

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the  
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at  
Phillips Graduate University**

**April 2016**

**Overview of this Report**

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at Phillips Graduate University. The report of the team presents the findings based upon reading the Institutional Self-Study Reports, review of supporting documentation and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation of **Accreditation** is made for the institution.

**Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions  
For all Programs offered by the Institution**

	<b>Met</b>	<b>Met with Concerns</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
1) Educational Leadership	X		
2) Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation	X		
3) Resources	X		
4) Faculty and Instructional Personnel	X		
5) Admission	X		
6) Advice and Assistance	X		
7) Field Experience and Clinical Practice	X		
8) District Employed Supervisors	X		
9) Assessment of Candidate Competence	X		

**Program Standards**

	<b>Total Program Standards</b>	<b>Program Standards</b>		
		<b>Met</b>	<b>Met with Concerns</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
Counseling	32	32		
Child Welfare & Attendance	24	24		
Psychology	27	27		

The site visit was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation regarding the activities of the site visit:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Self-Study Report
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

**California Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Committee on Accreditation  
Accreditation Team Report**

**Institution:** Phillips Graduate University

**Dates of Visit:** March 29-31, 2016

**Accreditation Team**

**Recommendation:** Accreditation

**Rationale:**

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the institutional Self-Study; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, graduates, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team felt that it obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgements about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Common Standards–

Team members discussed all documentation, evidence and information collected from interviews. Following these discussions, the team considered whether the Common Standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The consensus of the team is that all Common Standards are **Met**.

Program Standards–

After a review of the institutional report, supporting documents and information collected from interviews, the consensus of the team is that all program standards are **Met**.

Overall Recommendation–

Due to the finding that all Common Standards are **Met**, and all program standards are **Met**, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following credentials:

**Advanced/Service Credentials**

- Pupil Personnel Services
- School Counseling
- School Psychologist
- Child Welfare and Attendance

Staff recommends that:

- The institutions response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Phillips Graduate University be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Phillips Graduate University continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

**Accreditation Team**

<b>Team Leader:</b>	Judy Sylva California State University, San Bernadino
<b>Common Standards Cluster:</b>	Raymond Hurst Brandman University
<b>Advanced/Services Programs Cluster:</b>	Dione Taylor Point Loma University  Kathryn Norwood California Baptist University
<b>Staff to the Visit</b>	Bob Loux Commission on Teacher Credentialing

### Documents Reviewed

University Catalog	Biennial Report Feedback
Common Standards Report	Field Experience Notebooks
Course Syllabi	Schedule of Classes
Candidate Files	Advisement Documents
Fieldwork Handbooks	Faculty Vitae
Follow-up Survey Results	College Annual Report
Needs Analysis Results	College Budget Plan
Program Assessment Feedback	Student Portfolios
Program Assessments	Program Summaries
Informational Program Documents	

### Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	29
Completers	34
Employers	2
Institutional Administration	3
Program Coordinators	2
Faculty	11
Adjunct Faculty	3
Field Supervisors – District	14
Credential Analysts and Staff	2
Admissions	1
<b>Total Interviews</b>	<b>101</b>

## Background Information

Based in Chatsworth/Los Angeles, California, Phillips Graduate University currently has an enrollment of 210 students. A nonprofit educational, counseling, training and research center, Phillips Graduate University traces its origins to the 1950s when Clinton E. Phillips, Ph.D., and David Jansen, D.Min., introduced the application of family systems theory to clinical work with individual families.

In 1971, Dr. Phillips and Dr. Jansen founded the California Family Study Center (CFSC) which is dedicated solely to the field of human relationships. Built upon the family systems model, the graduate program in marriage and family therapy attracted a diverse population of students who together with the faculty shared a passion for making a difference. In 1996, in recognition of his innovative leadership, the Board of Trustees honored Dr. Phillips by changing the name to Phillips Graduate Institute.

## Education Unit

Degrees offered at Phillips Graduate University include Masters or Doctorate in Psychology with career paths in Marriage and Family Therapy, Art Therapy, Organizational Management and Consulting, and Pupil Personnel Services Credentials in School Counseling, Child Welfare and Attendance, and School Psychology. There are 56 faculty members at the institution, 12 of whom are full-time. Last year, thirteen students were enrolled in the School Counseling Services credential, nine were adding the Child Welfare and Attendance Services credential, and eight were enrolled in the School Psychology program.

**Table 1**  
**Program Review Status**

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2013-14)	Number of Program Completers (2014-15)	Number of Candidates Enrolled or admitted 2015-16
School Counseling	7	10	14
School Psychology	1	2	11
Child Welfare and Attendance	5	5	16

## The Visit

The visit to Phillips Graduate University began on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at noon. The team members met at the hotel. A team orientation and information sharing continued until early afternoon. The accreditation visit then started at Phillips Graduate University's campus where team members began interviewing stakeholders. Data collection continued on Tuesday and Wednesday. The team spent Tuesday evening going through each of the Common Standards and

credential program standards in preparation for the mid-visit report that was scheduled for Wednesday morning.

