Issues and Problems in School Psychology  
SPS 6052  
Course Syllabus: Fall, 2015

Instructor: Connie W. Sorice, Ph.D.
Email: soricehome@cfl.rr.com
Phone: 386-795-0230 (cell); 386-427-1412 (home)
Class Hours/Location: Wednesday, 5:45, NRNA 2321
Office Hours: By appointment

Instructor Message:
I welcome each of you to this course and to the school psychology program at the University of Florida. I hope that you will enjoy and actively participate in the course, learn from the readings (both required and supplemental), discussion, class activities, and assignments.

My goals include developing and enhancing your knowledge, skills, and expertise relative to issues and problems in school psychology; the comprehensive roles of school psychologists as leaders and change agents; as well as the promotion of the psychological and educational development and well-being of children and youth. It is my hope that this class will introduce you to the field of school psychology, as well as enable you to be better prepared for this wonderful career choice.

My expectations are that you demonstrate consistent attendance, effective listening skills, and active participation in class activities and discussions. Likewise, I hope that you will demonstrate a high degree of responsibility, intellectual resourcefulness, reflective thinking and problem solving, as well as initiative during the course. Consistent with professional conduct, attendance and punctuality are expected. Assignments should be completed in a graduate level, professional manner. Please take the time to look over your spelling, grammar, and other matters concerning the overall appearance of your work. It is a reflection of you and your effort. All written assignments should be typed using standard one-inch margins, 12-point standard font, and according to APA 6th edition (see reference in Recommended Text section).

General Objectives:
This seminar is an introduction to the profession and practice of school psychology. The topics covered will include: (a) history and foundations of school psychology; (b) roles and functions of school psychologists; (c) professional issues and standards; and (d) contemporary issues and challenges. This course will also cover the Florida system of school improvement and accountability and review the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and the Florida Standards.

Required Text:
Recommended Text:

UF Honor Code:
“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

“I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

Students are expected to conform to all policies of the University of Florida and work within the honor code. One of the goals of the University of Florida is to ensure that students are honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines of the University of Florida. Those students adjudged to have committed a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy, or fabrication) shall be subject to the sanctions listed in Paragraph XI of the Student Conduct Code. For additional information about the University of Florida Student Judicial Process or Academic Honesty Guidelines, contact the Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall (phone: (352) 392-1261).

Communication with the Instructor:
The best way to reach me is by phone or text. If you call and leave a voice mail, speak clearly and slowly, providing your name, the course number, the message and a return phone number, including your area code. If you email me, note that I may not be able to read the email within an immediate time frame that same day. When emailing, please include your name and course number in the subject line. When leaving a message or emailing me, I will attempt to respond within 24 hours.

Attendance:
Your commitment to this class and to yourself should be to be in class and on time. Students should arrive to class ready to participate and engage in critical and in-depth discussion of the course readings and lectures. In case of personal or family emergency, notify Dr. Sorice before class or as soon as possible. If you have to miss class, please contact a fellow student for pertinent class information, directions, assignments, and handouts. See below regarding absences, assignments, and due dates.

Due Dates:
Assignments are to be turned in on the due date. A 20% reduction in points per week will be applied to late assignments. Arrangements should be made to have the assignment turned in on time (via another student, emailing to the instructor as a Microsoft Word attachment by 5:45 pm on the due date). Absence on the night or your assigned class presentation will result in a deduction of 20% of the points for that assignment. If you need accommodations due to a disability, please meet with me by appointment.
Cell Phones:
Personal electronic devices are a distraction. Please turn them off or to silence mode before coming to class as a common courtesy to all. You may check for messages, return calls, or text during the class break.

E-mail / Gatorlink Account:
You are required to get a Gatorlink account through the University, a service that is free to all students. With this account, you will be able to send and receive e-mail and access the internet from home or school. You will also need a Gatorlink account to access COE online course management system website. Instructions for obtaining a Gatorlink account can be found at http://www.gatorlink.ufl.edu/. In addition, please review the UF computer requirements at http://www.circa.ufl.edu/computer.htm and make sure that you have the necessary computer software and hardware.

After you have obtained a Gatorlink username and password, you will be able to access the COE Online Course Management System website at http://online.education.ufl.edu/. CANVAS is the platform for the courses. Your username and password for login on the site is the same as your Gatorlink account. You will be able to access the website from off-campus. The site is for general class use. It is used to share information (e.g., articles, calendar events, Web links), hold electronic discussions (e.g., discussion forums), and much more. You should log in at least once per week. Class announcements and course readings should be referred to on the website.

