2 sem. min.)
- Advanced Practicum in Counseling Psychology (2 sem. min.)
- Supervision Theory and Practice
- Professional Seminar in Counseling Psychology
- Professional Seminar in Counseling Psychology (Internship Preparation)
III. Research

- Research Design and Evaluation in Counseling
- At least 6 hours (2 approved courses) of doctoral statistics

IV. Electives

Electives taken will depend on the training area(s) the student wishes to emphasize based on their individual interests and based on the courses offered during their time in the program (e.g., some courses taught as special topics courses may be used as electives when taught by the counseling psychology faculty). For the students who want to prepare for an Academic/Research career (and thus focus on research/teaching more in their coursework), additional courses may include additional research methodology or statistics courses, a specialty practicum in teaching, and independent studies focusing on research. For the students who want to prepare for a Practitioner career (and thus focus more assessment/therapy in their coursework), additional courses may include additional advanced theories courses and specialty practice topics (e.g., Health Psychology, Eating Disorders, Substance Abuse Disorders). However, it is important that applicants understand that any combination of courses may fulfill the elective requirement and these examples are only provided as guidance to help students select courses that would best prepare them for particular types of careers.

V. Dissertation

Described above—a minimum of 10 semester hours of credit must be earned. Students must be enrolled in dissertation credits while they are working on the dissertation. This may require that they enroll for more than 10 hours if they have not yet completed the dissertation at the time they have fulfilled the 10 hour minimum.

- Dissertation

VI. Internship

Described below. Each semester during the year-long internship the student enrolls in a zero-credit course, which allows payment of a minimum fee. The course is graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory. We cannot guarantee that the course will remain a zero credit course, and thus tuition may be charged in the future.

- Internship in Counseling Psychology

Program Values Regarding Tolerance and Acceptance, Multicultural Competence, and Diversity

Because counseling psychology is a part of the social sciences, it is inevitably bound up in values. Counseling psychologists often work with individuals who have been marginalized in one way or another, and it is therefore imperative that those who aspire to the Ph.D. in counseling psychology hold tolerance and acceptance among their most central values. Tolerance for, and the valuing of, diversity is expected of all students who are accepted into the program. In particular, the program expects that students will be respectful and supportive of individuals (including, but not limited to clients, colleagues, and faculty) who are different from themselves in terms of sexual orientation,
race/ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, religious preference, or disability. Standards for student behavior exceed the idea of non-discrimination. When there is diversity among clients and classmates in terms of ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious values, etc., it is our assumption that students will take personal responsibility for creating and maintaining a climate of safety and trust for all concerned. The program recognizes that few individuals (whether they be faculty or students) are completely free from all forms of prejudices. Furthermore, it is expected that there will be a range of attitudes and values concerning controversial issues. In fact, one of the goals of the program is to expose students to a diversity of intellectual ideas and deliberately challenge some of their (and our) long-held assumptions and values. Students should typically welcome this opportunity to have their ideas challenged. Membership in the departmental or program community is seen as a commitment to the social value of tolerance and to the process of self-examination so that prejudices may be evaluated in the light of both scientific data and the traditions of cooperation and mutual respect that, when appropriately present, have well served the human community. Prospective students who have reservations about their ability to show such tolerance in all the areas listed above should understand that the program, although committed to supporting the positive personal development of all enrolled students, will not support behaviors that are judged by the faculty to be highly intolerant. Although the program strongly reflects commitment to the constitutional right of free speech, tolerance for the values of others is a factor that may be used to screen applicants and to evaluate students. In addition, applicants should review the program policies, which describe the requirement of competence in working with diverse populations in order to successfully complete the program.

Our program has published this statement (and various slight revisions) regarding values, tolerance, and diversity since the early 1990s, and we believe that we are perhaps the first Ph.D. training program in counseling psychology to have adopted such a statement. We are proud that similar documents have now drawn on our statement, including statements adopted by multiple universities as well as a subsequently developed statement on diversity endorsed by the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs, the Association of Counseling Center Training Agents, and the Society of Counseling Psychology.
**Program Data**

**Applications:**
The first class of counseling psychology students entered the Auburn program in January, 1983. We were last site-visited for APA-accreditation in 2010 and were given the maximum time (seven years) prior to our next visit (2017). You may contact the APA Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association at: American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242; [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org); (202) 336-5979. Below, you will find the numbers of applicants to the program for the past 10 years. Currently, we have There are currently 43 students enrolled in the program (including seven who entered in 2015). All students are expected to be full-time, and all students begin the program in the fall semester.

