

**Winthrop University School Psychology Program Alumni Survey:  
Summary and Interpretation**

August 2019

2015-2018 Graduates (N=32)

Number of Respondents-14 (43.75%)

In August, 2019, a survey was conducted of all Winthrop University School Psychology Program alumni who graduated from May 2015 through May 2018. That population consisted of 32 alumni, of whom 14 (43.75%) responded to the survey. Alumni records for those graduates indicated that all but one (97%) were employed as school psychologists in public schools subsequent to graduation, with one student pursuing an additional graduate degree in neuropsychology.

Alumni were first asked to rate on a scale from 1 (“Very satisfied”) to 5 (“Very Dissatisfied”) their satisfaction with various aspects of the program. Every aspect of the program received a mean rating more positive than a “2.” (“Satisfied”). The *most positively* rated items were:

- Comprehensiveness of fieldwork (traineeship and internship) in professional preparation (mean of 1.36)
- Orientation session, student handbook, and other efforts to integrate students into the program (1.43)
- Admission process (1.50)
- Overall quality of the program (1.57)

The *lowest* rated items (although all more positive than a “2”) were:

- Program facilities and equipment (1.86)
- Overall quality of instruction (1.79)

There were few comments that clarified why these items were rated somewhat less positively than others, but the differences in ratings are so small so as to be non-meaningful. One alumnus did note poor office space available to graduate students, which the program and department recently addressed by moving the graduate student workroom to a larger space downstairs in Kinard.

Next, alumni were asked to rate their degree of agreement (using the same scale as described above) with whether the Winthrop School Psychology Program prepared them in ten areas derived from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Graduate Preparation Standards and *Domains of Professional Practice*. Every domain received a mean rating more positive than a “2” (“Satisfied”). The *most positively* rated items were:

- Conduct psychological and educational assessments and use data to design and/or evaluate services (mean of 1.38)
- Consult, collaborate, and communicate with others...(1.46)
- Provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards (1.46)

The *lowest* rated items (although all more positive than a “2”) were:

- Plan, implement, and/or evaluate services that support socialization and mental health (e.g., behavioral interventions, counseling) (1.92)
- Design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context and facilitate family and school interactions. (1.77)

Interestingly, the comments made by respondents didn’t always match these relative strengths and weaknesses. For example, one respondent said that they wished they had received more direction on cognitive test interpretation (a relative strength based on ratings) while another felt particularly well

prepared in understanding diversity and cultural variables in any given community. Another made a positive comment about the preparation in counseling. Several alumni suggested the need for more training in behavioral intervention, which was addressed recently when the program added a second behavioral analysis and intervention course. One suggested the need for more training in autism, which is included in three courses in the program but is receiving more coverage in the third course. Another suggested a different structure for internship supervision to provide greater diversity in supervision. But as it stands now, students receive both a faculty and field supervisor for traineeship and a different faculty and field supervisor for internship. It's hard to imagine much greater opportunities for supervision than that. Nonetheless, some group supervision, as suggested, might be worth considering for internship.

Alumni made positive comments about many other aspects of the program. Financial aid for graduate students was cited as a plus, as was the traineeship-internship sequence of supervised field experiences. One alumnus stated, "Overall, the program was an excellent resource to prepare me for my career as a School Psychologist, particularly during the traineeship and internship years."

Probably the best single indicator of alumni satisfaction with the program was in response to the question, "*Would you recommend the program to a well-motivated, capable person wishing to pursue training in school psychology?*" Of the 12 respondents who answered the question, 83.33% said they would "strongly recommend" and the remaining 16.67% said they would "recommend" the program. These results are consistent with those on program exit surveys and on anecdotal evidence obtained over many years.