Information from the Tuesday evening meeting was carried over to Wednesday morning in an effort to refine the Mid-Visit Report that was presented to the president, department chairs and other Phillips faculty and staff. After careful discussion and deliberation, the team examined additional information provided by Phillips faculty and administration. The team also conducted additional interviews with various stakeholders. Wednesday evening was devoted to drafting the final accreditation report. Consensus was reached on all standard findings and an accreditation recommendation. The Exit Report was held on the campus at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2016.

### Common Standards

#### Standard 1: Educational Leadership

Met

The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision for educator preparation that is responsive to California's adopted standards and curriculum frameworks. The vision provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance and experiences, scholarship, service, collaboration, and unit accountability. The faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and governance of all professional preparation programs. Unit leadership has the authority and institutional support needed to create effective strategies to achieve the needs of all programs and represents the interests of each program within the institution. The education unit implements and monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all the requirements.

#### Findings

At Phillips Graduate University (PGU), the persons within the organizational structures that are responsible for the ongoing oversight of the credential programs are the Department Chair of the School Counseling (SC) and Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) credentials and the Department Chair of School Psychology. Each department has also identified a Director of Field Experiences and a Director of Assessment. The department chairs report to the interim Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA works directly in consultation with and reports to the President of Phillips Graduate University. The President is responsible to the Board of Directors.

The vision articulated by the institutional leadership includes service to the community through the preparation of educators ready to practice in the field to transform communities. This vision is evident in the programs, coursework, teaching, and evaluation of candidate performance. The institution clearly and consistently identifies the educator/practitioner model of educator preparation as the cornerstone of their programs. All of the stakeholders interviewed reiterated that this model is responsive to California's adopted standards and curriculum frameworks in the schools and is a specific strength of the PGU programs. The Master of Arts degree in School

Counseling prepares students for careers working in public school systems as credentialed school counselors. The Master of Arts in School Psychology prepares students for careers working in public school settings as credentialed school psychologists. The curriculum reflects Phillips Graduate University's commitment to systemic thinking and applies theory to the practical world of school counseling and school psychology.

The Academic Affairs Council (AAC), chaired by the interim Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA), includes the department chairs, the assessment coordinators, the Director of Library Services, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, and the Chief Final Officer (CFO). The AAC reviews and develops campus-wide academic policies and facilitates communication among all academic programs and departments. Final recommendations or suggested changes made in the AAC are approved by the President of Phillips Graduate University. Students play a role in governance through the appointment of a class representative for each course who provides feedback to the department chair on behalf of the students.

PGU has partnered with Inspiras to manage the funding and budgeting for the institution. A letter was written by the president of PGU, stating that Inspiras "is a company that invests in professional education institutions to bring pioneering best practices and continuous improvement processes to help students build successful careers and thriving personal lives". The strategic planning process has been instituted this year (AY 15/16), which utilizes unit level assessment to inform priorities for strategic planning. The president of the institution solicits priorities for each department and will present these priorities to the Board of Directors for allocation of resources. This process addresses unit level accountability consistent with the PGU commitment to systemic thinking and practical application of theory to practice.

The credential analysts monitor student progress in meeting all requirements for the credential, from admission to credential recommendation and provide advisement and support in the successful completion of requirements.

**Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation**

**Met**

The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement. The system collects, analyzes, and utilizes data on candidate and program completer performance and unit operations. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and is used for improvement purposes.
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**Findings**

As part of the culture of evidence at Phillips Graduate University, beginning in 2009-2010, all five (5) academic programs have implemented a yearly program assessment process in which student-learning data is collected. The data is analyzed to determine if the Student Learning Outcomes for the department have been achieved. Each department meets with faculty several times per year to review programs and obtain input and suggestions and modifications to the

courses. The annual program assessment results are shared at faculty meetings and also at the yearly retreat for all unit faculty at the beginning of the academic year.

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each department are aligned with the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Over a 5-year period, each ILO is systematically assessed. There are three Institutional Goals. Three learning outcomes are associated with Goal 1, Knowledge; four learning outcomes are associated with Goal 2, Skills; and three learning outcomes are associated with Goal 3, Professionalism (Conduct). Two ILOs are evaluated each year through alignment with the SLO assessments over a five-year cycle. PGU has already completed one five-year-cycle indicating that all ILO's have been assessed and the feedback has been shared with program faculty as part of the annual faculty retreat. A new cycle began in the 2014-2015 Academic Year. The Institution maintains these data electronically.

In addition to the program level assessments, all candidates in the unit submit anonymous evaluations of the courses taken and their instructors each semester. The candidates also evaluate the school sites at which they have gained their field placement hours. The field placement site supervisors submit mid-year and final evaluations for all candidates. This data is reviewed by the department chair and credential analysts and shared at faculty meetings for evaluation and program improvement purposes. In the current academic year (2015/16), the institution has begun the process of strategic planning to link institutional and unit assessment data to inform priorities for resourcing departments (e.g., additional faculty lines; growth of programs toward replication of programs on additional campuses; etc.).

The final evaluation of candidate competency is completed for all program completers in their final field experience. In addition, program completers evaluate their site supervisor and the field placement as well as the courses they completed.