Class Participation and Reading:
Your participation is critical to your success in this class. I value class discussion and believe that the more you engage and learn together, the more you will enjoy the class, come to understand the material, and will be ready to apply the content to your future role as a school psychologist. All class members will listen attentively to others, remain respectful of others’ perspective, be open to differences of opinion, and will maintain respectful language at all times.

Each week you will be responsible for having read the assigned chapter(s) and article(s) listed/assigned for that week, as well as for participating in discussion in a reflective and thoughtful way. Please note that at the start of each class, you may be invited to share a brief perspective/reflection on one or more of the readings to stimulate discussion. In addition, each student will complete class assignments that are designed to assist you in preparing for class topics and activities. At times, you will be asked to work with a partner or group for an assignment. I ask that you work flexibly with the others, be prepared to work together, do your share, as well as complete the assignment in a manner that meets the delineated requirements and that you are all proud of.

Course Grades:
Grades for this course will be based on the class assignments, class participation, and engagement. Information on the assignments is presented below. Class participation is broadly defined to include class attendance (absences & tardies), active participation in discussions during class, and professional conduct. As stated above, students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings each week. This includes the quality of the information you contribute, the extent and quality of resources (your own and those from course materials), evidence of critical thinking, the extent to which the contributions facilitate the group’s consideration of the issues, and the clarity of your sharing.
Grades of Incomplete ("I") will be given only under special circumstances (e.g., illness). Students will not receive a passing grade in the course until they have received a rating of "Met" or "Met with Weakness" on Assignments #1 and #2 for the College’s Educator Assessment System. This system tracks student progress through the program for accreditation, program approval, and certification purposes (See pages 9 & 10). Furthermore, a course grade of “C” or better is considered passing at the graduate level.

Basis:

Attendance & Participation 50 pts.
Assignment #1: History of School Psychology Paper 75 pts.
Assignment #2: School Psychology Service Delivery System Poster & Reflection 125 pts.
Assignment #3: Contemporary Issues & Challenges Position Paper & Presentation 125 pts.
Sharing of Florida Standards 25 pts.
Summary/reflection of job role/function/aspect from NASP Communique’ 25 pts.
Review/sharing of NASP Best Practices topic/chapter 25 pts.
Review/sharing of websites and SP resources 25 pts.
Interview of SP/reflection 25 pts.
Total 500 pts.

Grading Scale:
A 500-470  C+  399-385
A- 469-450  C  384-370
B+ 449-435  C-  369-350
B 434-420  D  349-300
B- 419-400  E  Below 300

Course Outline (The course outline is tentative and subject to change. All course changes will be announced in class in advance).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: 8/26/15</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Rachael Elrod, Norman Library</td>
<td>Introductions, Course Overview</td>
<td>Obtain Gatorlink account Access CANVAS site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2: 9/2/15</td>
<td>Introduction to the Field; Historical Development of School Psychology</td>
<td>Merrell et al. (Ch. 1 &amp; 2) Fagan &amp; Wise, Ch. 2 Podcast Tom Fagan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3: 9/9/15</td>
<td>Employment Context; Roles and Functions of School Psychologists</td>
<td>Merrell et al. (Ch. 3 &amp; 5) Weininger article NASP Practice Model</td>
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<td>Week 4: 9/16/15</td>
<td>Training, Credentialing, &amp; Regulation of School Psychology</td>
<td>Merrell et al. (Ch. 4)</td>
<td>Assignment #1 Due Review Rosen data on NCSP</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Readings</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5:</strong></td>
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<td>School Improvement &amp; Accountability; Evaluation of School Psychologist; Legal and Ethical Issues</td>
<td>Merrell et al. (Ch. 6, Appendix B)</td>
<td>Sharing of Florida Standards (group presentation)</td>
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<td><em>NASP Best Practices</em> series chapter approved</td>
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<td>Develop bank of questions for interview of SP</td>
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<td><strong>Week 6:</strong></td>
<td>9/30/15</td>
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<td>SP Faculty Presentation</td>
<td>McLeskey &amp; Waldron article</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Dr. Nancy Waldron (5:45-6:30)</td>
<td>Splett, Fowler, Weist, &amp; McDaniel article</td>
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<td>SP Faculty Presentation</td>
<td>Merrell et al. Ch. 7, 11</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Dr. Joni Splett (6:45-7:30)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 7:</strong></td>
<td>10/7/15</td>
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<td>SP Faculty Presentation</td>
<td>Merrell et al. Ch. 8, 12</td>
<td>Summary/sharing of <em>NASP Best Practices</em> topic/chapter</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Dr. John Kranzler</td>
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<td>Discussion <em>NASP Best Practices</em> topic/chapter</td>
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<td><strong>Week 8:</strong></td>
<td>10/14/15</td>
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<td>Deadline: Approval of Topics for Assignment #3</td>
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<td>SP Faculty Presentation</td>
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<td>Review/sharing of websites &amp; tools for SP</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Dr. Tina Smith-Bonahue (5:45-6:30)</td>
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<td>Resources for School Psychologists</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9:</strong></td>
<td>10/21/15</td>
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<td>Summary/reflection on job role/function/aspect from <em>NASP Communique’</em></td>
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<td>SP Faculty Presentation</td>
<td>Joyce-Beaulieu &amp; Grapin article</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker: Dr. Diana Joyce-Beaulieu</td>
<td>Sulkowski, Joyce, &amp; Storch article</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion <em>NASP Communique’</em> job role/function/aspect</td>
<td>Merrell et al. Ch. 9, 10</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10:</strong></td>
<td>10/28/15</td>
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<td>NO CLASS---FASP Conference (<a href="http://www.fasp.org/">http://www.fasp.org/</a>) October 28-31</td>
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<td><strong>Week 11:</strong></td>
<td>11/4/15</td>
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<td>Sharing/reflection of SP interview due</td>
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<td>Future of School Psychology; International School Psychology</td>
<td>Merrell et al. (Ch. 13, Appendix A)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 12:</strong></td>
<td>11/11/15</td>
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<td>NO CLASS---Veteran’s Day Holiday</td>
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<td><strong>Week 13:</strong></td>
<td>11/18/15</td>
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<td>Assignment #2 Due</td>
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<td>Poster Session School Psychological Services Delivery Systems</td>
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<td><strong>Week 14:</strong></td>
<td>11/25/15</td>
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<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<td>Happy Thanksgiving!</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Week 15:</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues &amp; Challenges</td>
<td>Assignment #3 Paper Due</td>
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<td>12/2/15</td>
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<td>Week 16:</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues &amp; Challenges</td>
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<td>12/9/15</td>
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**Assignments**

