

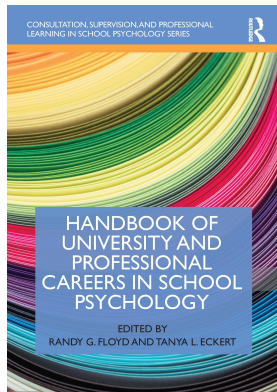
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Handbook of University and Professional Careers in School Psychology

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Career Paths in School Psychology

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1 Career Paths in School Psychology

John S. Carlson, Bryn Harris, and Celeste M. Malone

The primary focus of this edited book is to describe a diverse group of career paths for those interested in training the next generation of school psychologists. This training occurs in universities, schools, clinics, hospitals, and other mental health systems of care for school-aged populations and their families. Through the inclusion of this opening chapter and the others that follow, the book initially aims to encourage readers to embrace a career in school psychology with particular attention to career opportunities at the non-doctoral (e.g., school psychologist) and doctoral level (e.g., faculty member, clinical supervisor, and administrator). Next, a comprehensive set of chapters focuses on addressing how diversity and personal development factors may influence an academic school psychology career. Finally, the book concludes with chapters aimed at advanced skill development and reaching scholarly goals within a university position.

The fields of education and psychology offer a diverse array of career options for those passionate about serving others through practice, teaching, or research. Education-related careers exist across multiple contexts (e.g., schools, universities, communities, industry, and government) as highlighted in *101 Careers in Education* (J. Carlson & R. Carlson, 2016). One example is that of the *school psychologist*. School psychologists bridge the fields of psychology and education to address development and school-related issues, including those that concern children, parents, families, teachers, and communities. It is a highly meaningful career that has been recently ranked as the second best of 28 featured social service jobs (U.S. News & World Report, n.d.).

The purpose of this first chapter is to help you envision a path forward to embark on a career in school psychology with specific consideration for how to ready yourself for the diverse range of positions featured in this book. There are many paths one can take toward an academic, university, or professional career in school psychology. The single most direct path to an academic position or independent practice involves the completion of a doctoral degree. Slightly more than 99% of school psychology faculty have a doctoral degree (Crothers et al., 2010). As can be seen in the remaining chapters of this book, a doctoral degree affords one an amazing range of career opportunities and the ability to balance professional and personal goals flexibly.

Doctoral degrees in school psychology are most typically completed in graduate training programs that are accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA-accredited). Almost three-quarters of doctoral programs in school psychology in the United States (75 of 102) are APA-accredited (Gadke, Valley-Gray, & Rossen, 2019). Job applicants with a doctoral degree in school psychology and dually credentialed (i.e., Licensed Psychologist [LP] and Nationally Certified School Psychologist [NCSP]) are highly sought within academic position openings (see Chapter 2 by Sander and Radliff). However, faculty position applicants with degrees in one of the other professional psychologies (e.g., child clinical psychology and counseling psychology), special education, or closely related fields of study may also be hired for core or affiliated program faculty openings.

Doctoral education in APA-accredited school psychology programs can either be in the form of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) degree. Doctoral degrees can be exclusively focused on school psychology or combined with one or more of the other health service psychology disciplines (i.e., counseling psychology, and clinical psychology). According to APA's database of doctoral programs (APA, n.d.a), which includes Canada and the United States and its territories, there are currently 85 APA-accredited doctoral programs in school psychology. Most (73%: $n = 62$) offer a PhD in School Psychology. Seventeen (20%) offer a PsyD in School Psychology or some combination of clinical- or counseling-school training, while the remaining six (7%) offer a PhD in some combination of clinical, counseling, or school psychology training.

The competencies (e.g., a scholarship of research, teaching, and practice) associated with the doctoral degree and doctorate-related credentials (e.g., Health Service Psychologist [HSP]; LP; and NCSP) are typically required to train others within programs accredited by APA where training focuses on health service psychology with a specialization in school psychology. Academic careers in non-doctoral school psychology training programs, such as those approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), also require similar competencies and one or more of those credentials. Table 1.1 highlights the professional competencies expected within APA-accredited and NASP-approved programs.

An academic career in an NASP-approved or APA-accredited graduate training program can vary substantially. Factors such as the degree offered (e.g., Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study [CAGS], Educational Specialist [EdS], PhD, and PsyD) and the teaching-, training-, or research-intensive nature of the university in which the program resides can impact the path one needs to take. School psychology training programs can be focused on preparing graduates for a career in practice or research. They too can be focused on training the next generation of trainers as some doctoral programs (e.g., University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Texas-Austin, Lehigh University, University of Georgia, University of California-Berkley, University of Minnesota, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln) are known as leaders in preparing faculty for positions in APA-accredited programs (J. Carlson et al., 2016). From our combined experience, the University of Connecticut, University of Missouri, and University of California-Santa Barbara are additional universities that stand out in placing graduates into faculty positions. Given the range of non-doctoral and doctoral training programs in school

Table 1.1 An Overview of APA's Profession-Wide Competencies and NASP's Practice Model

<i>APA (2019) Standards of Accreditation for Health Service Psychology: 9 Profession-Wide Competencies (PWC)</i>	<i>National Association of School Psychologists (2010c) Practice Model: 10 Domains</i>
PWC 1. Research	Domain 1. Data-based decision making and accountability
PWC 2. Ethical and legal standards	Domain 2. Consultation and collaboration
PWC 3. Individual and cultural diversity	Domain 3. Interventions and instructional support to develop academic skills
PWC 4. Professional values and attitudes	Domain 4. Interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills
PWC 5. Communication and interpersonal skills	Domain 5. School-wide practices to promote learning
PWC 6. Assessment	Domain 6. Preventive and responsive services
PWC 7. Intervention	Domain 7: Family-school collaboration services
PWC 8. Supervision	Domain 8: Diversity in development and learning
PWC 9. Consultation and interprofessional	Domain 9: Research and program evaluation
	Domain 10: Legal, ethical, and professional practice

PWC = profession-wide competency.

psychology, diverse training emphases (e.g., practitioner-scientist, scientist-practitioner, and scientist-scholar-practitioner), associated competencies, and varying licensure or credentialing rates of graduate training programs highly influence the characteristics and requirements expected in faculty position openings. To better understand the diverse array of careers available to doctoral-level and specialist-level school psychologists, we provide a brief overview of the school psychology field, a history of school psychologist training in the United States, and the training requirements necessary to assume varied roles and functions.

