COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION FOR

PROSPECTIVE AND CURRENT STUDENTS

ADMISSION: FALL 2017
Counseling Psychology Program

APA ACCREDITED

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

Revised: 4-2-17

For more information, view Program Policies and Frequently Asked Questions as well as other program documents on the Counseling Psychology PhD webpage.

“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.”

Source: American Psychological Association

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 Aim/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 of training in health service psychology. We place an emphasis training in skills needed to address mental and behavioral 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 health service psychology program that utilizes a scientist-practitioner training model includes the following Discipline-Specific Knowledge, Profession-Wide Competencies, and Program-Specific Competencies:

**Discipline-Specific Knowledge**

**Category 1: History & Systems of Psychology**

(a) Affective Aspects of Behavior
(b) Biological Aspects of Behavior
(c) Cognitive Aspects of Behavior
(d) Developmental Aspects of Behavior
(e) Social Aspects of Behavior

**Category 2: Research and Quantitative Methods (also see Profession-Wide Competencies)**

(a) Research Methods
(b) Quantitative Methods
(c) Psychometrics

**Category 2: Advanced Integrative Knowledge in Scientific Psychology**

*Note: at this time our program does not allow students to use courses completed at the undergraduate level in partial fulfillment of the Basic Content Areas requirements.*
Profession-Wide Competencies for Health Service Psychology Doctoral Programs
Source: American Psychological Association Accreditation Policies (PDF)

Research
Element 1: Demonstrate the substantially independent ability to formulate research or other scholarly activities that are of sufficient quality and rigor to have the potential to contribute to the scientific, psychological, or professional knowledge base.
Element 2: Conduct research or other scholarly activities.
Element 3: Critically evaluate and disseminate research or other scholarly activity via professional publication and presentation at the local, regional, or national level.

Ethical and Legal Standards
Element 1: Be knowledgeable of and act in accordance with each of the following:
   (a) The current version of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct
   (b) Relevant laws, regulations, rules, and policies governing health service psychology at the organizational, local, state, regional, and federal levels; and
   (c) Relevant professional standards and guidelines.
Element 2: Recognize ethical dilemmas as they arise, and apply ethical decision-making processes in order to resolve the dilemmas.
Element 3: Conduct self in an ethical manner in all professional activities.

Individual and Cultural Diversity
Element 1: An understanding of how their own personal/cultural history, attitudes, and biases may affect how they understand and interact with people different from themselves.
Element 2: Knowledge of the current theoretical and empirical knowledge base as it relates to addressing diversity in all professional activities including research, training, supervision/consultation, and service.
Element 3: The ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences in the conduct of professional roles (e.g., research, services, and other professional activities). This includes the ability to apply a framework for working effectively with areas of individual and cultural difference not previously encountered over the course of their careers. Also included is the ability to work effectively with individuals whose group membership, demographic characteristics, or worldviews create conflict with their own.
Element 4: Demonstrate the requisite knowledge base, ability to articulate an approach to working effectively with diverse individuals and groups, and apply this approach effectively in their professional work.

Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors
Element 1: Behave in ways that reflect the values and attitudes of psychology, including integrity, deportment, professional identity, accountability, lifelong learning, and concern for the welfare of others.
Element 2: Engage in self-reflection regarding one’s personal and professional functioning; engage in activities to maintain and improve performance, well-being, and professional effectiveness.
Element 3: Actively seek and demonstrate openness and responsiveness to feedback and supervision.

Element 4: Respond professionally in increasingly complex situations with a greater degree of independence as they progress across levels of training.

Communications and Interpersonal Skills

Element 1: Develop and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of individuals, including colleagues, communities, organizations, supervisors, supervisees, and those receiving professional services.

Element 2: Produce and comprehend oral, nonverbal, and written communications that are informative and well-integrated; demonstrate a thorough grasp of professional language and concepts.

Element 3: Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills and the ability to manage difficult communication well.