Application/enrollment ratios for the past ten years are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Approx. # of Applications</th>
<th># of Students Entering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typically, we interview approximately 20-22 students and offer admission to approximately 8-10 students in order to fill a class of 5–7. A total of 37 students graduated between September, 2007, and August 31, 2015. Of these, 18 came to our program with a master’s degree or substantial graduate work in counseling or psychology and 19 came with little or no graduate work.

**Demographic data on current students:**

The age range of the student body is approximately 22 to 40.

The median GRE V+Q score for students who have over the past few years is is approximately 1120/311 (note, the first number reflects scoring on the former GRE system and the second number reflects scoring on the current system); the mean undergraduate GPA is 3.62 (median 3.65).

In the past seven years, approximately 50% of the students have entered with a master’s degree or substantial graduate work in psychology or counseling, and approximately 50% with a bachelor’s degree (only) or a master’s degree not in psychology or counseling.

Of the 43 students currently working on degrees [these include students taking courses, ABDs (all but dissertation completed), ABDIs (all but dissertation and internship completed)], 34 are female and 9 are male. Fourteen are students of color. Six of the 43 began internship in the summer/fall of 2015.
Information on Program Completion:
When all 29 (over the last 7 years) graduates are considered, the mean time to graduation was 6.03 years with a median time of 6 years.

Time to Completion for all students entering the program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Year in which Degrees were Conferred</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students in less than 5 years</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in 5 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in 6 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in 7 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in more than 7 years</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, please describe or provide a link to program admissions policies that allow students to enter with credit for prior graduate work, and the expected implications for time to completion. Please indicate NA if not applicable:

For students with prior graduate credit, the policy (policy #10) regarding substitution of courses is found at [http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_policies.pdf](http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_policies.pdf) The course substitution form can be found at [https://auburn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eI2u5zbYTK3IRN](https://auburn.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eI2u5zbYTK3IRN)

Time to completion is typically shorter for students entering with a master’s degree, but for all students the minimum time to completion is five years (including internship). Average time to graduate for students with a master's who bring in coursework is shorter than for those without.
## Internship Placement - Table 1

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained APA/CPA-accredited internships</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained APPIC member internships that were not APA/CPA-accredited <em>(if applicable)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained other membership organization internships (e.g. CAPIC) that were not APA/CPA-accredited <em>(if applicable)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained internships conforming to CDSPP guidelines that were not APA/CPA-accredited <em>(if applicable)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained other internships that were not APA/CPA-accredited <em>(if applicable)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained any internship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who sought or applied for internships including those who withdrew from the application process</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
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## Internship Placement - Table 2

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<td>N</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who sought or applied for internships including those who withdrew from the application process</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained paid internships</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who obtained half-time internships <em>(if applicable)</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cell should only include students who applied for internship and are included in applied cell count from “Internship Placement – Table 1”
Between the years fall 2005-summer 2013 (inclusive) a total of 35 students graduated from the program. As of September, 2015, 33 (94%) of these individuals are licensed. Of the remaining 2, both are in service roles and in the process of applying for licensure.

### Student Selection

**Program Data** (above) give characteristics of our students and provide data which are related to how we select students.

Shortly after the application deadline, members of the counseling psychology faculty will perform an initial screening of applications. The purpose of the initial screening is to sort applicants into three categories: (a) interview for possible admissions (b) hold for possible later consideration, or (c) deny admission. Applicants in the interview category will be contacted and invited to visit the campus for an on-campus interview. Although applicants living a great distance from Auburn or those with financial necessity may choose to interview by telephone/skype, the counseling psychology faculty members have a strong preference that all candidates be interviewed in person if possible. Students in our program have consistently reported that this campus visit was very helpful in their decision-making process about enrolling in the program.