The data collection and analysis of student learning completed each academic year through ongoing progress monitoring, identifies areas of strengths and challenges in the academic program which may require closer examination and modification. These areas offer the departments an opportunity to review and restructure areas needing modification. As part of the year-end Executive Summaries, program review, and assessment include a "closing the loop" process where such changes or potential modifications are recognized and reviewed in future faculty or committee meetings. All of the faculty members that were interviewed confirmed the ongoing nature of curriculum review through feedback from students, site supervisors, and review of program assessment data. Evidence of assessment of candidate qualifications, proficiency and competence as well as program effectiveness was evident in all materials reviewed and in interviews with faculty, students, and alumni. The unit clearly demonstrates a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration across the unit.



### Standard 3: Resources

Met

The institution provides the unit with the necessary budget, qualified personnel, adequate facilities and other resources to prepare candidates effectively to meet the state-adopted standards for educator preparation. Sufficient resources are consistently allocated for effective operation of each credential or certificate program for coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum and professional development, instruction, field-based supervision and/or clinical experiences, and assessment management. Sufficient information resources and related personnel are available to meet program and candidate needs. A process that is inclusive of all programs is in place to determine resources needs.

### Findings

The institution manages the budget centrally through their partnership with Inspiras. In the last three years, PGU has moved into a new building that has been custom built to support an environment conducive to learning for post baccalaureate candidates in professional preparation programs. The new building has spaces for students to gather, a library and computer center, and a Clinical Counseling Center for practice and observation. All faculty and administrative offices are accessible and faculty members are available to students in each department throughout the week. Each department is staffed appropriately with core and adjunct faculty exceeding state-adopted standards for educator preparation. Requests for additional personnel and resources are made through the department chair to the VPAA and the president of PGU.

Students who were interviewed indicated that faculty and staff were always available to them from recruitment and admissions through credential recommendation and graduation. This convenience was highlighted by students interviewed across departments. The institution has clearly provided sufficient resources for the effective operation of each credential program for admission, advisement, coordination, curriculum development, instruction, and field-based supervision experiences. Because many of the adjunct faculty members are employed in administrative and pupil personnel services in adjacent school districts, PGU has access to educational placements providing varied experiences and training for field placements. Site supervisors are not paid, but they are provided with opportunities to participate in professional development activities hosted by PGU. Each department has identified personnel who coordinate field experiences and assessment activities. Department faculty meets two times per month to discuss curriculum review based on feedback from students, site supervisors, and colleagues. The president of PGU indicated that professional development is a priority for faculty and funding to support these activities is determined on a case-by-case basis. The faculty is encouraged to participate in conferences for their national and regional professional organizations.

The library facilities at PGU provide access to technology and resources for academic research required at the graduate level as well as experienced personnel to provide assistance and support. In addition, the Academic Resource Center is available for students from all academic

programs to work with faculty and academic advisors to identify student needs and provide targeted learning assistance to currently enrolled students. These services include writing skills using the APA format, assignment comprehension, time management skills, and group study strategies.

The department chair solicits input from faculty to determine resource needs and communicates with the VPAA and PGU President regarding resources needed to sustain and provide effective instructional programs to prepare students for professional success. All five department chairs meet regularly with the VPAA which includes discussion of program improvement. In the current academic year (2015/16), the institution has begun the process of strategic planning to link institutional and unit assessment data to inform priorities for resourcing departments (e.g., additional faculty lines; growth of programs toward replication of programs on additional campuses; etc.).

**Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel**

**Met**

Qualified persons are employed and assigned to teach all courses, to provide professional development, and to supervise field-based and/or clinical experiences in each credential and certificate program. Instructional personnel and faculty have current knowledge in the content they teach, understand the context of public schooling, and model best professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. They are reflective of a diverse society and knowledgeable about diverse abilities cultural, language, ethnic and gender diversity. They have a thorough grasp of the academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems that drive the curriculum of public schools. They collaborate regularly and systematically with colleagues in P-12 settings/college/university units and members of the broader, professional community to improve teaching, candidate learning, and educator preparation. The institution provides support for faculty development. The unit regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, recognizes excellence, and retains only those who are consistently effective.

**Findings**

Phillips Graduate University endorses a policy that all faculty teaching in the School Counseling, Child Welfare and Attendance, and/or School Psychology programs has a Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Credential. All faculty members currently hold positions or are retired from positions in a public school system. PGU uses both core and adjunct faculty for instruction. All members of the faculty hold advanced degrees in addition to a PPS credentials issued by the Commission. Field-based site supervisors all possess a PPS credential and have at least two years of experience. Site supervisors are carefully selected and screened to ensure that they are providing direct supervision. All placements of interns and practica students and site supervisors must be approved by the local district administrator. Every candidate has a faculty adviser. Interviews with department chairs confirm that faculty is selected based on their expertise in their field relative to the credential program. Students reported that the faculty maintains their currency

and expertise in the field by continuing their own practice in school-based settings as well as participating in continuing education activities to maintain their licensure and/or certification.

The institution provides resources for the faculty to engage in professional development activities to maintain currency in their respective fields. This was confirmed by interviews with the president, department chairs, and faculty members. Faculty members also report that they engage in continuing education in their fields as part of licensing/certification requirements. The faculty collaborates regularly with colleagues in public, private, and charter school settings.