Assessment

Element 1: Select and apply assessment methods that draw from the best available empirical literature and that reflect the science of measurement and psychometrics; collect relevant data using multiple sources and methods appropriate to the identified goals and questions of the assessment as well as relevant diversity characteristics of the service recipient.

Element 2: Interpret assessment results, following current research and professional standards and guidelines, to inform case conceptualization, classification, and recommendations, while guarding against decision-making biases, distinguishing the aspects of assessment that are subjective from those that are objective.

Element 3: Communicate orally and in written documents the findings and implications of the assessment in an accurate and effective manner sensitive to a range of audiences.

Intervention

Element 1: Establish and maintain effective relationships with the recipients of psychological services.

Element 2: Develop evidence-based intervention plans specific to the service delivery goals.

Element 3: Implement interventions informed by the current scientific literature, assessment findings, diversity characteristics, and contextual variables.

Element 4: Demonstrate the ability to apply the relevant literature to clinical decision making.

Element 5: Modify and adapt evidence-based approaches effectively when a clear evidence-base is lacking.

Element 6: Evaluate intervention effectiveness, and adapt intervention goals and methods consistent with ongoing evaluation.

Supervision

Element 1: Demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practice.
Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

**Element 1:** Demonstrate knowledge and respect for the roles and perspectives of other professions.

**Element 2:** Demonstrate knowledge of consultation models and practices.

Program-Specific Competencies for the Counseling Psychology Program and Auburn University

The program has two Program-Specific Competencies:

**Group Therapy**

**Element 1:** Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical foundations of group counseling/psychotherapy.

**Element 2:** Demonstrate understanding of types of groups and other considerations that affect the facilitation of therapy groups in varied settings.

**Element 3:** Implement group therapy interventions informed by theories of group therapy consistent with counseling psychology, evidence-based practices, and needs of the group and group members.

**Social Justice**

**Element 1:** Identify social injustices for which change efforts can be informed by psychological science and values of counseling psychology.

**Element 2:** Apply knowledge of social justice and advocacy principles to an identified social injustice.

Program Requirements:

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

2. **Practicum:** Students are required to complete 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 and during summers 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.

Students who enter the program during or after Fall, 2017 will also complete a Competency Portfolio. The Competency Portfolio, which is done following the written examination described above, consists of students providing evidence of their mastery of several competencies that are critical to the practice of health service psychology. These competencies include psychotherapy skill, group therapy skill, professionalism activities, and professional skills.

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.

1. 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, competency portfolio (for those who enter during or after Fall, 2017), and the general oral examination (which is the dissertation proposal for all students who enter the program during or after Fall, 2017). These things must be completed and passed no 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 more information about what is required regarding internship (Program Policies are available on the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage in the “Degree Overview” section.)

2. **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](#) available at our program webpage. Especially see 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 Counseling Psychology Program Core 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). Starting in the Summer of 2017, those who enter with the bachelor’s can obtain a master’s degree in route to the Ph.D. It is important to understand that this is considered a non-terminal master’s degree and no student is directly admitted into the master’s program.

**Curriculum Description**

The curriculum consists of the following:

1. **Discipline-Specific Knowledge 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. This also includes one course in Advanced Integrative Knowledge of Basic Discipline-Specific Content Areas (the Health Psychology and Wellness Counseling Course).
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 Core.** 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. Discipline-Specific Knowledge Core**
- Great Ideas in Psychology or History of Ideas in Psychology
- Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior
- Biological Bases of Behavior
- Social Psychology
- Counseling Applications of Lifespan Development
- Psychological Science and Health (previously taught as Psychology and Wellness Counseling)

**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 Development and Pre-Internship Seminar Research

**III. Research Core**
- Research Design and Evaluation in Counseling
- At least 6 hours (2 approved courses) of doctoral statistics
- Four semesters of Counseling Psychology Colloquium
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., 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 psychologists often work with individuals who have been marginalized, it is imperative that those who aspire to the PhD in counseling psychology hold respect for diversity and strive to contribute to an interpersonal environment of safety and respect for all individuals. Respect 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 all individuals (including, but not limited to, clients, classmates, students, staff, and faculty), including those who are different from themselves in terms of age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, language, national origin, race, religious preference, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or socioeconomic status.