The minimum GRE score (verbal and quantitative combined) preferred by the program is 1100 (using the old scoring system) or 312 (using the new scoring system). However, this is only one factor in admission decisions. The faculty also considers work or volunteer experience in the helping professions, research interests and experiences, professional objectives, letters of reference, and grade-point average. Applicants who score below the preferred score on the GRE, but who possess unusual strengths in several other areas will be considered. Our perception of the match between your professional goals and what the program offers, including its objectives and competencies, is an important consideration as we make decisions about who will be offered admission. The department is committed to enrolling students of diverse ethnicity and strongly encourages individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to apply for admission. We admit students who have completed only their undergraduate degrees as well as students who have completed a master’s degree.

- We prefer that applicants have some clinical experience, but we will consider you even if you do not. We have admitted some students who have very little or no such experience.
- We offer an opportunity for students to create an area of “focus” in our curriculum (see the required courses and examples of electives depending on the individual student’s career goals [e.g., academic, practitioner] on our webpage). This has traditionally reflected a difference in courses desired by students wanting to pursue an academic career or a practice career. You do not have to declare the “focus” you want at any particular time. There is no paperwork associated with choosing the courses other than preparing the general plan of study (i.e., students do not have to pick a focus and can take elective courses in both of these traditional domains). In some sense the career-focus
approach is more a matter of “flavor” than true specializations. That being said, a significant majority of our applicants are very interested in practice and the great majority of our students take initial jobs that are in the practice arena. Our program uses a scientist-practitioner training model, so the integration of science and practice is emphasized.

- There may be a small increase in the probability of your being accepted if you have a master’s degree, but it is not typically a significant increase. Obviously, if you have done very well in your master’s program, that would be an advantage. Among students who entered in 2015, two out of seven of our students had master’s degrees in counseling or experimental psychology. Below is the pattern of students entering with substantial graduate training for the past few years
  - 2014: two of seven students had a masters degree in counseling or psychology and one student had a masters degree in another area;
  - 2013: seven of seven of students had master’s degrees in counseling or psychology;
  - 2012: two of seven students had master’s degrees in counseling or psychology;
  - 2011: four of seven students had master’s degrees in counseling or psychology;

There is obviously variation from year to year in terms of whether entering students do or do not have a master’s degree. Applicants who have limited background in psychology at the undergraduate level are not seriously disadvantaged if they have a master’s degree in psychology or counseling. However, applicants who have not done graduate work in psychology or counseling, and did not major in psychology as an undergraduate, will be at some disadvantage if they have not completed several psychology courses and have some research and applied experience. Experience in applied settings (such as volunteer work in a community mental health center) is particularly helpful in such circumstances. At Auburn, we do not have a policy about a minimum number of hours that you must have in psychology to apply to our program, but, as just indicated, we do want applicants to have completed several psychology courses. Individuals who completed few psychology courses as an undergraduate and don’t have a master’s degree in psychology, counseling, or a closely related field, should seriously consider obtaining a master's degree before applying to our program.

- Applicants who are currently in a master’s degree program sometimes wonder whether doing a thesis will improve their chances of being admitted into our program. That depends on a number of variables, including the topic of the thesis and whether the applicant has done other research. Generally, having written a thesis does somewhat increase the chances of admission, but probably not significantly so.

- Potential applicants sometimes ask, “how can I increase my chances of being admitted?” As we suggested above, we consider a broad range of qualifications when we admit students. Our answer to this question often looks like this: “have a high GPA and GRE scores, do research and have some clinical experience, and work with faculty members and supervisors enough so that they are willing to ‘go out on a limb’ for you in their letters of reference. When someone says, for example, ‘This is one of the two or three best students I’ve had in 10 years,’ we take such comments seriously. The references should be from people who know your work. Letters from people who ‘know of you’ but who have not directly supervised you or taught you count for somewhat less. Letters from family friends do not help very much. On average, letters written by psychologists are weighted perhaps somewhat higher than others. We are particularly interested in references provided by individuals who have had an opportunity to recommend many students for Ph.D. programs. Grades in undergraduate psychology courses are considered more closely than are other grades. We consider personal attributes to be very important. These include traits such as behaving ethically, always doing significantly more than the minimum, being responsive to feedback, being respectful of diversity, having intellectual curiosity, being self-reflective, being supportive of others, being easy to talk to, and being non-defensive.