PGU has developed policies and procedures for evaluating core faculty on a biennial basis through evaluations of their teaching by students and self-evaluation. They set goals with their department chair and the institution provides support to address these professional goals. Every five years, faculty members undergo a comprehensive review. The Faculty Performance Evaluations are jointly prepared and approved by the Faculty Council and Academic Affairs Council with approval from the PGU president. Outstanding faculty are identified and acknowledged at the lunch meetings at the end of each year. Adjunct faculty members are evaluated by students in anonymous course evaluations. These are reviewed by the department chair each semester and feedback is provided to adjunct faculty as needed.

**Standard 5: Admission**

**Met**

In each professional preparation program, applicants are admitted on the basis of well-defined admission criteria and procedures, including all Commission-adopted requirements. Multiple measures are used in an admission process that encourages and supports applicants from diverse populations. The unit determines that admitted candidates have appropriate pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics, including sensitivity to California's diverse populations, effective communications skills, basic academic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness.

**Findings**

Acceptance into PGU academic programs requires an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university and a minimum of twelve units of social sciences with a letter grade of "B" or above. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required. Candidates who do not meet this standard must submit a Grade Point Average Exemption Petition for consideration for admission.

Candidates must also meet Commission on Teacher Credentialing requirements for School Counseling and Child Welfare and Attendance credentials, including a passing score on the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) in order to submit the application for credential to the Commission. Candidates for the School Psychology program must pass the CBEST by the end of the second semester of the program.

Multiple measures are used in the recruitment and admission process to support and encourage interest from candidates from diverse populations. This process includes an interview with the

department chair and/or faculty members, review of transcripts from all colleges or universities attended by the candidate, two letters of recommendation, and a writing sample describing their interest in pursuing the field of study and/or personal journey that has guided their choices. The writing sample also presents a vignette to assess their writing skills as well as identifying the possible need for other support that may be provided by PGU. School Psychology candidates take a written proficiency test consisting of an on-demand assessment which is completed when meeting with admissions personnel.

Assessment in the interview process includes a review of transcripts, letters of recommendation, resume or curriculum vitae, and personal and professional effectiveness as the express interest in the field of study to become a School Counselor and/or Child Welfare and Attendance Counselor. Personal and professional effectiveness is assessed through a writing sample/vignette during the admissions process.

In the area of working with diverse populations, interviewees confirmed that candidate competence is determined through a review of the resume, transcripts, and letters of recommendation as well as through interviews with full time faculty.

PGU credential analysts assist with the admission process by collecting CBEST verification data and reviewing academic plans to confirm that the correct sequence of course work is being followed. All PGU candidates, for School Counseling PPS credential, take an Introduction to School Counseling course where state licensure requirements are reviewed and explained in detail. Checklists of requirements and student master files are developed from this information. Credential analysts regularly check candidate progress and provide guidance and resources as needed.

**Standard 6: Advice and Assistance**

**Met**

Qualified members of the unit are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, and to assist each candidate's professional placement. Appropriate information is accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of all program requirements. The institution and/or unit provide support and assistance to candidates and only retains candidates who are suited for entry or advancement in the education profession. Evidence regarding candidate progress and performance is consistently utilized to guide advisement and assistance efforts.

**Findings**

During the first semester of all programs at Phillips Graduate University, candidates are assigned a faculty advisor. Faculty advisors have extensive resources in the educational community and provide networking assistance. Additionally, the advisors support academic adjustment to the rigors of graduate school and guidance with organizational techniques. PGU is designed in a cohort model that further supports the needs of the candidates, who are encouraged to form study teams, participate in professional development opportunities, and obtain support from

their course chairs. The department chair, Field Placement Director, and credential analysts also mentor and assist candidates as they progress through the program. Practicum faculty and the credential analysts regularly review the field placement logs and Commission required documentation.

During the first semester of the program, School Psychology candidates are assigned an advisor from the department. Faculty supervisors meet with fieldwork/practica and internship candidates weekly. Each candidate has an academic plan prepared by an advisor which specifies the courses s/he must complete. This plan is updated every semester. Information regarding all program requirements is accessible and provided in the institutional handbook and course catalog, and SC, CWA and SP field placement handbooks.

The credential analyst reviews School Psychology candidate folders each semester to ensure that all necessary requirements are being met, including the verification of hours and enrollment in practicum courses. The department chair updates the Academic Plans, outlining all courses and requirements each semester.

Candidates must maintain an overall "B" grade point average. Candidates who receive a grade of "C-" or lower must retake the course and the grade received in the repeated course is averaged into the final overall grade point average. The department chair and/or faculty may issue Statements of Concern regarding a candidate's academic and professional behavior. These documents are created to clarify concerns with suggested remediation plans. If two or more Statements of Concern are issued for any candidate, a meeting is recommended by the department chair to be scheduled with the Student Evaluation and Review Committee (SERC)

The Department Chair receives Statements of Concern, semester grade reports, and regular feedback from faculty on performance and progress of students in School Counseling and Child Welfare and Attendance programs. Evaluations from field placement supervisors offer additional feedback on the performance of candidates.

