

Interdisciplinary Training Project in Special Education and School Psychology (SP²) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. When should I apply?

- You should apply as soon as possible. All scholarship offers will be made by April 1st.
- Applications for the school psychology program are due by January 15th.
- Applications for the special education program are received on a rolling basis (i.e., no deadline—however, scholarship offers will be made by April 1st, so the sooner the better).
- In the “Specialization Area” of the application, you should indicate your interest in the SP² scholarship program.

2. I have already been accepted into the special education or school psychology program at the University of Iowa. Is it too late for me to receive SP² funds?

- Not at all! Current students who are interested in the interdisciplinary courses sequence are encouraged to apply. However, students enrolled in the U2G program are not eligible. Contact Allison Bruhn (allison-bruhn@uiowa.edu) in special education or Ann Santos (ann-m-garcia-santos@uiowa.edu) in school psychology to see if you are eligible and if funds are still available. Preference will be given to individuals who have NOT completed specific courses in the program.

3. How long will it take to complete the program?

- Funding for the program covers 2.5 years of coursework in the fall and spring semesters only.
- On average, most students pursuing an MA degree in special education will complete their degree within the period funded by the grant.
- Students seeking an EdS in school psych will need to complete a paid internship in order to be licensed for practice. This internship is not covered under SP².

4. Can I take classes in the summer?

- SP² candidates are welcome to take classes in the summer, as this may shorten time to completion of their programs or allow for the pursuit of additional certifications or licenses. However, grant funds are only applied to courses taken in the fall and spring semesters of each academic year. Students will be responsible for the cost of additional courses taken during the summer.

5. What if I decide to pursue a PhD?

- SP² candidates may choose to pursue advanced degrees, in addition to those funded through the grant. However, students are responsible for covering the cost of all courses taken beyond those included within the 2.5-year period funded by the grant.
- In addition, regardless of a PhD, students will need to fulfill the federally-required service obligation contingent upon acceptance of the funds. For more information on service obligation, see #11 “Will I have to pay the money back?”

6. How is this program different than the regular special education MA/school psych EdS program?

- Unlike our regular sped and school psych programs, students will receive integrated training experiences. They will take courses with each other and engage in other collaborative experiences. Students will have the opportunity to attend presentations and engage in discussion with leading researchers from across the country, as well as receive funding to attend professional development conferences.
 - Students will earn the [university certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis](#).
 - A description of a tentative plan of study which includes additional courses beyond our regular programs, participating researchers, and other program activities are available upon request.
- 7. Can I work a full-time or part-time job while attending school?**
- Given the rigor and time commitment of the program, full-time employment is not recommended. Part-time employment may, however, be possible. For instance, students may consider seeking a graduate assistant position (e.g., teaching, research) at the university.
- 8. Are courses online or in-person?**
- Courses are both online and in-person. Students must be able to attend class in person.
- 9. What if I cannot complete the program in 2.5 years?**
- We anticipate most scholars will be able to complete the course requirements related to either a MA or EdS within the 2.5 year period. Candidates will be responsible for costs related to course requirements that are completed beyond the 2.5 year plan of study.
- 10. What if I decide not to complete the program?**
- Students who do not complete the program will be required to pay back the amount in scholarship funds they received, or they will need to fulfill the service obligation equivalent to the funds provided (see #11).
 - If students received less than an academic year of funding, then the service fulfillment is not an option and funds will need to be paid back in full.
 - More information is available from the OSEP Personnel Development Program [website](#).
- 11. Will I have to pay the scholarship back?**
- Students who accept SP² funds will not be required to pay back the scholarship, as long as they satisfy the federally-required service obligation.
 - Upon program completion, students must fulfill a service obligation. Specifically, for every year of funding received, students must engage in 2 years of work in which 51% of their employment involves providing indirect or direct service to individuals with disabilities. Each student is provided 2.5 years of funding, which equates to a 5-year service requirement.
 - More information is available from the OSEP Personnel Development Program [website](#).
- 12. What if I decide not to complete the service obligation?**
- Graduates who choose not to complete the service obligation are responsible for reimbursing all funds they received through the grant.
 - More information is available from the OSEP Personnel Development Program [website](#).
- 13. What can I do with this degree?**
- Scholars who receive the MA degree in special education will receive all licenses and certifications associated with their specific course of study. These will be sufficient to

work as a special educator in Iowa schools and specialized settings. Employment in other states may be contingent upon additional requirements.

- Scholars pursuing the EdS degree would complete a year-long approved internship after completion of grant coursework. Once completed and certified, scholars will be qualified to work in schools, clinics, and other related educational settings that provide academic, behavioral, and mental health services to students.
- All scholars will complete a verified course sequence in applied behavior analysis. With the addition of supervised fieldwork and the national certification exam, scholars will be eligible for employment in behavior analysis in schools, clinics, and other settings that provide behavioral services to individuals with and without disabilities.