**Academic Preparation and Admission Requirements**

The following information is taken from the Graduate School Section of the University Bulletin (http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/admissions/) and lists the academic preparation required by, and the admissions requirements of, the Graduate School:
1. The applicant must hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution, or the equivalent from an international institution.
2. The applicant must be in good academic standing at the institution last attended.
3. The applicant must submit standardized examination scores (GRE, GMAT, and/or TOEFL). Applicants with an earned doctorate (Professional, EdD, PhD) from an accredited institution whose instruction is in English may be exempted from this requirement.
4. The successful applicant normally will meet one of the following: a) a GPA of at least 2.75 on all undergraduate course work at an accredited United States institution in fulfillment of the requirements for a baccalaureate degree; b) a GPA of at least 3.0 on all graduate course work at an accredited United States institution in fulfillment of the requirements for a graduate degree; or c) an acceptable GRE or GMAT score as determined by the program to which the applicant applies.
5. Applicants whose native language is not English must submit either TOEFL scores of at least 550 on the written test (213 on the computer-based test, 79 on the Internet Based Test with 16 in each section) or IELTS scores of at least 6.5.
6. The applicant must be recommended for admission by the graduate faculty in the applicant’s area of study.
7. The applicant must disclose all institutions beyond secondary school, including Auburn University, which the applicant previously attended; similarly, all coursework and/or degrees must be disclosed.
8. The applicant must complete the program application supplement and have three references submit recommendations using the program recommendation form.
9. Applicants must indicate whether they wish to be considered for application as a post-bachelors or post-masters student on the program application supplement.

The program does not impose further requirements for admission, other than the submission of required documents to the department by the yearly deadline. (See Application and Admission Procedure below.)

We expect that applicants will score above the Graduate School minimums in terms of GPA, TOEFL, etc. Due to the competitive nature of program admissions, many students who meet the minimum qualifications will not be admitted to the program (See Program Data above, this document).

**Application and Admission Procedure**

All applicants for admission to the doctoral program in Counseling Psychology must make application to the (1) Auburn University Graduate School and the (2) Doctoral Program in Counseling Psychology, housed in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling. Graduate School forms may be completed and submitted via the web. Go to the Graduate School homepage (www.grad.auburn.edu/) and then click on “apply on-line.”

Applicants may complete and submit (via email) their Counseling Psychology Program Application Supplement, found here: [http://education.auburn.edu/academic_departments/serc/academicprograms/counpsych.html](http://education.auburn.edu/academic_departments/serc/academicprograms/counpsych.html). If submitting a hardcopy application, please mail completed forms rather than fax them.

Forms to be completed by personal references are found by using a clickable link on the URL listed immediately above. Reference forms must be completed and mailed/ emailed directly (by persons serving as references) to the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling. We strongly prefer the reference to email (rather than send via traditional mail) letters of reference because email is the quickest means by which to submit materials.
In summary, application to the program is initiated by submitting relevant documents to the 
Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling, 2084 Haley Center, Auburn 
University, Auburn, Alabama 36849, and to Auburn University Graduate School, 106 Hargis 
Hall, Auburn, Alabama 36849. Completed applications consist of all of the following 
materials:

A. Submitted to the Auburn University Graduate School:

1. Auburn University Graduate Application and fee
2. GRE scores (verbal and quantitative—these scores must be no more than five years old.)
3. Transcripts from each college/university attended

B. Submitted to the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling:

1. Program application supplement
2. Three letters of reference
3. Photocopy of official GRE scores
4. Photocopy of official transcripts

There is no fee for submitting the program application supplement, but there is (as of Sept, 2014) a $60 
fee for an application to the Graduate School. It is the applicant’s responsibility to make certain that all 
materials have been received by the Graduate School and by the department. 
The application DEADLINE is December 11, 2015 for entry in Fall 2016.

