



**TO:** GSEP Psychology Faculty, Students, and Staff  
**FROM:** Helen Easterling Williams, EdD, Dean and Professor of Education  
**DATE:** Monday, March 22, 2021  
**RE:** Summer Classes and Commencement for GSEP Psychology Division

As you are aware, Pepperdine University continues to closely monitor guidance from the State of California and local counties, as well as our neighbors nationally and globally. Los Angeles County recently moved to the red tier in the state's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). Orange County also remains at the red tier.

We continue to advocate for the return of our students to campus and to safely deliver classes in-person as soon as possible. Our local counties may move to the orange tier as early as April 2021, though local health agencies have indicated this will only be the case if we continue to follow social distancing and masking guidelines, and if the vaccine continues to be made available to more people. We continue to make decisions on class modality while [considering equity](#), safety, and populations most affected by COVID-19. In light of our desire to best care for our GSEP students, faculty, and staff, summer 2021 classes for the Psychology Division will continue to be held in their current modality. Until September, all psychology classes will continue to be online.

Presently, state, county, and local guidelines prevent gatherings large enough for everyone to attend an in-person celebration. Out-of-state residents are expressly prohibited. Quarantine requirements are in place. We cannot provide a safe ceremony of exceptional quality under these restrictions. Therefore, GSEP is planning to have a virtual commencement on May 22, 2021 at 10 AM PDT for our 2020 and 2021 graduates. Please look forward to receiving a subsequent message with our online commencement details. I am confident that you will find our celebration most appealing.

This week marked one year of our campus closure and stay-at-home orders due to the pandemic. We have lost family and dear friends to COVID-19. You have endured multiple trials and hardships. Please know that we stand ready to support you if you need any assistance during the semester. Contact information for your academic chairs/program directors are below. We will keep you informed of our plans to return to campus as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Helen Easterling Williams, EdD  
Dean and Professor of Education

*Please contact your program directors with specific questions.*

<a href="#">Dr. Carrie Castañeda-Sound</a>	Program Director- MA in Clinical Psychology (Evening)
<a href="#">Dr. Robert deMayo</a>	Program Director, MA in Psychology
<a href="#">Dr. Miguel Gallardo</a>	Program Director, Aliento
<a href="#">Dr. Adel Najdowski</a>	Program Director, MS in Applied Behavior Analysis
<a href="#">Dr. Edward Shafranske</a>	Program Director – PsyD Program
Dr. Natasha Thapar-Olmos* (Interim Contact: <a href="#">Dr. Gimel Rogers</a> )	Assistant Dean, Online Psychology Programs
<a href="#">Dr. Stephanie Woo</a>	Program Director – MA in Clinical Psychology (Daytime)