Overview of the School Psychology Field

The field of school psychology in the United States may be best defined by the two professional organizations currently providing training oversight. NASP (2014) defines school psychologists as:

uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to teach. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community. (p. 2)

Graduates from non-doctoral NASP-approved programs typically assume school-based practice or administrative leadership positions.

APA is the primary professional group overseeing training at the doctoral level for school psychologists. APA (n.d.b) defines school psychologists as

prepared to intervene at the individual and system level, and develop, implement, and evaluate preventive programs. In these efforts, they conduct ecologically valid assessments and intervene to promote positive learning environments within which children and youth from diverse backgrounds have equal access to effective educational and psychological services that promote healthy development. (para. #1)

Doctoral graduates not only can be credentialed to work in schools but also with school-aged populations within other mental health systems of care (e.g., private practice, hospitals, and clinics).

History of School Psychology Training

Among the many who have influenced training in school psychology, two psychologists have uniquely provided leadership to the emergence of the discipline (Florell, 2019). Dr. Lightner Witmer, the founder of the first psychological clinic at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896, is credited with the emergence of the field of clinical and school psychology. His guidance on case conceptualization, training in diagnoses and remediation, and connecting psychology to schooling has profoundly impacted school psychological services (Fagan, 1996). Dr. Gertrude Hildreth, a psychologist at the Lincoln School of Teacher's College at Columbia University is credited with publishing the first school psychology textbook. *Psychological Services for School Problems* (Hildreth, 1930) highlighted the psychology of educational problems, service provision in schools and clinics, psychological measurement, test administration, children with exceptional needs, idiographic approaches to assessment and treatment, psychological services for instruction and guidance, administrative details, and educational research problems. The

book's focus on practice and research pertaining to assessment, consultation, and intervention of school-related problems is consistent with the role and functions of school psychologists today.

Five training programs are frequently discussed within the literature as providing leadership to the emergence of formalized doctoral training in school psychology. New York University (NYU) was the first to establish school psychology training in the 1920s and in 1953, the University of Illinois created the first clearly defined doctoral program in education and psychology that resembles curriculum currently found in contemporary school psychology programs (Fagan, 1986). APA-accredited programs in school psychology emerged almost 20 years later, when the University of Texas-Austin (1971) was the first to achieve that status, with the University of Minnesota (1972) and Hofstra University (1973) closely behind (Fagan & Wells, 2000).

NASP program approval did not begin until 1988. Fourteen programs were given the distinction of being the first NASP-approved specialist programs (Fagan & Wells, 2000). Seven (**in bold**) were also approved at the doctoral level. These included Fordham University (NY), Moorhead State University (MN), San Francisco State University (CA), The Citadel (SC), **University of Georgia, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts-Amherst**, University of Memphis (TN), **University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of South Florida, University of Tennessee**, Valdosta State University (GA), **Western Michigan University**, and Winthrop University (NC). In addition, the University of Southern Mississippi was approved by NASP in 1988, but only at the doctoral level.

Degree Types within School Psychology

Professionals that practice as school psychologists can receive one of three degrees, a master's degree, EdS, or doctorate (PhD; PsyD; and Doctor of Education, EdD). While there are programs that offer master's degrees in school psychology, not all master's degrees lead to state-level-licensure or certification. According to standards developed by NASP, to be eligible for certification, programs must provide specialist-level training that consists of a minimum of 60 graduate semester hours (or 90 quarter hours) and 3 years of full-time study inclusive of a 1,200+hour internship (NASP, 2010b). There are multiple ways to indicate specialist training including the EdS degree or a master's degree and a CAGS. The EdS degree (or equivalent) is the most commonly awarded school psychology degree in the United States. Among NASP members, 55% have an EdS or equivalent degree, 19% have a master's degree or equivalent degree, and 25% have a doctorate in school psychology (Walcott & Hyson, 2018). Although some states credential school psychologists with a master's degree, the specialist level is considered the minimum level of training for entry into the profession and is required for national certification as a school psychologist (NASP, 2010b). As such, the remainder of this section will focus on specialist- and doctoral-level training. The three doctoral degrees awarded in school psychology are PhD, PsyD, and EdD, though APA-accredited programs only grant the first two degrees. NASP requires doctoral degrees to consist of a minimum of 90 semester credit hours as well as a 1,200+ hour year-long internship, with at least 600 hours of those needing to be completed within a school setting (NASP, 2010c).

Degree Types and Associated Competencies

Both NASP and APA have standards describing the education and training experiences needed for psychology practice. The NASP *Standards for Graduate Preparation in School Psychology* (NASP, 2010c) describe the graduate education experiences and competencies needed for entering a school psychology career and are based on the practice domains in the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* (NASP Practice Model; NASP, 2010a). Both

specialist and doctoral programs are eligible for NASP approval. In contrast, the APA *Standards of Accreditation in Health Service Psychology* (APA, 2019a) are applicable only to doctoral-level programs as APA-accredited programs prepare trainees for licensure and independent practice as a psychologist, in addition to readiness for state- and national-certificates in school psychology. Regardless of degree level, school psychologists receive training in (a) data collection and analysis; (b) academic, behavioral, and psychological assessment; (c) prevention and intervention services; and (d) research and program evaluation. The distinctions between specialist- and doctoral-level school psychology training are described in more detail in the next two sections.