Standards for student behavior exceed the idea of “non-discrimination.” Faculty in the program believe the most effective training environment involves an openness to learning
about others who are different from themselves, acceptance of diversity, and actions that foster inclusion. When students encounter others who differ from them on one or more identity status, it is the assumption of the program that students will work to help create a climate of safety and trust for all concerned. Faculty recognize that no one is completely free from all forms of prejudice and bias. Furthermore, it is expected that there will be a range of attitudes and values concerning controversial issues. Nonetheless, enrollment in the program is seen as a commitment to the valuing of diversity and the process of self-examination so that bias can be evaluated in the light of both scientific data and the traditions of cooperation and mutual respect. In addition, this program strives to develop counseling psychologists who will actively work toward correcting social injustices by engaging in advocacy and/or activism for and with marginalized groups.

Prospective students who have reservations about their ability to show acceptance of diversity in all the demographic areas listed above should understand that the program, while committed to supporting the positive personal development of all enrolled students, will not support behaviors which are judged by the faculty to be highly intolerant and/or that create a hostile environment for others. Examples of behaviors that can create a hostile environment include, but are not limited to: using derogatory terms, insults, telling derogatory jokes, taunting, and intimidation. Faculty will consider the context, nature, scope, frequency, duration, and severity of incidents to determine whether a student has created a hostile environment. Similarly, although the program will take no action to abridge one's constitutional right of free speech, tolerance and respect for the values of others are factors which may be used to evaluate students. Students and prospective students found to have violated this Policy Statement will be subject to policies related to remediation and dismissal.

Drawing from the recommendations set forth by the APA Board of Educational Affairs, we as a program are committed to developing psychologists with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be able to work effectively with members of the public who embody intersecting demographics, attitudes, beliefs, and values. Students will, in the course of their training, inevitably encounter clients who are from different cultures, who hold different values from them, who are of different sexual orientations, etc. When graduate students’ attitudes, beliefs, or values create tensions that negatively impact the training process or their ability to effectively work with members of the public, the program faculty and supervisors are committed to a developmental training approach designed to support the acquisition of professional competence. Professional competencies are determined by the profession for the benefit and protection of the public; consequently, students do not have the option to avoid working with particular client populations or refuse to develop professional competencies because of conflicts with their attitudes, beliefs, or values. We will support graduate students in finding a belief- or value-congruent path that will allow them to work in a professionally competent manner with all individuals.

Students are required to honor not merely the Ethics Code of the American Psychological Association (APA; see Policy #1), but also to be familiar with and to abide by the various Guidelines published by the APA for working with individuals from marginalized groups. In addition, students are encouraged to access the website for the Auburn University Office of
Inclusion and Diversity for details on university expectations and priorities with regard to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion.

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 for Potential Applicants
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; (202) 336-5979. On our website at the link for Admissions, Outcomes and Other data, you can find a variety of data about the program, our applicant statistics, time to degree completion, internship match rate, and more. We strongly encourage applicants to review that material.

Student Selection
Selection Process
Program data available within the “Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data” document 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 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. There is obviously variation from year to year in terms of whether entering students do or do not have a master’s degree, but approximately 40% of students admitted in recent years have had master’s degrees.
- 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 Admissions found in the Auburn Bulletin. The site 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 (this is a program policy).

The program does not impose further requirements for admission, other than the submission of required documents to the department by the yearly deadline (which includes the requirement to declare as post bachelors or post-masters applicant). (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 (1) the Auburn University Graduate School, and (2) the Doctoral Program in Counseling Psychology, housed in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling. Graduate School application forms may be completed and submitted via the web.

