Informational Handout for Prospective Graduate Students

Educational Psychology Program

*Developmental and Learning Sciences Specialization*
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What is Educational Psychology?

(Prepared by the Division of Educational Psychology of the American Psychological Association)

What are good ways to study? What motivates students? Why are some people better students than others? How should reading, writing or arithmetic be taught? Is it better to study alone or in a group? What makes a good teacher? How can technology be used to support learning? Does ability grouping help or harm students? Are tests really fair? These are examples of the kinds of questions that educational psychologists seek to answer.

Educational psychology is the branch of psychology concerned with studying how people learn from instruction, and with developing educational materials, programs, and techniques that enhance learning. Educational psychologists conduct scientific research both to advance theory--such as explaining how people learn, teach, and differ from one another--and to advance practice--such as determining how to improve learning. Although perhaps best known for studying children in school settings, educational psychologists also are concerned with learning and teaching for people from infancy through old age, in school and outside of school.

What do educational psychologists do?

Educational psychologists work in a wide variety of settings. Some educational psychologists work at colleges and universities, often in psychology departments or in schools or departments of education. These psychologists may teach college courses, conduct research, prepare prospective teachers and other educators, and/or develop statistical and research methods. Also at the college level, educational psychologists may work in study skills programs, instructional improvement programs, and/or curriculum development projects.

Other educational psychologists work in government, school, military, or corporate settings, where they participate in training staff, developing and implementing educational programs, evaluating the effectiveness of educational programs, and/or analyzing educational data.

Still other educational psychologists work in research and development organizations in which they develop instructional materials that are grounded in psychological theory and/or develop educational tests for schools, businesses, and many professions.
What do educational psychologists contribute to improving society?

Educational psychologists contribute to science and practice. On the scientific side, educational psychologists create new knowledge concerning how people learn, remember, think, and develop. Research in educational psychology also produces new information about how people differ, what motivates people, how the social context affects learning, to what extent learning ability can be taught, and related topics.

On the practical side, educational psychologists contribute to society by working to improve education. By developing instruction and educational programs that are based on psychological theory rather than fads or unverified opinions, educational psychologists can contribute to the betterment of all citizens. Educational psychologists contribute to school effectiveness by working to insure that school practices are based on research—based principles of “what works.”

How can I get more information about educational psychology?

You can find out more about educational psychology by visiting your local library or the library of your nearest college or university. There you will find a wide variety of books and periodicals on educational psychology.

You also can contact a faculty member in education or psychology at your nearest college or university, or a school guidance counselor.

If you are interested in job opportunities, you can obtain the booklet, Careers in Psychology, published by the American Psychological Association (750 First Street NW, Washington, DC 20002-4242). If you are interested in educational opportunities at the graduate level, you can obtain the book, Graduate Study in Psychology, published by the American Psychological Association, and available in many libraries and bookstores. Finally, if you wish to join the Division of Educational Psychology of the American Psychological Association, the largest group of educational psychologists in North America, please write to: Secretary, Division 15, American Psychological Association, 750 First Street NW, Washington, DC 20002-4242.

What kind of education do educational psychologists need?

Typically, educational psychologists hold a bachelors (B.A. or B.S.) degree in fields such as psychology, education, or a related field, and a graduate degree such as a doctorate (Ph.D.) or a masters (M.A.) in education, psychology, educational psychology, educational statistics, or a related field. In addition, many educational psychologists have had experience working as teachers, support staff, or administrators in schools.
PAMPHLET COMMITTEE:

Richard B. Mayer (Chair)
University of California, Santa Barbara

David Berliner,
Arizona State University

Carol Dwyer,
Educational Testing Service

Barbara McCombs,
Mid—Continent Regional Educational Laboratory

Sharon McNeely,
Northeastern Illinois University

James Pellegrino,
Vanderbilt University

Sigmund Tobias,
City University of New York

Anita Woolfolk,
Rutgers University
Career Opportunities in Educational Psychology

Graduates of the program often pursue careers in the following areas:

- Universities and colleges
- Public schools and school districts
- Educational testing companies
- Private research and development organizations
- Federal, state, and local educational agencies

Many individuals with doctorate degrees in educational psychology find employment in universities and colleges. Depending on the institution, some educational psychologists are responsible for teaching, whereas others are responsible for both teaching and conducting research. Educational psychologists often teach courses on human development, learning and cognition, and research methods and statistics. As educational researchers, educational psychologists conduct research on a variety of topics related to educational psychology such as learning strategy instruction, college learning, instructional technology, achievement motivation, and adolescent development. Other educational psychologists find administrative positions in higher education such as Director of Graduate Student Development, Director of Instructional Technology, and Director of Institutional Research.

A background in educational psychology also qualifies people for jobs in public schools and school districts. Educational psychologists are often employed as Directors of Assessment, Accountability, and Evaluation. In this position an educational psychologist oversees standardized achievement testing, coordinates school improvement plans, and evaluates educational programs. These positions often require a strong emphasis in research, measurement, and statistics.

In light of the increased emphasis on educational testing, educational psychologists are often in high demand. An educational psychologist may find employment at educational testing companies such as Educational Testing Service. Positions with testing companies include but are not limited to the following: psychometrician, measurement statistician, research scientist, and test developer. These jobs are often reserved for educational psychologists with an expertise in research, measurement, and statistics.

Educational psychologists are also employed by federal, state, and local educational agencies and private research and development organizations. Their job responsibilities in these types of positions range from designing training and instructional programs to evaluating educational programs.