Specialist-level training. There are 222 specialist-level school psychology programs with 74% (or 164) of these programs holding either conditional or full NASP approval (Gadke, et al., 2019). Specialist-level training is denoted in a variety of ways including the EdS degree, the psychology specialist degree (PsyS), or a master's degree (MA, MS, and MEd) with over 60 credit hours or with an accompanying certificate of post-graduate study. To be eligible for NASP program approval, specialist programs must require at least 3 years of full-time study and completion of a minimum of 60 graduate credit hours (NASP, 2010c). However, there is significant variability in the number of graduate credit hours required by programs with some programs requiring over 90 credit hours (Gadke et al., 2019).

Graduate training at the specialist-level generally focuses on the basic knowledge and skills described in the NASP Practice Model (NASP, 2010a) as well as those competencies needed to provide federal and state mandated psychological services in schools (Tharinger, Pryzwansky, & Miller, 2008). Accordingly, almost 90% of specialist-level graduates obtain employment in Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 (PK-12) schools (Gadke et al., 2019), and most school psychologists employed in schools are trained at the specialist level (Walcott & Hyson, 2018). School districts sometimes prefer to hire specialist-level school psychologists because their starting salaries are lower on district pay scales when compared to doctoral-level school psychologists (O'Donnell & Dunlap, 2014). Yet, some specialist-level school psychologists may not receive compensation commensurate with their education and training since many district pay scales do not formally acknowledge specialist-level training, which is typically 30 credits beyond what is usually required for traditional master's degrees (Van Overschelde & Lasser, 2019).

Doctoral-level training. While doctoral candidates are trained in the knowledge and skill competencies outlined in the NASP Practice Model (NASP, 2010a), doctoral training is distinguished from specialist-level training by the higher number of credit hours required for degree completion, increased emphasis on statistics, and research methodology, the production of research (through a master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, or capstone project), and training experiences in advanced competencies such as supervision, leadership, teaching, or specific practice specializations. Training at the doctoral level is typically 4–6 years with the median time to completion being 5.3 years (Gadke et al., 2019). For NASP approval, doctoral programs must be a minimum of 4 years (inclusive of internship) and require at least 90 credit hours with 78 of those hours exclusive of internship and dissertation research. Additionally, NASP requires doctoral candidates to complete a 1,500-hour internship, 300 hours beyond what is required for specialist-level candidates (NASP, 2010c). Doctoral programs are also eligible for APA accreditation. For this, programs must be a minimum of 3 years plus a doctoral internship (APA, 2019a). Programs also must demonstrate that candidates have appropriate supervision, which has implications for the credentials required of faculty and supervisors.

Programs too must be accountable for how graduates have acquired discipline-specific knowledge, which is the general knowledge base in the field of psychology that prepares candidates to attain the profession-wide competencies in HSP (APA, 2019a). Between the curricular requirements for NASP and APA, doctoral training in school psychology provides broad and in-depth foundational knowledge in psychology with advanced competencies in professional psychology and distinct competencies for practice in schools (Tharinger et al., 2008).

Similar to specialist-level training, doctoral-level training is represented by several different degrees including the PhD, PsyD, and, less frequently, the EdD. There are 102 doctoral-level school psychology programs in the United States with 77% of these programs ($n = 78$) holding conditional or full NASP approval and 74% of the programs ($n = 75$) being APA-accredited (Gadke et al., 2019). Doctoral-level school psychologists are eligible for psychologist licensure from state boards of psychology. State boards typically require additional training documentation from those who do not graduate from APA-accredited programs. Licensure as a psychologist allows one to engage in independent practice outside of school settings. For licensed, doctoral-level school psychologists working in PK-12 settings, they may provide administrative leadership and supervision of other mental health staff while also being eligible to bill for Medicaid reimbursement for school-based services. These qualities may make them especially attractive to school districts despite their higher starting salaries (O'Donnell & Dunlap, 2014).

Health Service Psychology

APA has advanced the conceptualization of mental health care from a primary focus on mental health problems to the practice of psychological services within a continuum of health care services (Health Service Psychology Education Collaborative, 2013). As the primary professional body available to accredit a variety of applied doctoral psychology programs, APA has created regulations for the training of HSP with specific attention to 3 areas of specialization (i.e., school psychology, counseling psychology, and clinical psychology; APA, 2019a). The following elements are required for all programs that prepare psychologists in HSP:

- 1 Integration of empirical evidence and practice: Practice is evidence-based, and evidence is practice-informed.
- 2 Training is sequential, cumulative, graded in complexity, and designed to prepare students for practice or further organized training.
- 3 The program engages in actions that indicate respect for and understanding of cultural and individual differences and diversity (APA, 2019a).

Training in HSP advances our commitment to understanding the various systems that influence the children and families that we serve as biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors are considered within broad health and behavioral contexts (APA, 2019a). Graduating from an APA-accredited program allows graduates to seek the HSP credential from the National Register of Health Service Psychologists. HSPs have met the most rigorous national training standards in the country, and this credential is recognized by many state boards of psychology, allowing for mobility of the license in psychology across state lines. Further, the NCSP is formally recognized by the National Register to help identify HSPs who are also highly qualified school psychologists.

Demographics of the School Psychology Profession

Information pertaining to graduates of school psychology programs is regularly collected by NASP as well as APA Division 16 (School Psychology). Full membership in NASP is available to professionals that have a graduate degree in school psychology, which may include EdS degrees (or equivalent) and doctoral degrees. Full APA membership is available to individuals with a doctoral degree in psychology (including school psychology). Thus, demographic information from NASP membership surveys consists of substantially more practicing school psychologists as the majority of school psychologists practice with the EdS (or equivalent) degree (Walcott & Hyson, 2018).