Tuition, Fees, and Financial Assistance

Tuition Information for those without financial assistance (i.e., those who do not have graduate assistantships 
that qualify for tuition waivers) is listed in the table below (as of August, 2015).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2015-2016 1st-year Cohort Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition for full-time students (in-state)</td>
<td>$13,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition for full-time students (out-of-state)</td>
<td>$39,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition per credit hour for part-time students (if applicable enter amount; if not applicable enter &quot;NA&quot;)</td>
<td>$489 in-state &amp; $1,467 out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/institution fees or costs</td>
<td>$2,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional estimated fees or costs to students (e.g. books, travel, etc.)</td>
<td>varies (est. 2,250)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above rates reflect the current tuition rates for 2015-2016. Rates are subject to change each year. 
Applicants who wish to be considered for a departmental assistantship may contact Ms. Nancy Evans at 
evansna@auburn.edu for a copy of the departmental assistantship application. The deadline for applying 
for a departmental assistantship to begin in Fall, 2016 is April 1, 2016. An applicant for assistantship may 
not be considered until the applicant has completed and passed a background check (consistent with 
university requirements). The fee for the background check is $35, which students want an assistantship 
are encouraged to pay and complete as soon as they have accepted an offer of admission. Information 
about other financial support available to graduate students may be found at 
http://www.grad.auburn.edu/ps/aid.html

Information regarding tuition and fees at Auburn University may be found on the Student 
Financial Services website: http://www.auburn.edu/administration/iss/business_office/bursar/ As 
of September, 2015, the revised tuition rates may be found at:
As of August, 2015, graduate students, whether residents or non-residents of Alabama, who are employed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant or as a Graduate Research Assistant for at least 1/3 time and who meet other Graduate School criteria currently receive full tuition fellowships (and those who hold one for the fall and spring term receive full tuition remission for the summer term). In addition, departments have some ability (based on a formula) to provide a limited number of students with the full tuition benefit for the terms they hold the Graduate Teaching or Research Assistantship for at least 1/4 time. Beyond the set number of full tuition benefits allocated to a department (where those with Assistantships at 1/4 time receive full tuition remission), all graduate students with a 1/4 time Graduate Student Teaching or Research Assistantship receive in-state tuition rates plus a 50% discount. At present, any student who holds a 1/4 time assistantship in the program has the full tuition fellowship benefit. In all cases, students must meet Graduate School criteria (e.g., maintain a GPA > 3.0). See: http://www.grad.auburn.edu/ps/presgradfellows.html When they hold the 1/3 time (or in special cases of a 1/4 time assistantship), graduate students, whether residents or non-residents of Alabama, pay certain fees, but no tuition.

All students, regardless of assistantship type and status pay some fees. For counseling psychology students who entered Auburn in the fall semester of 2015, these fees are approximately $808 per semester (which includes university required registration fee). There is a one-time background check fee for individuals wishing to hold graduate assistantships. There is also a $563 graduate assistantship fee each term (paid by students holding assistantships that qualify them for part of full tuition waivers; however, these students do not pay the $808 registration fee listed above) and practicum fee ($15) each term during later years (paid regardless of assistantship status). In addition, students pay a parking fee of $80 or greater (optional and dependent upon parking zone) and a mandatory health insurance policy fee of approximately $1,041 annually (after subsidy) unless one has other acceptable health insurance and submits required documentation of such coverage by the university deadline. Fees are subject to change.

If the tuition waivers were not in effect for the fall of 2015, out-of-state students enrolled in nine hours or more could expect to spend $55,000 in tuition and fees (parking, travel, texts, and practicum fees not included) for the 2014-2015 academic year. In-state student could expect to pay approximately $18,000 in tuition and fees (parking, travel, texts, and practicum fees not included) for the 2014-2015 academic year. With the full tuition fellowships, students typically pay about $5,000 for the fees (health insurance fee, graduate assistantship fee, texts, travel, etc). The university also charges graduation fees if they are not enrolled in classes in the term in which they graduate. International student applicants should contact the Office of International Programs or visit the website: http://www.auburn.edu/academic/international/students.php for additional information. International students may also wish to email the office (intledu@auburn.edu) for additional information.

