



SPS 6945
Introduction to School Psychology Practicum
86464 001
Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Kahlila Lawrence

University Course Description

Supports the development of independent and competent service delivery for first-year school psychology graduate students. Students will gain early exposure to the practice of school psychology while receiving both field and university supervision. Throughout this course, students will become increasingly knowledgeable about the school psychologist's role within a variety of educational settings.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

Weekly meetings via in-person class sessions.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, school psychology students will be able to:

- Identify the variety of roles fulfilled by the school psychologist within a school's MTSS framework.
- Demonstrate knowledge of various aspects of school organizations and the impact on school psychological services.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the roles and functions of school problem-solving and special education teams.
- Integrate skills and knowledge obtained through formal coursework into practice within a school setting under appropriate supervision.
- Identify and explain a variety of assessment methods used for academic, behavior, and mental health concerns.
- Explain best practices in the assessment of culturally and linguistically-diverse students.
- Demonstrate an awareness of how school climate and culture impacts student performance and success.
- Identify the types of Tier 1 strategies used to support the academic, behavior, and mental health of diverse student populations.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the procedures and strategies used to manage student crises.
- Explain how to locate evidence-based academic, behavioral, and mental health interventions.
- Demonstrate the importance of designing and monitoring procedures to determine the effectiveness of interventions.
- Demonstrate an understanding of regulations that govern general and special education (e.g., IDEIA, NCLB, FERPA and Section 504).
- Develop an understanding and use of NASP/APA ethical guidelines, confidentiality issues and mandated reporting.
- Exhibit ethical, legal, and professional conduct that is consistent with best practice.

Course Objectives

Objectives (5) for this course include the following:

- Develop an understanding of the various roles of school psychologists in schools.
- Develop a foundational understanding of how assessment methods are selected and administered to examine student academic, behavioral, and mental health areas of concern.
- Develop an understanding of how schools support students using a MTSS framework for academics, behavior, and mental health.
- Understand the importance of identifying and linking empirically supported interventions to assessment outcomes.
- Develop an understanding of legal and ethical guidelines in public school education and, specifically, within the field of school psychology.

The knowledge base and professional competencies developed through this course address the goals of the School Psychology Program. The course objectives relating directly to desired Professional Competencies and Program Goals are noted in the following table:

COMPETENCIES	PROGRAM GOALS	OBJECTIVES
Competencies for Practice in Health Service Psychology (APA CoA)	Program Goals for School Psychology Practice (NASP Domains)	Course Objectives
Research	Research and Program Evaluation	4a, 4b
Ethical and legal standards	Legal, Ethical, and Professional practice	1a, 1b, 1d, 5a, 5b, 5c
Individual and cultural diversity	Diversity in Development and Learning	1c, 2b, 3b
Professional values, attitudes, and behaviors	Legal, Ethical, and Professional practice	1d, 2b, 5a, 5b, 5c
Communication and interpersonal skills	Consultation and Collaboration	1c, 1d, 2b, 3c
Assessment	Data-based Decision-Making and Accountability	2a, 4a, 4b
Intervention	Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills; Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills; School-wide Practices to Promote Learning; Preventive and Responsive Services	1a, 1b, 1c, 3b, 3c, 4a, 4b
Consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills	Consultation and Collaboration; Family- School Collaboration Services	1a, 1b, 1d, 4b, 5b, 5c

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

N/A

How to Succeed in this Course

While attending school-based practicum (on Wednesdays), students will observe their field-based supervisor engage in several activities throughout the day, such as assessment, intervention, and consultation. Practicum students will have opportunities to participate in specific activities while being supervised at their practicum site. During university supervision, emphasis will be placed on:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Working with general and special education populations
- Ethical standards for school psychologists
- Professionalism for school psychologists

The school-based practicum experience will help students begin to integrate what's being learned in courses with how practices and procedures are carried out within the field. **It is very important that students attend practicum every week for a full workday (i.e., mirroring the 8-hour workday completed by their site supervisor. By the end of the Spring semester (in May), students must have accrued at least 224 hours.** As a basic rule, students should be “on the clock” for the same time as their field supervisors. Furthermore, once a student achieves 224 hours for the school year, they are expected to continue attending practicum and university supervision until the end of USF’s Spring semester.