Table 1.2 National Association of School Psychologists and American Psychological Association Division 16 Membership Demographics

	NASP ^a (N = 1,274)	NASP (Doctoral Only) ^b (N = 312)	APA D16 ^c (N = 1,242)
Average age (years)	42.4	46.7	57.7
Years of experience	12.2	15.2	24.6
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	5.7%	6.7%	2.2%
Race	88.2%	87.5%	89.2%
White	5.1%	4.2%	3.5%
Black/African American	2.9%	3.5%	2.6%
Asian	3.8%	4.8%	4.7%
Other			
Gender	83.7%	75.8%	57.3%
Women	16.2%	23.9%	42.7%
Men	0.1%	0.3%	NR
Agender			
Highest degree	54.9%	–	NR
Specialist/equivalent	25.2%	100%	91.9%
PhD/PsyD/EdD/doctorate	19.0%	–	8.1%
Masters/specialist/equivalent or less			
Primary job role/setting	82.9%	55.7%	NR
School-based school psychologist	7.1%	26.9%	NR
University faculty	4.6%	5.8%	NR
School administrator	0.4%	0.6%	NR
State department of education	5.1%	11.0%	NR
Other			

NR = not reported.

^a Stratified random sample (Walcott & Hyson, 2018).

^b NASP Research Committee (2015). *Survey of demographic characteristics, Employment conditions, and professional practices: 2014–2015* [data summary]. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

^c APA. (2017). Demographic characteristics of Division 16 members by membership status. <https://www.apa.org/about/division/officers/services/div-16-2017.pdf>.

Demographic information pertaining to professionals paints a picture of the current landscape of school psychologists (see Table 1.2). First and foremost, 84% of NASP members identify as women (Walcott & Hyson, 2018). This is substantially different among doctoral-level members of Division 16 of APA where women compose 57% of the membership. Regarding race and ethnicity, between 88% and 89% of both NASP and APA Division 16 members identify as White. School psychologists who identify as being of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Origin are few in number and more likely to be NASP members (6%) than APA Division 16 members (2%). Similarly, school psychologists who identify as Black and Asian are more likely to be members of NASP (8%) than APA Division 16 (6%), although these percentages are also small. In summary, the field of school psychology employs more women than men, and women are more likely to have non-doctoral school psychology degrees than doctoral degrees. White school psychologists constitute the vast majority of the profession at almost 90%, a statistic that does not mirror United States demographic data where the White population is currently 60.4% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019).

Demographic characteristics of faculty in school psychology training programs appear to parallel data summarized from prior professional organization surveys of those holding a doctoral degree. For example, Crothers and colleagues (2010) surveyed 1,026 school psychology faculty members (51% women and 49% men). Of the 306 respondents who met study eligibility criteria associated with working within a university setting, 62% were women, and 38% men. The majority (89%) were White and non-Hispanic and the others identified as being a member of an underrepresented group including African American (3.6%), Hispanic (2.3%), Asian

(2.0%), Arab American (<1%), and other and multiethnic groups (2.3%). A more recent survey of school psychology faculty members' beliefs about evidence-based practices (Reddy, Forman, Stoiber, & Gonzalez, 2017) reported similar demographic characteristics (63% women, 95% not Hispanic or Latinx, and 81% White) of those working within university settings. The need for the diversification of faculty in school psychology is of significant importance as the demographic characteristics reported from a survey of newly hired assistant professors in 1998 (75% women and 92% White; Demaray, J. Carlson, & Hodges, 2003) appears to demonstrate little change over the past 20 years.

Job Shortages

Almost a third of all APA-accredited doctoral school psychology programs (25 of 85) advertised a faculty position opening during the 2019–2020 academic year (Psychology Job Wiki 2019–2020, n.d.). The field has a chronic shortage of faculty that has been recognized by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs for more than two decades via its personnel preparation training grant competition. One in four (25%) school psychology faculty position openings each year have historically not been filled due to a lack of well-qualified applicants and few doctoral students moving into academic positions (Clopton & Haselhuhn, 2009). An analysis of the number of applications (with an average of 23 applications per opening and a range of 5–50 applications) for 60 assistant professor job openings in 1998 highlighted the persistent challenge facing the school psychology field (Demaray et al., 2003). These issues are of grave concern given recent trends pertaining to the number of school psychology faculty openings advertised over the past 10 years (e.g., 2010 = 26, 2015 = 52, and 2020 = 66), due to both retirements and a substantial need for increased mental health services in schools.

Faculty shortages are integrally tied to current and expected shortages in personnel who are well qualified to provide special education services. Shortages of school psychology practitioners is expected to continue through at least 2025, with a shortfall of 3,500 school psychologists a year through that period (Castillo, Curtis, & Yin-Tan, 2014). The result of these shortages has been and will continue to be an increase in school psychologist-to-pupil ratios across the United States. These high ratios directly limit the comprehensiveness of services being offered, especially related to early identification, early intervention, and consultation. This is at a time when school-aged populations are increasingly losing their lives due to deaths of despair (i.e., suicide as well as alcohol-related and opioid-related accidents). The three leading causes of death in 10- to 24-year-olds (Heron, 2019) are all linked to psychological and behavioral health and include unintentional injuries (40.6%), suicide (19.2%), and homicide (14.4%). More mental health services are clearly needed in our schools and universities. These personnel shortages have created especially significant barriers to school psychological services, and the need to diversify the profession to more closely match the demographics of the children and youth being served is of critical importance.

Job Satisfaction

Given the shortage of school psychologists in the United States, it is imperative to explore the factors that encourage individuals to enter and remain in the field. More than 85% of school psychologists reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs (Van Voorhis & Levinson, 2006). These high rates of satisfaction have been consistent across time as highlighted by a similar study that investigated trends in job satisfaction over a 22-year span (Worrell, Skaggs, & Brown, 2006). That study found high job satisfaction rates were related to a commitment to social service and a desire for independence within a career. Job security, compensation, co-workers, and job activities also contributed to job satisfaction.