## **Winthrop University School Psychology Program Alumni Survey Results**

August 2019

2015-2018 Cohorts (N=32)

Number of Respondents-14 (43.75%)

**I. - Program Quality. Please rate your satisfaction with of each of the following aspects of the Winthrop School Psychology Program by selecting one rating from the provided scale:**

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1. Admission Process	1.00	4.00	1.50	0.82	0.68	14
2. Orientation sessions, student handbook, and other efforts to integrate students into the program	1.00	2.00	1.43	0.49	0.24	14
3. Financial support for students	1.00	4.00	1.71	0.88	0.78	14
4. Comprehensiveness of coursework in professional preparation	1.00	4.00	1.71	0.80	0.63	14
5. Overall quality of instruction	1.00	2.00	1.79	0.41	0.17	14
6. Comprehensiveness of fieldwork (traineeship & internship) in professional preparation	1.00	4.00	1.36	0.89	0.80	14
7. Overall quality of supervision during fieldwork	1.00	3.00	1.64	0.61	0.37	14
8. The value the program places on respect for human diversity	1.00	3.00	1.64	0.72	0.52	14
9. Program faculty	1.00	2.00	1.64	0.48	0.23	14
10. Program facilities and equipment	1.00	3.00	1.86	0.64	0.41	14
11. Opportunities for student personal and professional growth	1.00	4.00	1.71	0.80	0.63	14
12. Overall quality of program	1.00	3.00	1.57	0.62	0.39	14

Question	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Nether Satisfied nor Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		Total
1. Admission Process	64.29%	9	28.57%	4	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14
2. Orientation sessions, student handbook, and other efforts to integrate students into the program	57.14%	8	42.86%	6	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
3. Financial support for students	50.00%	7	35.71%	5	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14
4. Comprehensiveness of coursework in professional preparation	42.86%	6	50.00%	7	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14
5. Overall quality of instruction	21.43%	3	78.57%	11	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
6. Comprehensiveness of fieldwork (traineeship & internship) in professional preparation	85.71%	12	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14
7. Overall quality of supervision during fieldwork	42.86%	6	50.00%	7	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
8. The value the program places on respect for human diversity	50.00%	7	35.71%	5	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
9. Program faculty	35.71%	5	64.29%	9	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
10. Program facilities and equipment	28.57%	4	57.14%	8	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14
11. Opportunities for student personal and professional growth	42.86%	6	50.00%	7	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14
12. Overall quality of program	50.00%	7	42.86%	6	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14

**QID4 - Please comment on any of the above aspects of the program that you believe were particularly positive or negative.**

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I felt very well prepared for my position as a School Psychologist. Winthrop's Course of Study is very comprehensive and well thought out, which prepares its graduates well.

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I think that I learned valuable information in most of my classes, there were some that could have been structured differently to be more beneficial. For example, there were questions on the praxis on consultation that were not discussed during the class.

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Most of the faculty is excellent. They are all very qualified, exceptionally adept at being experts in the field and their individual areas of interest within the field. I wish that a certain faculty member's typical conduct had been on the same level as the rest of the staff.

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I believe that Winthrop has an extremely well-rounded and comprehensive training program for school psychologists.

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The Winthrop School Psych staff members are highly qualified and very knowledgeable. Their expertise and feedback are valuable while practicing and growing as a trainee and intern. It would be helpful to designate a backup field supervisor (at the school site), should something arise where the original supervisor cannot fulfill those duties. Or the program should support the trainee/intern by coordinating directly with the district to find a new field supervisor.

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More training with behavior was needed. Also, more explicit training with dyslexia identification would have been helpful.

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When I started my first job out of grad school, I felt very prepared by my education at Winthrop. I like that Winthrop assigned our internships instead of us having to find them. I also felt that we received more opportunities for field experience early on than other training programs.