Additional steps for success include:

School-based practicum and university supervision are required. Students must attend both their university supervision and school-based practicum assignment each week on Wednesday. University supervision is provided for all practicum students through a weekly group session (Grand Rounds) on Mondays. A student’s inability to attend two or more supervision

meetings may negatively impact the end of course practicum evaluation and grade. Additionally, individual supervision with the university supervisor is available to all practicum students as requested and also will be proactively scheduled by the instructor throughout the semester. If a student is in need of additional guidance outside of what is offered by the instructor, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor to request a meeting.

Treat practicum with the highest level of professionalism. Practicum students are expected to behave professionally, ethically and respect all district students, families, and employees with whom they work. Students are to dress professionally (e.g., business casual) and in attire that is suitable for working with children and adolescents. Please avoid any clothing or jewelry that might be distracting to others. Also, it is important to follow the dress code of the school to which you are assigned.

Class attendance, punctuality, and participation are required. Students are expected to attend all classes, except when there are compelling reasons and unavoidable circumstances (e.g., religious observance, severe illness, etc.). It is also understandable that students may experience unavoidable challenges (e.g., medical conditions, psychological conditions, illnesses, injuries, etc.) that require them to be away from the classroom, or that affect their ability to perform optimally in class. For illnesses, a verification of care letter from a medical provider may be required upon your return to class. If there is an emergency, students are to notify the professor as soon as possible. Situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Please note: It is critical that all students arrive to class on time and are active participants in class activities and discussions.

Due to the collaborative nature of this course, it is essential that students give their undivided attention to their peers and are willing to engage in discussions regarding their experiences. The intention is to facilitate your success in this course, so please do not hesitate to contact the professor for assistance.

Grand Rounds. Students should always arrive to class ready to share a brief update with their peers and the professor on their practicum experience from the previous weeks. Grand rounds is an opportunity for students to learn from each other. Practicum students are also encouraged to ask questions during grand rounds and to provide feedback regarding their knowledge of a presented topic.

Civility & Respectful Behavior, Ethical Conduct. All students share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive classroom setting. Students are expected to always conduct themselves in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Comments or behavior that disrupts the learning process may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Please remain mindful of the following:

- a. Students are asked to maintain their attention and engagement throughout class until dismissed.
- b. Classroom discussions should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the current topic. Classroom discussion is meant to allow everyone to hear a variety of viewpoints. This can only happen if students maintain respect for each other's differences.
- c. Any discussion from class that continues on a listserv, class discussion forum, group text forum, etc. should adhere to professional standards for school psychologists in training (including the language used and topics discussed).
- d. Value diversity through the use of non-sexist, culturally-sensitive, person-first, professional language during class discussions, course-related field work, and on all written assignments.

Professional Conduct. The highest levels of ethical and professional conduct are expected of all professional school psychologists and school psychologists-in-training. At USF, faculty and students alike are expected to model ethically and professionally appropriate behavior in all contexts, including University as well as field settings. The following Professional Work characteristics, as identified by the National Association of School Psychologists are required of both faculty and students: adaptability, communication skills, respect for human diversity, effective interpersonal relations, ethical responsibility, and initiative and dependability.

Electronic Devices. While engaged in learning, students may utilize a laptop or iPad device for note-taking and for in-class activities that are permitted by the university supervisor. However, students are not permitted to work on other, unrelated tasks (e.g., completing unrelated assignments for this course or other courses, surfing the web, typing and sending emails, texting or chatting with

classmates, uploading documents to Canvas assignments, etc.). Overall, the use of electronic devices for any other purpose during class time, without expressed permission from the university supervisor, is not permitted. Unauthorized use of electronics may negatively impact a student's progress.