Some studies have identified specific contributors to job dissatisfaction among school psychologists. Worrell and colleagues (2006) reported that the lack of opportunity for advancement and school system policies were associated with job dissatisfaction. Weaver and Allen (2017) found that difficulties adapting one's emotions and emotional expressions to the expectations of the profession relates to burnout. Research pertaining to specific school psychology tasks has also informed our understanding of job dissatisfaction. Cottrell and Barrett (2016) investigated school psychologists' perceptions of involvement in specific learning disability (SLD) assessment activities. While the majority of participants were satisfied with practices surrounding SLD assessment, they found that job dissatisfaction was more likely to occur when alignment between preferred and actual SLD identification practices was poor. Although there are areas of job dissatisfaction among school psychologists, the profession reports high levels of overall job satisfaction that has generally increased over time.

School psychology faculty job satisfaction appears to be even higher than those of their practitioner colleagues (Crothers et al., 2010). Both faculty members who are men (90%) and women (88%) rated themselves as being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their jobs. These high rates also held true when looking across years of experience, which suggests these positive feelings toward one's university career are maintained across time. The roles and responsibilities associated with faculty positions can be stressful and even overwhelming at times. This can especially be true when one is at the point of seeking tenure (or what some refer to as job security for life). Yet, it is important to recognize that the ability to create a line of scholarly work consistent with one's professional vision within a highly flexible work schedule is particularly attractive to those of us wishing to (a) provide service to the field, (b) generate school psychology-related knowledge, and (c) impact the training of the next generation of school psychology practitioners and faculty. In sum, given the diverse array of positions available, school psychologists are able to secure careers that match their strengths, interests, and values while engaged in a variety of responsibilities that afford autonomy and a high rate of job satisfaction (Barringer & Dixon, 2017).

Careers in School Psychology

The majority of individuals who complete a graduate degree in school psychology are employed in school settings as school psychologists. Among NASP members, almost 83% practice in a school-based setting as a school psychologist. However, NASP members with a doctorate work within a diverse array of employment settings as only 56% report working as school-based school psychologists (NASP Research Committee, 2015). Obtaining a doctorate in school psychology allows employment opportunities within clinical settings, community agencies, or private practice. A doctoral degree may also create opportunities for advancement and diversification in roles and responsibilities within the school setting. Specifically, within school systems, advancement opportunities may include various leadership positions, such as director of psychological services, special education administrator, a district-wide position within such areas as multi-tiered systems of support or positive behavioral interventions and supports, a supervisory role, or professional development team leader. While non-doctoral school psychologists too may assume these diverse school-based positions, those that hold the doctoral degree may find these positions more readily available.

School Psychology Practice Careers

School psychologists' ability to practice outside of school settings is dependent on the credentialing requirements of their individual state. In most states, this requires licensure or another credential from a state board of psychology (see Chapter 2 by Sander and Radliff).

Doctoral-level school psychologists are typically eligible for licensure as a psychologist. Several states require completion of an APA-accredited internship. A smaller number of states also require the completion of an APA-accredited doctoral program. Most states require supervised postdoctoral hours; however, there is currently a strong push within APA to eliminate the requirement for postdoctoral supervision so that doctoral graduates are eligible for licensure upon graduation. For specialist-level school psychologists interested in non-school-based practice, some state boards of psychology have a credential (e.g., psychology associate or psychological examiner) in which the school psychologist practices under the supervision of a licensed doctoral-level psychologist in a non-school setting.

Most school psychologists practice at the specialist-level and are certified to practice by state boards of education. In most instances, this school psychology certification limits school psychologists' scope of practice to school settings. However, some states (e.g., Pennsylvania and Indiana) allow for unsupervised practice outside of schools under the school psychologist credential (Rossen, 2019). Depending on their training experiences, specialist-level school psychologists may be eligible for other credentials, such as the board-certified behavior analyst or the licensed clinical professional counselor. These additional credentials provide school psychologists with expanded opportunities to engage in non-school-based practice.

Clinical settings. The services that school psychologists provide in clinical and community settings are very similar to the services provided in school settings with regard to assessment and intervention. However, in non-school settings, school psychologists typically work more closely with families as they are delivering counseling and other interventions. An important consideration for those working in clinical settings is that families often initiate services, whereas services in schools are often initiated by school personnel. Additionally, school psychologists working in clinical settings need to be familiar with child psychopathology and diagnosis using the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders, 5th Edition* (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). School psychologists seeking to work in clinical and community settings should obtain additional training and experience in providing individual counseling and other practices needed by those that experience mental health disorders within a diverse array of systems of care (e.g., school and non-school settings) during practicum and internship experiences. See Chapter 10 by Lasser, Klose, and Corley for additional information about career opportunities available to those who are licensed psychologists working outside of the school setting.

Hospital settings. School psychologists working in hospital settings may have received training in pediatric school psychology or integrated behavioral health. This training typically includes didactic instruction in systems issues for hospitals and clinics, medical issues affecting school performance, psychopharmacology, prevention programming, and research (Shaw, 2003). However, specialty training in pediatric school psychology is not a prerequisite to practice in a hospital setting. School psychologists who work in hospital settings may complete assessments, implement behavioral interventions for treatment compliance, and facilitate transitions from hospitals back to schools (Power, DuPaul, Shapiro, & Parrish, 1995). Often these treatments are similar to the services school psychologists provide in school settings. School psychologists working in hospitals are often housed in departments of psychiatry to provide services (including individual, group, and family counseling as well as assessment) to children and youth with mental health concerns on an inpatient or outpatient basis. Additionally, school psychologists can provide services on medical units (e.g., oncology and urology) to provide behavioral interventions that promote compliance with medical treatments or conduct assessments to determine a patient's readiness for a medical procedure or the impact of illness on psychological functioning.