**Standard 7:**

The unit and its partners design, implement, and regularly evaluate a planned sequence of field-based and clinical experiences in order for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students effectively so that P-12 students meet state-adopted academic standards. For each credential and certificate program, the unit collaborates with its partners regarding the criteria for selection of school sites, effective clinical personnel, and site-based supervising personnel. Field-based work and/or clinical experiences provide candidates opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity that affect school climate, teaching, and learning, and to help candidates develop research-based strategies for improving student learning.

## **Findings**

At PGU, School Counseling candidates begin their field placement hours after completion of 13 units of academic curriculum. All School Counseling candidates participate in a bi-monthly practicum course while completing 700 field placement hours. Upon completion of 100 hours, the field placement logs and a 100 hour evaluation is submitted to the practicum instructor and forwarded to the credential analyst. All field placement hours are under on-site supervision by a person holding a PPS credential for two (2) years or more. Candidates are required to gain field placement hours at a minimum of two grade levels, elementary, middle, or high school levels.

Candidates pursuing the Child Welfare and Attendance Credential (CWA) may begin the field placement hours as soon as they have completed the Certificate of Clearance and presented proof of a PPS credential. PGU has aligned with Los Angeles Unified School District as one opportunity for candidates to obtain waiver and/or intern opportunities. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) have been created with school districts throughout southern California to facilitate opportunities for field placement.

Candidates in the School Psychology program at PGU begin their fieldwork experience in the first semester of the program. Experiences can include classroom and non-classroom observations of students, co-leading a group under the supervision of the school psychologist, and participation in parent conferences. During the second year of the program, they complete psycho-educational assessments under the direction of the site supervisor.

The School Counseling and Child Welfare and Attendance credential faculty work collaboratively with the school districts and school sites to determine effective and appropriate field placement opportunities for candidates.

For candidates who are combining the M.A. in Psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy and the School Counseling credential, PGU has also partnered with the David H. Fox Counseling Center, where three (3) traineeships offer opportunities for candidates to gain both PPS and MFT training/field placement hours.

The School Psychology Department works collaboratively with the psychological services in school districts to determine effective placements for the students for both fieldwork and internship.

School Counseling and Child Welfare and Attendance credential candidates have opportunities to demonstrate and gain experiences to understand and address issues of diversity that affect school climate, teaching, and learning. Courses in diversity, group counseling skills, crisis and trauma intervention, and communication skills support the skills candidates bring to their field placement experiences. Research-based strategies are an important part of the instructional program as current laws require understanding of both evidence-based instruction in the classroom and, when used, in Response to Intervention (RTI) to determine eligibility for special

education services. The issues and concerns are addressed throughout the curriculum for both credentials in addition to the competencies addressed throughout field placement opportunities.

School Psychology candidates have opportunities to gain experience and skills that enable them to understand school climate and culture. School psychology candidates are aware of how diversity in culture and language can impact instruction. They are evaluated on their knowledge and skills in addressing the needs of elementary and secondary pupils whose primary language is not English in course work, fieldwork and internship evaluations, and in the comprehensive oral and written exams during the final year of the program.

Diversity is addressed in a number of ways. Candidates are given a list of 150-350 possible sites for fieldwork. The candidates are allowed to select from that list a site that a.) is convenient for them in terms of travel and b.) has the type of population that meets the candidate's area of specialization and/or interest (e.g. socio-economic status, levels of diversity, neighborhood dynamics, etc.) It was also noted that a candidate's background is taken into consideration in this process, with, for example, a candidate from a higher SES being placed in a school with a lower SES.

**Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors**

**Met**

District-employed supervisors are certified and experienced in either teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. A process for selecting supervisors who are knowledgeable and supportive of the academic content standards for students is based on identified criteria. Supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.
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**Findings**

Field placement supervisors who provide guidance and support while candidates are performing field placement hours are credentialed for a minimum of two (2) years and have approval from the administrator on campus and/or school district to assume the responsibilities of supervision. Besides on-site supervision, PGU requires candidates for PPS and/or CWA credentials to meet bi-monthly in a field placement practicum group to review field placement logs, challenges, and successes as they present school-based situations in which they are involved at school sites. Field supervisors are evaluated by candidates at the end of each placement. Candidates in field placements and internships provide weekly logs of experiences supplemented by reflection papers which are reviewed by the faculty supervisor to ensure that these experiences are providing sufficient training, knowledge, and skills to prepare them for the profession of school psychology. Weekly seminars and individual conferences with interns and fieldwork candidates also provide feedback to the faculty supervisor on the types of experiences being provided.

All supervisors selected by PGU must be approved by the school administrator or Director of Mental Health Services for the school district in which they are employed. They are required to have two (2) years of credentialed experience and a current credential recognized by the Commission.

All supervisors selected by PGU to oversee training and experiences for PGU School Psychology candidates must be approved by the Director of Psychological Services for the school district in which they are employed. They are required to have at least two years of experience and have a current California credential authorizing service as a school psychologist. A copy of the syllabus for the appropriate course for which the fieldwork or internship is being completed is also supplied to the supervisor.

Supervisors are trained in supervision and reflect on their own experiences while helping candidates obtain their field placement hours. Candidates submit an evaluation of the school sites and supervisors upon completion of field placement hours at the site. At the weekly seminars during fieldwork and internship courses, candidates are encouraged to discuss and share their experiences and challenges.