Grading Scale

Student progress during Practicum (through field-based practicum and university supervision) will be evaluated using the following methods:

- Reported interactions with the practicum student's interactions with students, families, school staff, district staff, and community liaisons while attending practicum
- Observation of the practicum student's interactions with faculty and peers at the university
- Observation of the practicum student's quality of engagement during grand rounds
- Review of the practicum student's written products and/or presentations
- Accrual of (at least) 224 practicum hours at the end of USF's Spring semester
- Completion of the student mid-year and end-of-year practicum self-evaluations.
- Completion of the supervisor mid-year and end-of-year practicum evaluations (including an overall rating of a 3 or higher on the end-of-year evaluation).

Please note: Combined feedback from supervisors, faculty, and school staff will be considered. A grade of Satisfactory at the end of the semester will position the student for enrollment in the second-year practicum course (SPS 6940).

Grade Categories and Weights

Students will earn a grade of Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or Incomplete at the end of the semester.

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

Once scores/grades are submitted for assignments, students will be able to access them by reviewing "Grades" in Canvas.

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Date of Class	Weekly Course Agenda	Course Topics & Due Dates
Date	Course Schedule	Topics for Discussion/Assignments Due
8/24 Week 1	Overview of the Course	Syllabus Review Update on district assignment for practicum placements Class Norms Practicum Logs & Other Documentation Grand Rounds
8/31 Week 2	Grand Rounds <u>Lecture:</u> Professionalism in Schools/Practicum Activities	Deadline to Submit Evidence of Student Liability Insurance (including dates of coverage) in Canvas by 11:59pm
9/7 Week 3	Labor Day - No Class	---
9/14 Week 4	Grand Rounds <u>Lecture:</u> Practicum Evaluations <u>Review of Assignment:</u> Interview - The Role of the School Psychologist	---
9/21 Week 5	Grand Rounds <u>Review of Assignment:</u> Organizational Structure of Schools	Signed August Logs due in Canvas by 11:59pm
9/28 Week 6	Grand Rounds	---

Date of Class	Weekly Course Agenda	Course Topics & Due Dates
10/5 Week 7	Grand Rounds <u>Review of Assignment:</u> Resources for Students & Families Individual Check-Ins this Week	Interview: The Role of the School Psychologist – Interview due in Canvas by 11:59pm
10/12 Week 8	Grand Rounds	Organizational Structure due in Canvas by 11:59pm
10/19 Week 9	Grand Rounds <u>Review of Assignment:</u> Standardized Assessment Tools	Signed September Logs due in Canvas by 11:59pm
10/26 Week 10	Grand Rounds	Resources for Students & Families due in Canvas by 11:59pm
11/2 Week 11	Grand Rounds	Standardized Assessment Tools due in Canvas by 11:59pm
11/9 Week 12	Grand Rounds <u>Review of Assignment:</u> School Climate Reflection	
11/16 Week 13	Grand Rounds	School Climate Reflection due in Canvas by 11:59pm
11/23 Week 14	Grand Rounds	Signed October Logs due in Canvas by 11:59pm
11/30 Week 15	Grand Rounds Individual Student Check-Ins this Week	---
12/7 Week 16	Last Day of Class	Mid-Year Evaluations (Supervisor & Self-Eval) due in Canvas by 11:59pm.

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

First Day Attendance Policy:

To confirm their presence in the course, students may be asked to complete an introduction activity. Students who do not complete this activity run the risk of being dropped from the course.

Make-ups & Late Work Policy:

There will be no make-up assignments for this course. The acceptance of late work is up to the professor's discretion, and may negatively impact the student's end-of-course grade.

Extra Credit Policy:

Extra credit will not be provided within this graduate course.

Rewrite Policy:

Rewrites will not be offered within this graduate course.

Grades of "Incomplete"

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. The course instructor and student must complete and sign the "I" Grade Contract Form that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses from the original date grades were due for that course. An "I" grade not cleared within the two semesters for undergraduate courses and one semester for graduate courses (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the contract.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require

you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Technology Supports. Course materials will be made available through Canvas, an online course management system. You can access materials by going to the following website: <http://my.usf.edu>, and providing your USF NetID and password. If you have problems accessing materials through this system, you can call the Academic Computing Office at help@usf.edu or by calling 974-1222.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the

student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.

- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training

that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)