Related settings. Throughout their graduate training, doctoral-level school psychologists (especially those from APA-accredited programs) are required to demonstrate the generalization of their competencies in working with school-aged children and youth across a diverse

array of mental health, educational, or developmental needs. Through practicum, internship, and postdoctoral experiences, they have demonstrated their ability to effectively provide psychological services to children and youth, families, and schools across a diverse array of systems of care. These skills and competencies may allow them the opportunity to provide similar services within juvenile justice centers or other health and human systems (e.g., child welfare departments). Specialist-level graduates within some states who have extensive experience or training may also be found working in these alternative non-school practice settings. See Chapter 9 by VanDerHeyden and Aldrich for information about conducting research within practice-related careers both in and outside of school settings.

School Psychology Academic Careers

Competencies associated with the preparation of school psychologists pertaining to the integration of science and practice position applicants well for university training program openings and an academic career. These positions may be either at the nontenure-track level (as an adjunct faculty, clinical faculty, or teaching faculty) or at the tenure-track level (as an assistant professor, associate professor, or full professor). They teach, advise, mentor, supervisor, conduct research, write, and provide service to their program, department, college, university, and profession (Roediger, 2017). The emphasis of each of these roles varies substantially by the nature of the position, the organization of the training program (e.g., doctoral or non-doctoral), and the focus of the university (e.g., research intensive or teaching intensive).

Matching one's background and training to the needs of the position opening is especially important (Demaray et al., 2003). For example, NASP-approved programs rated practical experience and teaching skills as most important for their hires. Whereas training programs that were both APA-accredited and NASP-approved rated applicants' quality of research, grant writing experience, teaching skills, and publication record as being most important for hiring decisions at the assistant professor level. Additional guidance for seeking, securing, and succeeding within a faculty position can be found in chapters throughout this book. Subsequent chapters provide guidance for how a career in academia may unfold across time and how to flourish as one approaches and enters retirement.

Equipped with exceptional data-based problem-solving skills and highly developed interpersonal competencies, school psychologists who seek out experience and training in leadership development are also well prepared for a range of university administration positions. As experience within a training program unfolds, opportunities to provide leadership to one's school psychology program (e.g., addressing curriculum development, accreditation, and student recruitment and retention) may be afforded. This service to one's program may serve as the starting path toward a university administration career. See Chapter 7 by Tobin et al. for additional guidance about this career path.

Other Careers in School Psychology

The skills and competencies of school psychologists also position them well for a range of other work not directly related to practice or work within an academic position. These include providing leadership to journals through editorial work, employment within grant agencies, leadership to professional organizations or associations, or working within state departments of education.

Journal editing. Reviewing manuscripts for journals is a particularly helpful professional service. Most journal websites provide guidance about how to serve in this role and what it means to provide exceptional editorial feedback within a review. Both practitioners and researchers can volunteer to serve in this role. Not only does reviewing others' scholarship allow

you to guide and support the research skills of those in the profession, but it can also have a profound impact on knowledge and practice dissemination. Offering to serve as an ad hoc reviewer for a journal is one way to get started and can lead to invitations to serve on a journal's editorial board. Other times, a journal editor will invite those who have submitted or published work within the journal or those who have distinguished themselves as a scientist-practitioners or university-based researchers within the field. See Chapter 22 by Floyd et al. for additional guidance on reviewing manuscripts.

Grant agencies. Doctoral-level school psychologists are well prepared to work within grant agencies like the Institute for Educational Sciences (IES), Office of Special Education Programs, National Institutes of Health, and various foundations and professional association grant mechanisms. For example, program officers at IES oversee funding competitions that work to establish rigorous evidence that can inform education practice and policy (Albro & Buckley, n.d.). They avail themselves to grant writers by reading and consulting on drafts and being willing to discuss proposal review feedback. With particular attention to identifying evidence-based practices that improve educational contents and access to mental health support, work within multiple grant agencies is quite consistent with the goals and mission of the field of school psychology. For additional information related to grant agencies and funding related to school psychology see Chapter 19 by Herman, Reinke, Chapparo, Pas, and Sullivan.

Advocacy groups and professional associations. Involvement in advocacy groups and professional associations is typically categorized under professional service. School psychologists may volunteer with professional associations such as NASP, APA, and state affiliates as elected or appointed leaders. A lot of these associations' work is completed by members volunteering to serve on boards, committees, and other work groups. However, professional staff play an integral role in supporting volunteer leaders and ensuring the continuity of work between leadership transitions. Professional staff possess knowledge about this history and inner workings of an association and use their expertise to help leaders and members accomplish the association's priorities (Pemberton, 1994). In addition to their close work with leadership and governance, professional staff are involved in associations' management and organizational processes and represent the association to external groups (Fowler, 1999). These activities include monitoring trends in psychology and school psychology, creating resources for use by school psychologists and the public, and identifying and advocating for federal policies and legislation germane to school psychology practice. For example, NASP employs school psychologists who serve as the staff directors for educational practice, professional development and standards, professional policy and practice, and policy and advocacy. Similarly, APA's four directorates, the organizational arms that address areas of interest to APA's strategic plan, are led by psychologists. For additional information for involving yourself within professional organizations, see Chapter 30 by Grapin, Malone, and Stoner.

State departments of education. School psychologists have the opportunity to contribute to and lead state compliance, regulation, and improvement efforts by working within state departments of education. School psychologists may be well suited for diverse positions in their state departments of education including within areas such as mental health support, affective needs, equity assistance, culture and language, multi-tiered systems of support, early childhood, evaluation, coaching positions, or specific grant-funded initiatives. These positions may also be highly collaborative with universities, foundations, or agencies. For additional information about public policy advocacy at both the state and federal levels, see Chapter 29 by Hughes and Malone.