All field supervisors are oriented to PGU where they are given program materials, etc. at site visits. However, there appears to be no additional formal training/professional development activities in supervision for the field supervisors. It was also noted that some field supervisors are also adjunct instructors in the program.

**Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence**

**Met**

Candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission-adopted competency requirements, as specified in the program standards.
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**Findings**

As part of the field placement assignments and the course in Legal and Ethical issues for School Counselors, candidates gain knowledge of California state curriculum and content standards and the importance of understanding grade level competencies.

As part of their fieldwork and intern assignments, School Psychology candidates gain knowledge of California state curriculum and content standards as well as the importance of understanding what students are required to learn at each grade level.

Candidates for the M.A. in School Counseling/PPS credential and CWA credential must demonstrate the professional skills that validate and confirm their readiness to work effectively in schools with all students and stakeholders. In order to ensure that candidates are ready for recommendation for the credentials for SC and CWA, reviews are made by the department chair and credential analyst to confirm the following:

- Completion of passing score on the CBEST (California Basic Education Skills Test)
- Completion of all academic units required for SC or CWA credential with an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher



- Successful completion of an oral exit exam
- Completion and presentation of final portfolio
- Submission of “satisfactory” or higher rating by Site Supervisors
- Final application for SC or CWA credential

Candidates for the M.A. and P.P.S. credential in School Psychology must demonstrate their professional skills which confirm their readiness to work effectively in schools with all students and their individual needs at every grade level. In order to ensure that candidates are ready to apply to Commission for the school psychologist credential, candidates must have completed the following:

- Received a passing score on the CBEST (California Basic Educational Skills Test)
- Completed all 64 units of required courses with an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Successfully completed both the oral and written exit exam covering all course content during the final year of the program
- Prepared a portfolio describing their skills in the eleven domains documenting knowledge and professional competency outlined by NASP (National Association of School Psychologists) providing written documentation of experiences and projects which establishes their background and readiness for the profession
- Submit evaluations by site supervisors in all fieldwork and internship placements with a rating of “satisfactory” or higher in all areas (Candidates who have received a rating of “less than satisfactory” during their completion of 450 Practicum hours and 1,200 hours of internship during SP 604a-f Fieldwork or SP 622 and SP 624 – Internship area may not be able to apply for a credential without demonstrating that they are able to receive an rating of satisfactory or better on subsequent ratings)

PGU credential analysts monitor student progress regularly, and provide remediation resources as needed (e.g. CBEST tutorials and websites, etc.). They also assist both School Counseling and School Psychology candidates with the final oral and written exit examinations through enrollment in a capstone course. This course provides opportunities for candidates to present their culminating portfolio and also to participate in a mock interview. School Counseling Master’s degree candidates are also required to present a stakeholder workshop to the community.

## **Pupil Personnel Services Credential: School Counseling and Child Welfare and Attendance**

### **Program Design:**

The Master of Arts in Psychology with the Pupil Personnel Services School Counseling Credential (PPSC) and Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) emphases at Phillips Graduate University (PGU) are programs designed to prepare school counselors to work in urban elementary, middle, and high school settings.

The PPSC program supports a comprehensive School Counseling model based on an understanding of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) National Model and Standards that include the domains of School Counseling referenced as academic, career, and social/emotional development of the child. Candidates follow a pathway leading to the PPSC Credential only (55-units) or a dual-track option (82-units) leading to emphases in the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) and PPSC. The CWA authorization can be added to a PPSC earned at PGU (6 additional units) or a PPS credential from another university (12 additional units).

The dual-track option is a unique feature of the PGU program. Multiple candidates stated an appreciation for the dual nature of the program as an opportunity to acquire an increased awareness of the emotional challenges students experience. This preparation informs the practice of school counseling and improves candidate insight regarding appropriate circumstances requiring referral of students for further assessment and treatment beyond the PPSC scope of practice. A recurring statement shared by current students and alumni is the experiential nature of the program as a value-added component of their learning process. They endorse this integrative method as foundational and substantive to the overall PGU experience. Candidates also expressed a deep appreciation for their professors, all of which are practitioners, creating relevance and providing context for the academic preparation.

Graduates are expected to become proactive leaders, practitioners, and advocates for their students using data to inform and direct decisions for support services at the school site. Additionally, candidates are prepared to address the spirit of the **Reach Higher Initiative** <https://www.whitehouse.gov/reach-higher>. The *Reach Higher Initiative* was designed to assist K-12 students to plan for their future beyond high school, for which, school counselors play an integral part. PGU candidates learn to provide college and career readiness services for K-12 students and demonstrate their knowledge through coursework and during the internship experience.

Candidates who wish to earn the CWA authorization are preparing themselves to work with students who have poor attendance patterns, social/emotional issues, insufficient resources or those facing other challenges interfering with success in the school environment. These vulnerable populations include homeless youth, foster youth and those returning from juvenile hall or other juvenile detention programs. PGU candidates who enter this program address the

needs of these children holistically. Candidates are expected to demonstrate proficiency by learning the state and federal laws pertaining to child welfare, providing appropriate intervention and preventions strategies, educational assessment and psychosocial assessment.