It is important to realize that the program does not guarantee financial assistance prior to acceptance into the program, cannot guarantee that all students will receive an assistantship, and cannot guarantee that students who receive an assistantship will receive full tuition waivers or even reductions in tuition from out-of-state tuition rates to in-state rates. Assuming they continue, tuition waivers may be used to cover the minimum number of graduate hours required for the degree plus an additional number of hours up to 10% of the required number of credit hours. Although individuals who hold an assistantship in the summer are eligible for full or partial tuition waivers and some who hold 1/3 time 9-month assistantships receive full tuition waivers, it is highly unlikely that all students who had an assistantship (especially inside the department) for the fall and spring will also receive an assistantship in the summer. Students who do not have an assistantship during the summer, but who had an assistantship during the academic year, may be required to pay in-state tuition for the summer (depending upon whether they held a 1/4 or 1/3 time assistantship the previous two semesters and the year at which they entered the program).
Applicants for whom financial assistance is important are encouraged to maintain contact with the program to learn of on-going changes in rules concerning assistantships. For the past 10 years, all counseling psychology students who desired an assistantship, were in good standing, had performed adequately in their assistantship(s) previously, and who were in their first or second year of study have received some type of assistantship (not including summers). Furthermore, many, although not all, third- and fourth-year students have also been supported. It is possible for students to receive funding beyond their fourth year, but such funding is rare and generally requires the student to have funding through an assistantship outside the department. Assistantships beyond the first year often require initiative on the part of the graduate student. For more information about assistantships, see our FAQs on our Program webpage
http://www.education.auburn.edu/graduate-degree-cert/counseling-psychology-ph-d/

Applicants for whom financial assistance is important are encouraged to maintain contact with the program to learn of on-going changes in rules concerning assistantships.

Student Support Services

An important resource for Ph.D. students in Counseling Psychology at Auburn is the student organization, Association of Counseling Psychology Students at Auburn (ACOPS). The Association elects officers annually, has monthly meetings, provides feedback to faculty, and is involved in a variety of professional activities.

Auburn University provides a wide variety of support services for enrolled students. These include resources such as Student Counseling Services, Office of International Student Life, Student Financial Aid, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Career Development Services, Safe Harbor (sexual assault program), University Medical Center, Pharmacy Outreach Clinic, and Student Recreation/Activity Center. Other resources include the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, a comprehensive library system, the Learning Resources Center in the College of Education, and excellent university computer facilities. Support for diverse students takes a variety of forms, including the University Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Office of Accessibility, Spectrum Alliance (graduate student support group for LGBTQIQA students at Auburn), Auburn Feminist Alliance, Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA), and the President’s Graduate Opportunity Program Scholarships, for which African-American graduate students may apply. A more complete list of diversity-related student organizations may be found at: https://cws.auburn.edu/diversity/pm/audOrganizations

Program and University Policies

Our program policies can be found at: http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_policies.pdf. The Auburn University Student Handbook describes the university’s academic grievance procedures for students, lists various university policies such as the Harassment/Discrimination Policy, etc. This publication may be found on-line at: http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/_The Auburn University Bulletin contains listings of courses, university policies, etc. Of particular interest to prospective students is the section of the Bulletin pertaining to the Graduate School. This section of the Bulletin describes university policies regarding due process for graduate students, course withdrawal policies, etc. The Bulletin may be accessed on-line: http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin. Graduate School forms (and other relevant information concerning the Graduate School specifically) may be accessed on the Graduate School Homepage: www.grad.auburn.edu In addition to program
policies, various other documents relevant to the program may be found on its homepage: http://www.education.auburn.edu/graduate-degree-cert/counseling-psychology-ph-d/

Location and Local Living Conditions

Auburn University is Alabama's largest land-grant state institution and is located in Auburn, Alabama, in the east central part of the state. It was chartered in 1856, and has an enrollment of approximately 25,000 students of which about 5,000 are graduate students. The city of Auburn has a population of approximately 60,000 and the Auburn-Opelika metropolitan area has a population of around 150,000. Auburn is located 110 miles from Atlanta, Georgia, and 50 miles from Montgomery, the state capital. The Atlanta International Airport is around 90 minutes by car (via Interstate 85) from Auburn.

There are a variety of housing opportunities available to students at Auburn University. Several of our students have been employed by University Housing as Resident Directors and Senior Resident Assistants while enrolled in the program. These are “live-in” positions; students may be married but may not take on this role if they have children in the home. Applicants are expected to have prior experience in residence and campus life. If you think you might be interested in such a position, you should contact the office of Housing and Residence Life http://www.auburn.edu/residencelife/employment/.

With the exception of the “live-in” positions described above, Auburn University does not offer housing for graduate students. Off-campus housing opportunities are numerous and include one-room efficiency apartments, full-size apartments with 1-4 bedrooms, off-campus dormitories, mobile homes, condominiums, duplexes, and houses. On occasion, Counseling Psychology students who are currently enrolled may be seeking roommates to share an apartment or house for the coming year. Rents vary widely, but may be lower than those in many cities. For information concerning off-campus housing, contact local realtors or check the local newspaper, the Opelika-Auburn News. The website for the Department of Housing and Residence Life (http://auburn.edu/administration/housing/) contains linkages to other websites that allow you to search for off-campus housing. Housing arrangements should be made as early as possible by entering students; however, leases for houses and duplexes expire at various times; therefore, frequent and repeated checking for vacancies is a good idea.