Preparing for an Academic Career in School Psychology

We end this chapter with ideas for how to prepare for an academic career in school psychology, which is the predominant focus of subsequent chapters. While a very small number of

specialist-level graduates assume faculty positions upon graduation according to yearly employment outcome reporting (Gadke et al., 2019), an academic career in school psychology typically begins with the completion of a doctoral degree (Crothers et al., 2010). The first step toward that degree is entry into a graduate program in school psychology (i.e., specialist or doctoral). This may occur immediately after completing an undergraduate degree (46%), after a short period of employment in a related field (34%) or unrelated field (9%), following many years of working as a credentialed school psychologist (2%), or at some other time (e.g., transfer from another graduate program in school psychology or other field; 10%) (Bocanegra, Rossen, & Grapin, 2017). Setting the stage for entry into graduate school may begin as early as high school when decisions about postsecondary education and declarations of major and minor areas of study may arise.

Undergraduate Majors and Experience

Based on our combined 40+ years of experience as faculty members, the majority of graduate students in our school psychology programs have completed an undergraduate degree in psychology, education, special education, sociology, child development, or a related discipline. Background knowledge in psychology and education can be especially important. The more that applicants can be accountable for that knowledge and experience within their curriculum vitae, the stronger the likelihood that they can find admittance into a graduate program in school psychology. Written and oral communication skills, analytical thinking, and interpersonal talents are also particularly important for the school psychology profession. Well-qualified students representing a diverse set of college majors who are motivated to learn, committed to continuous improvement, able to work well with others, and possessing strong data-based problem-solving are especially well suited for the field. Persistence, optimism, collegiality, enthusiasm, curiosity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence are additional characteristics of those who have excelled in our graduate programs.

Doctoral programs are especially interested in seeing applicants' readiness for the intensive demands of research and practice expected within their training programs. Working within research labs can help applicants demonstrate experience with data collection, analysis, and dissemination skills while securing a letter of support from faculty supervisors who may speak to your academic preparedness, responsiveness to critical feedback, time management skills, or interpersonal skills. Getting experience presenting and writing in the area of psychology, education, or the sciences can help to demonstrate a readiness to handle similar duties within a graduate program through references appearing on your curriculum vitae. Having experience working in schools or with school-aged populations can help to secure letters of support from supervisors who can speak to your interpersonal and practice-related skills. Holding leadership positions within service organizations or demonstrating strong time management skills (e.g., working full-time or being a student-athlete) can help to position applicants for success in completing a doctoral degree in school psychology.

Applying to School Psychology Graduate Programs

We have previously highlighted in this chapter the wide range of goals and purposes of graduate training programs that exist in school psychology. Where these specialist and doctoral programs and the faculty within these programs fall along the research-teaching-practice training continuum is especially important to consider when making choices about the programs you may wish to apply. Matching one's own interests and career goals to those of the graduate programs is especially important to address in one's application materials (e.g., personal statement). In addition to the book *Graduate Study in Psychology* (APA, 2019b), Table 1.3 highlights web-based

Table 1.3 APA and NASP Web-Based Resources Pertaining to a Career in School Psychology

<i>Web Resource Topic</i>	<i>APA</i>	<i>NASP</i>
Careers	www.apa.org/careers	www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/a-career-that-makes-a-difference
Applying to Graduate School	www.apa.org/education/grad	www.nasponline.org/about-school-psychology/selecting-a-graduate-program
Internship/Postdoctoral Positions	www.apa.org/education/grad/internship	www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/graduate-students/graduate-student-fact-sheets
Job Search	www.psycareers.com/	www.nasponline-jobs.careerwebsite.com
Certification/Licensure	www.apa.org/careers/early-career/	www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/national-certification

resources essential for those looking for information pertaining to applying for graduate study in school psychology. With respect to graduate school selection, personal statements, letters of recommendation, interview performance, undergraduate grade point average, student-mentor research match, and Graduate Record Exam scores are universally seen as the most important student admission criteria across all graduate programs in psychology (Littleford, Buxton, Bucher, Simon-Dack, & Yang, 2018).

Given the research demands inherent within doctoral programs, aligning research interests to one or more program faculty who may serve as an advisor may be especially important for applicants. Graduate programs have their strengths and weaknesses related to preparing graduates for a range of careers in school psychology. Some are focused on preparing school psychologists to work in schools. Others are focused on preparing school psychologists to work with school-aged populations and their families both in and outside of schools. Many of these programs too may be focused on preparing faculty or researchers in school psychology. These program differences can be especially true even within what some perceive to be the homogenous group of APA-accredited doctoral programs in school psychology. For example, some APA-accredited programs have a high number of core faculty role models who excel in mentoring future researchers while other programs have faculty role models with higher rates of professional credentials that may emphasize practice competencies (J. Carlson et al., 2016). Other program faculty appear to excel at both. For example, program faculty at the University of Texas-Austin, University of Virginia, and Hofstra University not only demonstrate high rates of research productivity (e.g., as evidenced by high h index scores) but also possess the professional credentials often required to train future scientist-practitioners in health service psychology with a specialization in school psychology. As an applicant to graduate programs in school psychology, a close examination of the match between one's professional goals and the program's goals and graduate outcomes is especially important.

Doctoral Internships and Postdoctoral Fellowships

To more closely align to the *Standards of Accreditation* (APA, 2019a), APA-accredited doctoral programs in school psychology are working to increase the frequency that their graduates complete accredited internships. Completing APA-accredited internships allows graduates an easier path toward securing state credentials (e.g., LP) and national credentials (e.g., HSP)—both of which are important to the training of future health service psychologists with specializations in school psychology. APA-accredited programs are required to track and report on graduate outcomes through the point of licensure, and programs are required to publicly report graduates' licensure rates on their websites as a part of meeting the *Standards of Accreditation* (APA, 2019a).

Postdoctoral fellowships in school psychology are being offered increasingly across the country. Typically, these fellowships are either practice or research focused. Practice-related postdoctoral experiences typically involve one to two years of clinical work, sometimes combined with research, to assist fellows with securing the supervision and hours necessary to become a licensed psychologist and meeting credentialing requirements for becoming a health service psychologist. As an alternative, research-focused postdoctoral fellowships may not result in additional preparation for clinical credentialing and instead will help fellows focus on the development of research methodology and data analysis competencies.