The Pupil Personnel Services School Counseling Credential (PPSC) and Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) programs are chaired by Judy Davis, M.A., L.M.F.T., P.P.S. The Director of Field Placement for PPSC is Alan Scher, M.A., P.P.S., who reports to the department chair. The PPSC and CWA programs are supported by the work of numerous faculty members and site supervisors who also serve as practitioners in the field.

Candidates described the admissions process and orientation to the program requirements as informative and comprehensive. They also described the PGU staff and faculty members as responsive and supportive and peer group members as collaborative throughout the duration of the program. Similar comments confirmed these beliefs held by candidates who described the PPSC, MFT/PPSC and CWA programs.

**Course of Study (Coursework and Field Experience):**

Candidates take courses in the PPSC and MFT/PPSC programs as a cohort. The PPSC program is designed to be completed in 5 Semesters whereas the MFT/PPSC program is to be completed in 6 Semesters. Candidates attend 8:00am – 5:00pm one day per week and 6:00pm – 9:00pm one evening each week for Case Conference. The Case Conference course is taken during Semesters One and Two and allows candidates to observe an “in vivo” counseling session behind a two-way mirror and, on a rotational basis, act as a co-therapist.

During Semester Two, candidates learn skills in recognition of mental disorders and how symptoms affect children and adolescents. An additional learning objective of the second semester includes gaining an increased awareness of diversity, cultural competence and social justice issues as they relate to children and their families. The Summer Semester is dedicated to learning group facilitation skills and ethical and legal practices in the profession of school counseling. The third semester experience integrates the practice of school counseling with gaining proficiencies in the academic and career development domains as well as understanding the special education needs of K-12 children. The fourth semester includes the capstone project demonstrating a culmination of knowledge and skills as a future leader and child advocate in the school counseling profession. Coursework is directly aligned with the competencies candidates will be expected to demonstrate during their internship experience.

The 100 hours of Practicum (non-counseling hours) are a requirement for the PPS Credential and are completed in advance of the fieldwork internship. Additionally, 600 hours of internship includes placement in public school at two grade-levels, typically, middle school and high school. Candidates work closely with site-supervisors and are visited twice during the internship by the Director of Field Placement.

CWA candidates address all Commission Standards through their coursework and fieldwork. The PGU CWA faculty members are practitioners who train candidates using a systems approach. Through this methodology, candidates learn to provide individual, family and group counseling, address the social and emotional needs presented by the youth with whom they work and identify useful community resources. The requirement for fieldwork is 150 hours. To address this requirement, candidates work with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) CWA Unit Field Placement Leads to identify fieldwork sites.

**Assessment of Candidates:**

Candidate knowledge is assessed throughout each program. Forms of assessment include portfolios, case studies, research papers, presentations and mock interviews. CWA assignments are related to Student Learning Outcomes and evaluate the competency of each candidate. Site supervisors praised the level of candidate preparation upon entering the internship experience, their skilled interactions with students at the school site and their motivation to succeed. Site supervisors also formally assess candidates at the conclusion of the internship experience and have an opportunity to discuss ongoing development of the candidate with the Director of Field Placement.

**Findings on Standards:**

After review of the institutional report and supporting documentation and after conducting interviews of candidates, graduates, faculty, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **Met**.

## **Pupil Personnel Services Credential: School Psychology**

### **Program Design:**

The Phillips Graduate University School Psychology program is offered as one of five degree graduate programs for the institution. The program is based on 64 units of coursework (12 units of social science coursework in Bachelor's is required), and includes 450 hours of practicum and a 1200-hour internship. Upon completion of the program candidates can apply for national certification as a school psychologist (NCSP). Candidates typically complete the program in three years with the first two years devoted to full-time coursework and the completion of 450 hours of fieldwork, while in the third year candidates complete practicum experiences with a full-time internship experience.

Presently, candidates enter the program to earn a Master of Arts in Psychology, and candidates concurrently fulfill requirements for the Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Psychology (PPS). At this time, the institution is a non-National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) approved institution; however, all candidates are required to prepare a portfolio aligned with the requirements to apply for the National Certified School Psychologist License granted by NASP.

A full professor serves as department chair of the School Psychology PPS program and oversees administrative responsibilities including course scheduling, recruitment and admissions, program policies and procedures, curriculum, and candidate concerns. A core faculty member who reports to the department chair coordinates the intern program and functions as the assessment coordinator.

To ensure candidate concerns are addressed in a timely manner, program meetings are held several times during the year with all core and adjunct faculty. Each candidate is assigned an academic advisor at the beginning of the first semester of enrollment and all candidates are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor early in the first semester. Thereafter, candidates meet with the advisor at least once each semester and until completion of their degree to review candidates' program plans and provide feedback regarding course load and sequencing, and projected fieldwork plans. Additionally, site supervisors review a checklist with candidates to evaluate candidate progress in the program and allow for candidates to share their questions or concerns.

The institution has procedures for course instructors to inform department chairs of any concerns about student progress through Semester Statement of Concern and the Student Evaluation and Review Committee (SERC). Through interviews with current faculty, it was verified that SERC can review candidate progress at the request of the faculty if the candidate's progress is unsatisfactory or problematic. The committee meets with the candidate and develops a remediation plan, including ongoing monitoring and assistance.