**Assignment #1: History of School Psychology Paper**

The historical development of school psychology can be divided into two distinct, but overlapping, periods. For this assignment, you are to discuss the significance of one important event or person in each of these two periods for the development of the field of education and school psychology. Compare and contrast the significant events/people when appropriate. Papers should be at least 4 typed pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins), references included. Editorial Style of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) is required. Written papers are due at the beginning of class in Week 4 (9/16/15). This assignment is worth 75 points, and grades will be based on quality of the written paper as follows: accuracy and relevance of information (30 points), quality of writing (25 points), and evidence of critical thinking (20 points).

**Assignment #2: School Psychology Service Delivery System**

For this assignment, you are to integrate what you have learned about the role of school psychologists and the psychological and educational needs of children to explore and describe a school psychology service delivery system. Be resourceful—research the district on line, call a contact(s) in the district, talk to respective people from that district at FASP. PLAN AHEAD—accessing real school district data can sometimes be a challenging process! The goal of this assignment is to help you discover how different school districts or other settings organize their delivery of psychological services and the different kinds of settings that employ school psychologists. Each section of the project will be graded based on the thoroughness and the quality of the information shared. Regarding quality, the extent to which your descriptions are accurate, reflective, objective, and fair will be considered. You must include the following information on your project display or within your reflection paper, as well as answer the following questions:

**Needs Assessment (30 points)**

- Describe the physical (region, climate, rural, urban, etc.) and sociological characteristics (SES, distinctive racial or ethnic groups, political leaning, etc.) of the district, as well as any other noteworthy characteristics. For example, are there high incidences of crime, poverty, drug use?
- Describe the number and types of schools in this district and estimate the number of children per school.
- Describe the current school psychological service delivery system in this district in terms of “demographics” (e.g., ratio of psychologists to students, number of schools per psychologist, services provided, etc.). To what extent do the demographic characteristics of the psychologists match the clients? For example, do they tend to live in the same kinds of neighborhoods, speak the same language, etc.?
• Describe the psychological and educational needs of the children in this district. Are they “at-risk” for any psychological or educational (or both) problems? Does your district purport to have a specialization? Is it known for excellence in any areas?
• Do the needs of the school help in determining school psychologists’ assignments? Are psychologists’ specialties (if any) considered in matching service delivery in schools?