Chapter Authors Entry into Academia

To help you think about an academic career in school psychology, we briefly share our career paths that brought us into academia. We also encourage you to seek additional resources and books related to a career in psychology, including an academic one, like those highlighted in Table 1.4.

John knew in high school that he wanted to be a child psychologist. He majored in Child Psychology at the University of Minnesota while working full-time as a part of the Minnesota Twin Family Studies as a psychophysicologist. During his PhD program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he completed his predoctoral internship at the APA-accredited Primary Children's Medical Center in UT. Never did he consider himself one who would go into

Table 1.4 Additional Resources to Assist with Finding your Career Path in School Psychology

<i>Book Title</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Areas of Focus</i>
<i>Becoming a Psychology Professor: Your Guide to Landing the Right Academic Job</i>	Guy Boyesen	This book helps those looking for an academic career to link their search to their long-term goals.
<i>Career Paths in Psychology: Where Your Degree Can Take You (Third Edition)</i>	Robert Sternberg	This third edition is very popular for those interested in a career in psychology. Specific chapters on careers in school psychology and academia are included.
<i>Handbook of Education, Training, and Supervision of School Psychologists in School and Community, Volume I</i>	Enedina Garcia-Vazquez, Tony Crespi, Cynthia Riccio	The first volume summarizes the various training experiences in the field of school psychology with an emphasis on assessment and intervention training.
<i>Handbook of Education, Training, and Supervision of School Psychologists in School and Community, Volume II</i>	Judith Kaufman, Tammy Hughes, Cynthia Riccio	The second volume focuses on supervision, difficult dialogs, and future training directions for the field of school psychology.
<i>The Chicago Guide to Your Academic Career</i>	John Goldsmith, John Komlos, Penny Schine Gold	This comprehensive resource includes guidance pertaining to graduate school, mentorship, dissertation strategies, and obtaining an academic career.
<i>The Psychologist's Guide to Professional Development</i>	Greg Bohall & Mary-Jo Bautista	This career guide provides new professionals and doctoral students with information to inform a strong foundation for a career in psychology and other behavioral health professions.
<i>The Early Career Researcher's Toolbox: Insights Into Mentors, Peer Review, and Landing a Faculty Job</i>	Andres De Los Reyes	This book describes how early career faculty can use narrative tools to build and describe their research agendas. It also provides tool on working with mentors, navigating peer review, and conducting job talks.

academia. However, he was lucky that he had a number of publications and national presentations at the time of his first job search. His internship combined with a dissertation on medication treatment for selective mutism helped him to land his first academic position at Oklahoma State University. As a part of negotiations for his hire, he was able to set up the supervision and postdoctoral hours needed to become licensed in Oklahoma. Words of advice: If you are interested in an academic position in an APA-accredited school psychology program be sure to secure licensure via a postdoctoral fellowship or negotiate a postdoctoral placement as a part of your hire. At Michigan State University, licensure as a psychologist is now a preferred requirement for all faculty position openings.

Bryn double-majored in Psychology and Spanish at Kenyon College. She realized in college that school psychology was her ideal career after conducting a research project pertaining to the importance of mental health prevention efforts in school settings. She attended Indiana University for her doctoral studies and completed her predoctoral internship at the APA-accredited University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis. She never planned for a career in academia, but while preparing to secure a postdoctoral position, a mentor encouraged her to apply for academic positions. After an opportunity arose in a preferred location, she began her academic career at the University of Colorado Denver where she remains today. Although her path to academia was not direct, her career has been fulfilling, and she feels more connected to academia with each passing year. Words of advice: Find peers at similar career stages so you can support each other! These colleagues will be instrumental for mentorship, validation, and support for many years—likely your entire career.

Celeste majored in Psychology at Brown University but was unsure about her career path until she met a school psychologist while working as a paraprofessional at an autism support school. She received her master's degree in school counseling from Johns Hopkins University and then immediately transitioned into doctoral studies at Temple University. Her main reason for pursuing a PhD was to enter academia and prepare culturally competent school psychologists. To prepare for an academic position, she completed the Teaching in Higher Education certificate program while enrolled in her doctoral program. Graduate students in the Teaching in Higher Education program completed coursework on teaching adult learners, course design, and assessment, and completed a teaching practicum under supervision of a "master teacher."

Celeste completed a postdoctoral fellowship in child clinical and pediatric psychology to accrue hours for licensure before starting her academic career at Howard University. Words of advice: The lack of racial and ethnic diversity in academia, and specifically in school psychology, can be isolating for school psychology faculty of color. Consider looking outside of your department to find other scholars of color who can serve as mentors and provide peer support network in navigating the unwritten rules of academia.

Summary

Careers in school psychology can be personally and professionally fulfilling and can benefit children, families, schools, and communities in extensive ways. The range of careers available to school psychologists tap into the diverse array of skills and competencies taught in graduate training programs. For those with primarily practice interests, there are many careers focused on bringing their clinical skills (e.g., assessment, consultation, and intervention) and leadership talents to either school or non-school settings (e.g., private practice and hospitals). For those interested in training the next generation of school psychologists there are plentiful opportunities for positions that emphasize clinical supervision, teaching, research, or advisement roles across a range of teaching- and research-intensive universities. For those with primarily

research interests, there are a range of positions that require well-developed research (e.g., methods, statistics, and data analysis), writing (e.g., journal publications, chapters, and books), and fund-seeking skills (e.g., contracts, foundation grants, and federal grants). Matching one's professional goals and interests to a graduate training program often serves as a starting point to a career in school psychology. Yet, there are many jumping on and jumping off points along a school psychology career path. The comprehensive skill set of school psychologists allows for substantial individuality in how this path may unfold across time. Given the chronic shortage of practitioners and academics; the ever growing need for mental health services within school-aged populations (ages 0–25 years) and their families, schools, and communities; and high rates of job satisfaction, the school psychology field is an attractive one for those interested in a long and fulfilling career.

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