To ensure program faculty are abreast of current policies and procedures, in lieu of an advisory committee, the institution remains connected to the field through an extensive network of field

practitioners comprised of current school psychologists, core and adjunct faculty with current practices, students (current and alumni), site supervisors, and district level personnel who oversee pupil personnel services. In interviews with members of this networking community, it is clear that the institution receives input and guidance from the field regarding current and projected needs in the field, and quality of training for candidates, interns, and graduates.

Over the past two years, the School Psychology program began emphasizing positive psychology in its courses, focusing on primary prevention, resilience, and well-being as a “best practice model” for the program. This emphasis was clearly articulated in interviews with faculty, students, and alumni. Current students voiced, “I am here because of a high recommendation from an alumni” and that “the Phillips Graduate program comes highly recommended”.

**Course of Study (Coursework and Field Experience):**

The School Psychology program is a 64-unit course of study that leads to a Master of Arts in Psychology and completion of the requirements for the Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Psychology (PPS). All candidates, regardless of whether they hold a Master’s degree upon entering the program, are required to complete a Comprehensive Oral Exit Exam (COEE). Candidates must complete both fieldwork experiences under the supervision of a credentialed and experienced school psychologist. Although candidates are required to find their own practicum/internship site(s), program faculty assist with placements by providing candidates with leads and recommended field sites and supervisors. This mutual process allows for self-selection of practicum and is a mutually acceptable method for all involved as evidenced by interviews with alumni, site supervisors, and current students.

Supervised field placement experiences begin in the first semester, with 125 hours required the first year and 325 hours during the second year, meeting the required 450 hours in four to six 1-unit courses. Alumni indicate, through interviews, that the ability to experience onsite field work during the first semester of enrollment sets Phillips Graduate University apart from other universities offering School Psychology degrees and indicated that “this program gives you a glimpse into a school psychologist’s world at the very beginning of the program”. Candidates meet weekly with the university fieldwork supervisor and are required to submit weekly journals reflecting their experiences and how they relate to the curriculum. University supervisors evaluate candidates via course assignments completed at their school site, such as a consultation case study, school analysis report, and writing-up classroom observations.

As fieldwork and internship placements occur, candidates are interviewed for appropriateness of fit whereupon potential site supervisors look at the “individual student” when reviewing a potential candidate for the best field placement. Candidates are expected to work with a variety of diverse socioeconomic and cultural students and families, and engage in an array of activities based on the NASP Standards for Training and Practice (e.g., consultation, counseling, academic/behavioral intervention). Additionally, they are required to document experience in at least two levels of schooling in any of the following settings: preschool, elementary, middle or junior high, and senior high/transition age. University supervisors complete site visits each

semester of a candidate's internship experience where they observe the intern engaged in a school psychology-related activity (e.g., social skills group, IEP meeting, etc.), as well as interview the fieldwork supervisor regarding intern activities and concerns, if any. Candidates expressed the advantages of both small class size and site visits in the School of Psychology, indicating that "the small, intimate environment at Phillips Graduate University was very effective for learning and sharing" and that "site visits gave me personal support for my individual needs".

### **Assessment of Candidates:**

The School Psychology program is designed to foster candidate outcomes based on the eleven NASP Domains of Professional Competency and the Commission standards. As such, assessment activities are designed to measure candidates' performance as they engage in activities related to these outcomes beginning the first semester of their first year in the program through graduation. Outcomes are measured at several different points during the program as the activities are considered developmental and permeate all aspects of the practice of school psychology (e.g., data-based decision making; collaboration and consultation).

First and second year candidates receive feedback and an evaluation from both the faculty and field supervisor at the end of each of the first six semesters during the 450 hours of fieldwork. Third year candidates are additionally reviewed and evaluated by the field supervisor(s) during the 1200 hours of internship using the university evaluation form in the field placement manual. Additionally, a Comprehensive Oral Exit Exam (COEE) is administered in the last semester of the program for the purpose of candidates demonstrating their knowledge, understanding, and application of the core knowledge base acquired in the program reflecting Commission Generic Standards and School Psychology Standards. Candidates are assessed using a rubric for the COEE by at least two professors during the exam and are informed of the results within one to two days after the completion of the oral examination.

Outcome data are aggregated and reviewed for university and student learning outcomes as well as the Commission and NASP standards for the School Psychology program throughout the academic year based on a five year assessment plan and are reviewed annually at faculty meetings. The department chair and faculty use candidate data to determine necessary modifications of course activities such as non-discriminatory assessment, an understanding of cultural competence, specific assessment activities, or counseling techniques for the role of school psychologist. Data from evaluations is analyzed and aggregated for opportunities to make program recommendations to enhance candidate learning and proficiency of competencies in school psychology as evidenced by viewing and discussing the assessment coordinator's annual reports during an interview.

A recurring theme at Phillips Graduate University expressed during interviews with faculty, both core and adjunct, current students and alumni, is "the high rate of employment as school psychologists for graduates from the program". During an interview with the assessment coordinator complete data was viewed which indicated that 85% of the graduates are currently employed as school psychologists.

**Findings on Standards:**

After review of the institutional report and supporting documentation and after conducting interviews of candidates, graduates, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **Met**.