WHAT YOU MUST KNOW TO BECOME A SCHOOL COUNSELOR OR PSYCHOLOGIST

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
An Overview of the Credential Process

Step One: Getting Started

Welcome to National University’s Credential Program and congratulations on your decision to join the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) profession. In California, the standards for credentialing professional school counselors and school psychologists are regulated by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). This packet contains information on National University’s School Counseling and School Psychology credential programs and will provide you with a clear picture of the requirements needed to obtain your credential.

1. The process begins with enrolling into a Pupil Personnel Services Credential Program and providing proof of a conferred master’s degree* from a regionally accredited institution of higher education (IHE). Candidates with a non U.S. master’s degree must have their degree evaluated by a CTC-approved international agency before being admitted and starting the first course (see an Admissions Advisor). All students need to have previous coursework evaluated by the PPS lead faculty advisor.

   *Students who do not already possess an approved master’s degree in educational counseling, psychology, or social work must also enroll into an appropriate master’s program.

2. All students need to complete the Orientation and Field Experience class, which includes an overview of the program, provides early field experience, and establishes your credential packet. The class also includes a faculty interview, submission of writing samples, and permission to enroll into future classes.

3. The first form you must complete is the Acknowledgement of Terms and Agreements for a PPS Credential (PPS-1). This document outlines your obligations and includes most of the procedural regulations related to your credential program. Carefully read and initial all items, sign the form, and return it to your National University Credential Advisor in order to receive a grade for the Orientation and Field Experience class.

4. Next, you must begin to collect your documents. Under Step Two: Determining Eligibility you will find the list of documents you must provide in order to be considered for your internship. You will not be able to move ahead until the University has all of the documents.

5. You must be fingerprinted or have current prints on file. In order to participate in the field components of your coursework, as well as your internship, you must have fingerprint clearance. If you hold an Emergency Substitute Permit, California credential, or a Certificate of Clearance, then you already have fingerprint clearance.

   If you do not, the CTC requires that you obtain a Certificate of Clearance by completing a fingerprint process and filing your application for a Certificate of Clearance online directly with the CTC. In addition to the fee for the fingerprints, there is a $29.50 fee that must be paid with a valid credit card. The billing address submitted on the CTC website must match the billing address on the credit card being used. Detailed information is available on the Certificate of Clearance Application Process form (RP-3).
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Step Two:
Determining Eligibility

Before beginning your internship, candidates must meet the following requirements:

• Verification of Basic Skills Assessment
• Possession of fingerprint clearance
• Verification of a negative tuberculosis (TB) examination taken within the last four years
• Completion of all required coursework with a 3.0 GPA; “D” and “F” grades are not accepted
• Completion of required practicum hours
• Acknowledgement of Terms and Agreements for a PPS Credential (PPS-1) on file
• Zero account balance
• Other program specific requirements as listed in your catalog

Once you complete the above requirements you will need to submit an internship application to the Internship Coordinator in order to be assigned a University Supervisor and to be placed for your internship. Please submit this application 30 days prior to the requested date of internship placement. Internship classes are scheduled by a Placement Specialist.

Step Three:
Internship

In the PPS program, all practical experience is referred to as ‘internship.’ In this respect, the term ‘internship’ does not necessarily imply that the student is under a paid contract with a school district. Some students, however, may choose to participate in such an option, known as a University Internship (see the section entitled Alternative Credential Route).

For School Counseling, eligible candidates are required to successfully complete a minimum of 600 clock hours of internship experience that includes two levels of practice (Elementary and Secondary) and that is gained at no more than two sites with no more than two Site Supervisors at one time. The experience must be completed on either a full time (40 hours per week) or part time basis (20 hours per week).

For School Psychology, eligible candidates are required to successfully complete a minimum of 1,200 clock hours of internship experience that includes two levels of practice (Elementary and Secondary) and that is gained at no more than two sites with no more than two Site Supervisors at one time. The experience must be completed on either a full time or part time basis; experience of less than 20 hours per week will not be approved.

Students should always refer to the current PPS Internship Handbook for specific information about the practicum and internship requirements.

Alternative Credential Route: University Internship

The University Internship route provides an opportunity for candidates who have been offered employment to complete their internship, while employed in an appropriate position as a School Counselor or School Psychologist. This experience is a partnership between you, National University, and the employer meant to support you in an environment similar to the one you’ll be fully credentialed for at the end of your program. For more information please contact your local Credential Advisor.
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Step Four: Exiting

The following requirements are to be met before applying for your Pupil Personnel Services credential. Please take steps to complete these requirements throughout your program to ensure they are satisfied and turned in to your Credential Advisor before you wish to exit the program. All PPS program courses are to be completed within seven years.

- Completion of all coursework, portfolio, practicum, and internship
- Verification of ETS Praxis for School Counseling/School Psychology
- 3.0 GPA with no "D" or "F" grades (please refer to your catalog for specific grading policies)
- Fulfillment of current residency requirement
- Completed Exit Interview form (obtained from the Faculty Advisor during the Exit Interview)
- Completed Program Evaluation form
- Zero account balance

Candidates enrolled in the Master of Science in Educational Counseling or School Psychology with the Counseling or Psychology PPS credential are not awarded the master's degree until they have completed all coursework and have successfully completed the PRAXIS exam.

If a candidate does not hold a previous and relevant master's degree, then those candidates must be eligible to receive an appropriate master's degree from National University prior to applying for the PPS credential. All coursework must be completed prior to the PPS credential recommendation.

It is highly recommended that all PPS program participants acquire membership in a professional school counseling or school psychology organization.

To exit the program you will meet with your Credential Advisor who will verify that you have completed all of the requirements for your credential by completing the Credential Exit Checklist and collecting the Application for Credential form (CA-1).

The paperwork will be sent to the National University Credential Processing Department which will review and, if applicable, submit your recommendation to the state. The CTC will send you a notice asking that you go online and pay the processing fee. Once the CTC has your payment, you will be notified in approximately 10 days about the granting of your credential. The University will receive notification of your status directly from the CTC. Please note that this time frame varies depending on time of year and the number of applications received.

Your PPS School Counseling or School Psychology Credential is valid for five years.

Congratulations!