Service Delivery (30 points)
• Describe the school psychology delivery system in terms of organizational structure. What is the model of service delivery underlying the delivery of these services? Is there a “lead” school psychologist? Are psychological services offered under Exceptional Student Education or Student Services or some other division? Are there other professionals in the district in supportive or collaborative roles with the psychologists (e.g., psychometricians)? Are there other professionals in the district offering similar or overlapping services (e.g., data coaches, counselors, social workers)? Are there other professionals that the school psychologists work closely with in their job roles (e.g., Problem Solving Team chairs, staffing specialists, administrators, behavior specialists)?
• What types of services are provided by school psychologists in this district? What percentage of time do the school psychologists in your district spend on each? Are services primarily direct or indirect? Among the psychologists employed by your agency, are there specialists (e.g., neuropsychologists, crisis specialists, low incidence disabilities, Pre-K, bilingual, legal, etc.) or do all psychologists perform the same functions?
• What qualifications are necessary to work as a psychologist in the district/agency? For example, what level (Ed.S., Ph.D., Psy.D.) and type of degrees do psychologists hold? Is extra training or specialization required for some or all of the psychologists? What types of ongoing professional development (e.g., coursework, attending conferences, district-sponsored workshops, etc.) do psychologists in your agency participate in?
• Provide an organizational chart showing where psychological services appear in the overall structure of the organization or district. (You may find that the district/agency has created this chart already or you may have to draft this based on the information you have gathered from multiple sources.)

Accountability & Evaluation (30 points)
• Describe the steps taken to meet the state legislation regarding teacher and principal performance evaluations. How has this legislation impacted the ways in which school psychologists in the district are evaluated annually?
• For Florida school districts, summarize the recent performance of your district on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA). What steps did the district take to transition to the Florida Standards and the FSA?
• There is a strong movement in education to demonstrate the impact of every employee on student outcomes. Think about the types of services provided by your agency. How does the agency determine if the services provided (by the school psychologists specifically) have an impact on PK-12 student outcomes? How is this “impact” demonstrated and measured for teachers and school psychologists in the district?

Poster Presentation (25 points) and Reflection (10 points)
Service delivery systems will be shared with classmates and presented in Week 13 (11/18/15). The purpose of the presentation is to share what you learned about your district and provide insights and connections to previous course readings and discussions. Also due that day is a paper summarizing your reflections on the assignment, including discussion of reactions to the
school improvement and accountability system you researched. Papers should be 4-5 typed pages in length (no more than 5; double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins), references included, if applicable. Editorial Style of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) is required. Grades will be based on quality of the poster, presentation, and depth of reflection on the assignment.

Assignment #3: Position Paper on Contemporary Issues & Challenges
For this assignment, you are to identify an important contemporary issue in the field of school psychology. After you have selected a topic, you must review relevant literature on all sides of the issue. This does not have to be an exhaustive review. However, you must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the key issues and various sides of the debate. In addition, you much choose and defend your own position on this issue. All topics must be approved by the instructor no later than Week 8 (10/14/15).

Papers should be at least 10 typed pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins), references included. Editorial Style of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) is required. Papers are due at the beginning of class in Week 15 (12/2/15). Grades will be based on quality of the written position paper (100 points) and class presentation and discussion (25 points).

Additional Assignments:
Sharing of Florida Standards (25 pts.)
Students will work in groups to explore the Florida Standards for various grade levels, specific to English Language Arts, Math, and Science. The goal is to become familiar with the scope of the standards/course content taught at the respective grade levels; as well as skills for that developmental age/grade. A brief sharing of the primary content/scope will be provided by each group in an engaging way so that the class also understands the scope of the content. To be presented Week 5 (9/23/15).

Summary/reflection of job role/function/aspect from NASP Communique’ (25 pts.)
Each student will select a recent issue of the NASP Communique’, review the content of the issue, and choose one article to read from the issue that relates to some job role/function of school psychologists or current issue impacting school psychologists. Write a one-page summary/reflection on the article; with only a brief opening paragraph that summarizes the article. The majority of the paper should be your reflection on the article as it relates to the course objectives, readings, and our discussions regarding the roles/functions/current issues in school psychology. Each student will also very briefly share their article contents in class. Due Week 9 (10/21/15).