**II. - Goals/Objectives** To what extent do you believe that the Winthrop School Psychology program prepared you within the following areas. Please indicate your degree of agreement that the program prepared you to perform each of the following, which are derived from the NASP Practice Model and graduate preparation standards, as well as from program goals, by selecting one rating from the provided scale.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1. Conduct psychological and educational assessment and use data to design and/or evaluate services and programs.	1.00	2.00	1.38	0.49	0.24	13
2. Consult, collaborate, and communicate with others during design, implementation, and evaluation of services and programs.	1.00	2.00	1.46	0.50	0.25	13
3. Plan, implement, and/or evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills.	1.00	3.00	1.62	0.62	0.39	13
4. Plan, implement, and/or evaluate services that support socialization and mental health (e.g., behavioral interventions, counseling).	1.00	4.00	1.92	0.83	0.69	13
5. Facilitate practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others.	1.00	3.00	1.54	0.63	0.40	13
6. Promote services that enhance student learning, mental health, safety, and physical well-being.	1.00	2.00	1.62	0.49	0.24	13
7. Design, implement, and/or evaluate services that respond to culture and context, and facilitate family and school interactions.	1.00	3.00	1.77	0.58	0.33	13
8. Provide services responsive to the needs of students and families with diverse backgrounds in a manner that shows respect for human diversity and advocacy for social justice.	1.00	2.00	1.54	0.50	0.25	13
9. Use research and technology in designing, delivering, and/or evaluating programs and services.	1.00	3.00	1.62	0.62	0.39	13
10. Provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards.	1.00	2.00	1.46	0.50	0.25	13

Question	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
1. Conduct psychological and educational assessment and use data to design and/or evaluate services and programs.	61.54%	8	38.46%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
2. Consult, collaborate, and communicate with others during design, implementation, and evaluation of services and programs.	53.85%	7	46.15%	6	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
3. Plan, implement, and/or evaluate services that support cognitive and academic skills.	46.15%	6	46.15%	6	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
4. Plan, implement, and/or evaluate services that support socialization and mental health (e.g., behavioral interventions, counseling).	30.77%	4	53.85%	7	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	13
5. Facilitate practices and strategies to create and maintain effective and supportive learning environments for children and others.	53.85%	7	38.46%	5	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
6. Promote services that enhance student learning, mental health, safety, and physical well-being.	38.46%	5	61.54%	8	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
7. Design, implement, and/or evaluate services that respond to culture and context, and facilitate family and school interactions.	30.77%	4	61.54%	8	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
8. Provide services responsive to the needs of students and families with diverse backgrounds in a manner that shows respect for human diversity and advocacy for social justice.	46.15%	6	53.85%	7	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13
9. Use research and technology in designing, delivering, and/or	46.15%	6	46.15%	6	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13

evaluating programs and services.											
10. Provide services consistent with ethical, legal, and professional standards.	53.85%	7	46.15%	6	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13



**QID5 - Please comment on any of the above areas for which you felt particularly well prepared or not sufficiently prepared.**

I was very well prepared in all of these areas. This is a field of ongoing learning, so it is impossible to know everything, but Winthrop prepared me well for starting out as a School Psychologist. They also gave me the tools and confidence to seek out additional consultation, collaboration, and support when that is needed.

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I would have liked more direction on interpreting results of cognitive assessments.

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Entering the field professionally, I felt that I had a much greater appreciation and understanding of diversity in our student population than many other members of my faculty thanks to the sort of critical thinking that our professors at Winthrop required us to use when considering the cultural variables in any given community.