Faculty

Faculty members in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling (SERC) have a diversity of backgrounds and interests. Students in the Counseling Psychology program may also work closely with faculty in the Department of Psychology, and other departments as well.

Faculty members in the Department who are most likely to teach classes or serve on doctoral committees for counseling psychology students are listed below, together with their research interests. Members of the Core Counseling Psychology faculty are indicated below by an asterisk (*). In addition to those faculty listed below, other faculty members in the department are involved in research and outreach consistent with the area closely related to counseling psychology. For more information about programs and faculty in our department, go to: http://www.education.auburn.edu/special-education-rehabilitation-and-counseling. The Department enjoys a rich tradition of interdisciplinary collaboration.
*Joseph A. Buckhalt, Ph.D.* (George Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, 1974). Sleep in children and adolescents and relations to cognitive functioning, emotion regulation, and behavior problems. Risk and protective factors for academic and behavior problems related to socioeconomic status and ethnicity.

**Jamie Carney, Ph.D.** (Ohio University, 1990). Examination of educational and training interventions for working with persons with HIV disease, including consideration of attitudes. Additional focus on evaluation methods used in counselor training programs. (Director of Counselor Education Program).

*Marilyn A. Cornish, Ph.D.* (Iowa State University, 2014). Research interests include the processes and outcomes of psychotherapy, forgiveness and self-forgiveness in counseling, religion and spirituality (and intersecting multicultural factors) in group counseling, and stigma associated with seeking mental health care.
Amanda Evans, Ph.D. (Auburn University, 2010). Research interests in problematic counseling students, counseling men, and ethical decision making. (Director of the Clinical Mental Health Program).

Melanie M. Scherer Iarussi, Ph.D. (Kent State University, 2011). Research and professional interests include substance abuse counseling, college counseling, and applications of and the dissemination of motivational interviewing, including populations served and training issues.

*Annette S. Kluck, Ph.D. - (Texas Tech University, 2006). External factors in the development of disordered eating and human sexuality with an emphasis on atypical sexual behavior. (Director of the Counseling Psychology Program).

*Randolph B. Pipes, Ph.D. (University of Texas, 1977). Research and professional interests include professional ethics in psychology, therapist/client relationship, bias and error in judgment.

Suhyun Park Suh, Ph.D. (University of Alabama, 2001). Research and professional interests include multicultural counseling, issues among minority adolescents, parenting, school counseling, spirituality in counseling. (Director of School Counseling Program).

Chippewa Thomas, Ph.D. (Auburn University, 2004). Research and professional interests include admission, training, and competency evaluation issues in Counselor education. Also interests in multicultural issues and concerns, and the use of technology in training and service delivery. (Office of Outreach).

**Other Questions & Program Contact**

Questions concerning admission, assistantships, and other aspects of the program should be addressed to:

Annette S. Kluck, Ph.D., Director of Training  
Counseling Psychology Program  
Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, & Counseling  
2084 Haley Center  
Auburn, Alabama 36849-5222  
(334) 844-7676  
ask0002@auburn.edu

For additional information, see FAQs and also Program Policies which may be accessed from our website at http://www.education.auburn.edu/graduate-degree-cert/counseling-psychology-ph-d/

The Counseling Psychology Program at Auburn University is accredited by the American Psychological Association, and is also included in the National Register of Health Service Providers List of Designated Psychology Programs. You may contact the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association at: American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002–4242, www.apa.org. Phone: (202) 336–5979.

The homepage for Auburn University is: http://www.auburn.edu/
Auburn University is an Equal Opportunity Educational Institution

Applicants for 2016 should ensure that the Program Application Form has “2016” at the top of the application form. Do not submit forms with dates from previous years. Deadline for receipt of application for enrollment in Fall 2016 is December 11, 2015.

Information in this document will be updated and posted to the web periodically. If you are using this document in a printed format, please check to ensure that you have the most recent version: (http://www.education.auburn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/cop_programdescription.pdf)