Review/sharing of NASP Best Practices topic/chapter (25 pts.)
Each student will select one chapter from the NASP Best Practices series to write a brief one-page summary/reflection and to share with the class. The goal is to become familiar with the NASP Best Practices series, as well as the nature of the issues and challenges that we work with in our field. The one-page summary/reflection should have a brief opening paragraph summarizing the chapter, with the majority of your paper reflection on the chapter as it relates to your course objectives, readings, and our class discussions related to issues and problems in school psychology. Your chapter should be approved by the instructor no later than Week 5 (9/23/15), so as to avoid duplication of chapters. The summary/reflection is due Week 7 (10/7/15).
Review/sharing of websites and SP resources (25 pts.)
Each student will access/browse/review the websites and SP resources from the list provided to you below, as well as any additional sites provided or that you might find during the course of the semester related to the course objectives, readings, or discussions. These will be valuable resources to you as you progress through your program, as well as in your career. The goal is to become familiar with some of the many resources available to school psychologists and educators, early in your program/career, so that you may begin to add them to your course content and use them in your field experiences. After browsing the sites, please select one resource that you would like to share with the class that you found particularly interesting or possibly valuable in the future. To be shared Week 8 (10/14/15).
http://www.fldoe.org/
http://www.nasponline.org/
http://fasp.org/
www.interventioncentral.org
http://www.fcrr.org/
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/
http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/
http://www.pbisworld.com/
http://www.casel.org/
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/
http://www.samhsa.gov/

Interview of SP/reflection (25 pts.)
Each student will interview a practicing school psychologist to learn more about the roles/functions, changes in school psychology over time, and current issues and problems school psychologists and educators face. A potential bank of interview questions will be developed in class. This assignment is purposefully scheduled to be due after the FASP Annual Conference in the event that you have the opportunity to meet with the school psychologist there to talk. From this interview, write a two-page summary/reflection; with the majority of the paper being your reflection on the interview content as it relates to the course objectives, readings, and class discussions; as well as how your knowledge has expanded this semester regarding school psychologists and the profession. The paper is due Week 11 (11/4/15).

Florida Educator Certification
In this course, one or more assignments have been selected as “Key Tasks” that will assess your mastery of knowledge, skills, and / or dispositions that the State of Florida requires of all entry-level educators. These assignments were specifically selected as Key Tasks because they align with elements of Florida’s Uniform Core Curriculum. Your mastery of each Indicator will be measured by your performance on a Key Task. To pass this course, you must successfully complete all Key Tasks and receive a rating of either “Met” or “Met with Weakness.” No exceptions will be made to this rule, even if you do not plan to practice in Florida after graduation or apply for state certification. Students who receive a “Not Met” rating will be offered a chance to redo the Key Task or, in some cases, to complete a comparable task assigned by the instructor. Students who do not complete their makeup work satisfactorily (with a “Met with Weakness” or higher rating) will receive either “an Incomplete” or “a failing grade” at the instructor’s discretion.

Core Curricular Requirements: (a) Professional Education Competency 13 – Knowledge of the history of education and its philosophical and sociological foundations (Foundations of
Education); (b) State Adopted Content Standards or the Florida Standards; and (c) Information on the State system of school improvement and accountability.

Key Tasks / Assignments: History of Education and School Psychology (Assignment #1)
The historical development of school psychology can be divided into two distinct, but overlapping, periods. For this assignment, you are to discuss the significance of one important event or person in each of these two periods for the development of the field of education and school psychology. Compare and contrast the significant events/people when appropriate. Papers should be at least 4 typed pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1” margins), references included. Editorial Style of the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) is required. Written papers are due at the beginning of class in Week 4 (9/16/15). Grades will be based on quality of the written paper.

Indicators & Rating Guide:

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<tr>
<th>INDICATOR NUMBER &amp; DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>MET</th>
<th>MET WITH WEAKNESS</th>
<th>NOT MET</th>
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<td>(13) Knowledge of the history of education and its philosophical and sociological foundations (Foundations of Education).</td>
<td>The paper appropriately discusses the significance of one important person or event on the development of education and school psychology in each of the two historical periods.</td>
<td>The paper appropriately discusses the significance of one important person or event on the development of education and school psychology in one of the two historical periods.</td>
<td>The paper does not appropriately discuss the significance of one important person or event on the development of education and school psychology in either of the two historical periods.</td>
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Key Tasks / Assignments: School Psychology Service Delivery System (Assignment #2) For this assignment, you are to integrate what you have learned about the role of school psychologists and the psychological and educational needs of children to explore and describe a school psychology service delivery system. The school district you choose must be a real district.

Indicators & Rating Guide:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADDITIONAL CORE CURRICULUM</th>
<th>MET</th>
<th>MET WITH WEAKNESS</th>
<th>NOT MET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Adopted Content Standards or the Florida Standards</td>
<td>Reflection paper articulates understanding of the Florida Standards</td>
<td>Reflection paper articulates partial understanding of the Florida Standards</td>
<td>Reflection paper does not articulate understanding of the Florida Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on the State system of school improvement and accountability.</td>
<td>Reflection articulates understanding of system of school improvement and accountability.</td>
<td>Reflection articulates partial understanding of system of school improvement and accountability.</td>
<td>Reflection does not articulate understanding of system of school improvement and accountability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Assigned Readings