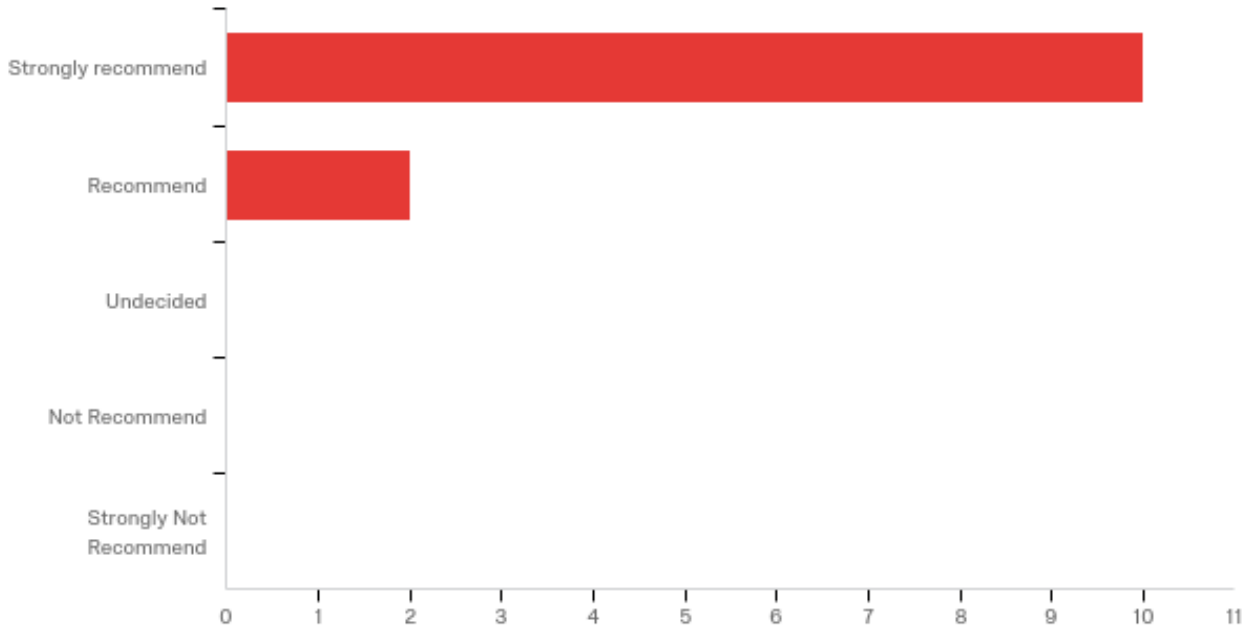
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More understanding of 504 laws and regulations.

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Wished we could have received a specific class on ASD (evaluations, ADOS, interventions, etc.). Wish that we had learned about different eligibility for SLD (discrepancy (simple vs. predictive method), strengths/weaknesses, RTI, etc.)

**III. - Overall 1. Would you recommend the program to a well-motivated, capable person wishing to pursue training in school psychology?**



	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
Overall 1. Would you recommend the program to a well-motivated, capable person wishing to pursue training in school psychology	1.00	2.00	1.17	0.37	0.14	12

Answer	%	Count
Strongly recommend	83.33%	10
Recommend	16.67%	2
Undecided	0.00%	0
Not Recommend	0.00%	0
Strongly Not Recommend	0.00%	0
Total	100%	12

**QID7 - 2. What were the BEST aspects of the program - those that you would recommend NOT be changed? (Because this is a program evaluation, please do not refer to individuals by name). Please type your response in the box below.**

Assessment and Tests and Measurement

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Traineeship and Internship set up

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I think the most valuable part of the program is the internship and traineeship experience. I was able to fairly easily get my current job because I had so much experience in the district.

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Faculty that are experts in their respective areas; fostering a non-competitive and supportive community; help with finding jobs and getting certification. Overall, the program is extremely supportive financially, emotionally, and academically to grad students and I think that goes a long way.

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With few exceptions, I felt that the course formats were appropriate (ex. ratio of time spent lecturing vs. role playing, practicing, discussing, presenting, etc.). There is a strong adherence to the NASP practice standards as well, and I feel that it is reflected in the course syllabi and reinforced within the program as a whole regularly. Also, there is a real sense of unity shared and promoted in the program, which I know is a point of pride for this program specifically. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively, and rely on one another for support when and how it is needed. I feel like this is a good parallel to the workplace that students will be entering as graduates. Finally, I appreciate the level of financial assistance provided through the traineeship and internship. Of course virtually every student will always see the need for as much assistance as can be provided, but compared to many programs that expect their recruits to do the job for free or even pay for the opportunity, Winthrop's program was exceptional in this manner.