Forms to be completed by personal references may also be found on the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage listed under “Application Materials”. Reference forms must be completed and uploaded into the Graduate School application portal directly (by persons serving as references). The portal will ask your references to provide some information about you and upload a letter. We ask that you clearly inform your references that they should include the form our program uses as the first page of the letter.

In summary, application to the program is initiated by submitting relevant documents to the 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
4. CV
5. Diversity Statement
6. Program application supplement
7. Three letters of reference

There is a 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 12 of each year for entry for the subsequent Fall semester.

Tuition, Fees, and Financial Assistance

Information about tuition and fees and graduate assistantships can be found within the “Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data” document on the program website.

Applicants who wish to be considered for a departmental assistantship may contact Ms. Nancy Evans to request the departmental assistantship application. The deadline for applying for a departmental assistantship to begin in any Fall term always April 1st of the same calendar year. 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. More information about other financial support available to graduate students may be found by viewing Ways to Fund Your Graduate Education.

Specific tuition information can be found at Tuition and Costs and Basic Charges in the Auburn Bulletin.

Information about other financial support available to graduate students may be found at Ways to Fund Your Graduate Education and the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling Scholarship Information.

Information regarding tuition and fees at Auburn University may be found on the Student Financial Services website. Tuition rates (and a tuition and fees calculator) may be found at Tuition and Costs.

Graduate students, whether residents or non-residents of Alabama, who are employed as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, Graduate 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
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 Assistantship (of any of the three types listed above) 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 Guidelines for Graduate Tuition Fellowships). 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.

It is important to note that some assistantships may be classified in such a way that students may have to pay taxes on a portion of the waived tuition. For more information about the various types of assistantships and which are subject involve potential taxation of the stipend and tuition waiver view the Graduate Assistantships & Fellowships found in the Auburn Bulletin.

All students, regardless of assistantship type and status pay some fees. More information about those fees is available in the “Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data” document/

The program does not guarantee financial assistance prior to acceptance into the program. It 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. Assistantships beyond the first year often require initiative on the part of the graduate student. For more information about assistantships, see our Frequently Asked Questions link found on the Counseling Psychology PhD webpage.
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 Inclusion and Diversity, 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. The Office of Inclusion and Diversity has a more complete list of diversity-related student organizations.

Program and University Policies

Our “Program Policies” can be found on the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage. The Auburn University Student Policy eHandbook describes the university’s academic grievance procedures for students, lists various university policies such as the Harassment/Discrimination Policy, etc. A link to this publication may be also be found on-line at the link labeled “Program Policies” on the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage.

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 Auburn University Bulletin is an online document.

Graduate School forms and other relevant information concerning the Graduate School specifically are available at the Graduate School website.

In addition to program policies, various other documents relevant to the program may be found on the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage.

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 60 miles from Montgomery, the state capital. The Hartsfield-Jackson 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 University Housing and Residence Life.

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 University Housing and Residence Life 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.
*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).

**Evelyn Hunter, Ph.D.** (Auburn University, 2012). Research interests include disordered eating in minority communities, multicultural competencies in counseling psychology (with an emphasis on women of color), and training and professional competency considerations in various contexts.

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

**Jill M. Meyer, Ph.D.** (University of Missouri-St. Louis, 2011). Research interests are positive psychology, including coping, well-being and adaptation in individuals with chronic illness and disability; disability identity development; and general research methodology.

**Randolph B. Pipes, Ph.D.** (University of Texas, 1977). Retired, not accepting students.

**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 and 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  
Email [Annette Kluck](mailto:Annette Kluck)

For additional information, see “Frequently Asked Questions” and also “Program Policies” found on the [Counseling Psychology Ph.D.](http://www.counselingpsychology.abe.edu) website.
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, website, Phone: (202) 336–5979.

For more information about Auburn University, view the website.

Auburn University is an Equal Opportunity Educational Institution

Applicants for 2018 should ensure that the Program Application Form has “2018” 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 2018 is December 12, 2017.

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 by viewing of the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. webpage.