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I really appreciated the first psycho-educational course and requirements. Counseling was also very well organized.

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The assessment courses were all very helpful and the types of assessments that we're chosen to teach was good to provide a very solid foundation. I feel confident in my ability to administer and interpret any assessment because of the foundation that was built in the program.

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The cohort size, the level of faculty support during each year of the program, and the effective communication/collaboration between district and faculty supervisors and programs.

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Size of the cohort that allowed for individual attention when needed. It was clear that most professors were invested in seeing you succeed.

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Assessment 1 and 3, counseling, CBM instruction in reading, instruction in reading research.

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Rigor, preparedness for managing workload, supervision

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-Internships are assigned to us. -Academic intervention and psychoeducational assessment course work

**QID8 - 3. What aspects of the program do you think need to be changed/improved? Provide specific suggestions where possible. (Because this is a program evaluation, please do not refer to individuals by name). Please type your response in the box below.**

A more comprehensive and applicable child development course, starting at birth, including pre-K assessment.

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Some teaching styles

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One thing that I still struggle with in my job is addressing behavior. I understand that the behavior course has changed since I took it and I wish that I had been able to participate in that class.

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More training in behavior, more flexible internship opportunities.

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I would encourage the faculty to consider adapting the internship or at least traineeship supervision to include two staff members and at least two students. Winthrop's school psychology faculty members have various professional perspectives that do not always align with one another, and no two students will have the same types of issues within their districts on a weekly basis. Expanding the supervision in this way would ensure a maximum number of relevant topics are shared each week, and would increase the students' exposure to differing professional judgements and the logic behind them. Additionally, it could cut down on the stress that some students experience wondering what they plan to talk about for a full hour if they have had an unusually slow week. Just an idea. But I know that there were other students in my cohort with very interesting, relevant cases that I would have liked to hear more about outside of the lecture format that some classes offered.

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I feel that the program covered a lot of different topics to make me successful as a beginning school psychologist. However, I would have preferred more training with behavior modification.

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The behavior course needs to be expanded. This is a huge component of the profession and I feel more time spent in this area would have been helpful. Particularly more discussion and case study work involving ED eligibility.

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Having a more updated workspace for graduate students on-campus would be nice (we were often borrowing small windows of time in the School Psych Office, and the Graduate Room was reduced to one small round table and some pretty outdated computers/printers).

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An additional assessment class to allow for training on things like ADOS or other more high level assessments. Additional behavior/ABA type training. Even if these things are optional add-ons, it would help to expand skill set in a meaningful way.

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More comprehensive instruction on behavior (not just summer), better instruction on evaluating response to intervention. Assessment 2 and the diversity classes redesigned to be more useful.

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Ability to seek out internship sites (could help students financially)

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While I think we had solid instruction in behavior management, it is one area I felt like I would have liked more time on. The course was taught during the summer and I think it could be better served by being done during the regular academic year.

**QID9 - 4. Other comments/suggestions. Please type your response in the box below:**

I would recommend at some point running cohorts through a mock DSS report for practice, and also focusing on reviewing important SC and NC regs for the different disability categories. Knowing the SEED specifically, and all its loopholes and shortcomings would be especially valuable. Being able to discuss questions with Winthrop faculty about how different districts may approach the wording of specific disabilities could promote ethical classification of students being evaluated. I realized that some of this is covered within supervision, but I feel like really working through it would be invaluable particularly when some districts do not always take a legal approach or are loose in their interpretations.

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Overall, the program was an excellent resource to prepare me for my career as a School Psychologist, particularly during the traineeship and internship years.

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Everyone knows there is one professor that made everyone miserable, and it makes no sense why this professor was allowed to teach so many of our classes, particularly a crucial one like assessment where inaccurate information and training happened repeatedly. At first I felt this professor just created a neutral impact on my education, but after assessment I realized they harmed my education because I was so poorly trained on how to interpret what I was doing.