To learn more about job opportunities in the field of educational psychology, please visit:

- [www.APA.org](http://www.APA.org) - contains information about the various careers in psychology
- [www.AERA.net](http://www.AERA.net) - contains an updated list of academic and nonacademic job openings
- [www.Chronicle.com](http://www.Chronicle.com) - contains an updated list of academic and nonacademic job openings
Program Overview

The Developmental and Learning Sciences (DLS) specialization housed in the Educational Psychology program at Texas Tech University provides a competency based program designed to assist students in developing a comprehensive knowledge of cognitive, motivational, social, and cultural processes that are related to human development and learning. Additionally, the specialization is designed to assist students in developing the knowledge and skills needed to serve as teaching, learning, and research consultants. To accomplish this goal, students will learn how to (1) assist clients in applying principles derived from psychological science to enhance teaching and learning and (2) effectively provide research consultation services to a diverse clientele such as school districts, universities, and educational agencies.

Courses Include:

EPSY 5330: Motivation in Academic Settings  
EPSY 5331: Human Development in Education  
EPSY 5332: Educational Psychology  
EPSY 5379: Introduction to Educational Research  
EPSY 5380: Introduction to Statistics  
EPSY 6349: Cognition and Instruction

Course Delivery Methods

Courses are offered primarily in a traditional, face-to-face format with some courses offered online. Courses that are offered in a face-to-face format typically meet one weekday evening from 6-9pm.

DLS Faculty

Hansel Burley, Professor  
Lee Duemer, Professor  
William Lan, Professor  
Kamau Oginga Siwatu, Professor

For More Information Contact:

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Master’s Program of Study

A minimum of 36 semester credit hours is required for the granting of a Master’s of Education in Educational Psychology. There are two basic plans for the master's degree.

**Thesis option plan.** A minimum of 33 hours of graduate work plus three hours of thesis research. The master's thesis is expected to represent independent work by the student, conducted under the supervision of a faculty committee. An oral defense of the thesis is required. Comprehensive examinations are not required under this option.

**Non-thesis option plan.** A minimum of 36 hours of graduate work without a thesis is required in addition to satisfactory completion of a comprehensive final examination. No examination may be held prior to the mid-point of the semester or summer term in which a student will complete all remaining courses on the degree plan.

1. **Educational Foundations Core (3 hours)**

   Choose one of the following courses:

   EPSY 5310: Philosophy of Education  
   EPSY 5314: History of Education  
   EPSY 5323: Cultural Foundations of Education

2. **Research Core (9 hours)**

   EPSY 5379: Introduction to Educational Research  
   EPSY 5380: Introduction to Educational Statistics  
   EPSY 5382: Qualitative Research in Education

3. **Content Core (9 hours)**

   EPSY 5331: Human Development in Education  
   EPSY 5332: Educational Psychology  
   EPSY 6349: Cognition and Instruction

4. **Professional Development Core (3 hours)**

   EPSY 6349/7000: Educational Psychology in Practice

5. **Electives (9-12 hours)**

   Students may take additional courses in fields related to DLS such as Education, Psychology, Human Development and Family Science, Computer Science, Anthropology and Sociology. Students electing to not do a thesis will complete 12
hours of electives. Students electing to do a thesis will only complete 9 hours of electives.

6. **Thesis (3 hours)**

Students electing to do a thesis will take a total of 3 thesis hours.
Program Overview

The Developmental and Learning Sciences (DLS) specialization housed in the Educational Psychology program at Texas Tech University provides a competency based program designed to assist students in developing a comprehensive knowledge of cognitive, motivational, social, and cultural processes that are related to human development and learning. Additionally, the specialization is designed to assist students in developing the knowledge and skills needed to serve as teaching, learning, and research consultants. To accomplish this goal, students will learn how to (1) assist clients in applying principles derived from psychological science to enhance teaching and learning and (2) effectively provide research consultation services to a diverse clientele such as school districts, universities, and educational agencies.

Courses Include:

- EPSY 5330: Motivation in Academic Settings
- EPSY 5331: Human Development in Education
- EPSY 5332: Educational Psychology
- EPSY 5360: Program Evaluation
- EPSY 5385: Foundations of Educational Research
- EPSY 5381: Intermediate Statistics
- EPSY 5382: Qualitative Research in Education
- EPSY 6349: Cognition and Instruction
- EPSY 6349: Social Basis of Behavior
- EPSY 6349: Biological Basis of Behavior

Course Delivery Methods

Courses are offered primarily in a traditional, face-to-face format with some courses offered online. Courses that are offered in a face-to-face format typically meet one weekday evening from 6-9pm.

DLS Faculty

Hansel Burley, Professor
Lee Duemer, Professor
William Lan, Professor
Kamau Oginga Siwatu, Professor

For More Information Contact:

Kamau Oginga Siwatu, PhD
DLS Specialization Coordinator
806-834-5850
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Doctoral Program of Study

A minimum of 91 semester hours of course work, internship, and dissertation research, including credits taken at Texas Tech or other Higher Education institutions, is required for the granting of a Degree of Philosophy in Educational Psychology. In some instances, students will be required to complete leveling courses as deemed necessary by the program.

1. Educational Foundations Core (6 hours)

Choose two of the following courses:

EPSY 5310: Philosophy of Education
EPSY 5314: History of Education
EPSY 5323: Cultural Foundations of Education

2. Research Core (18 hours)

EPSY 5381: Intermediate Statistics
EPSY 5382: Qualitative Research In Education

Choose four of the following courses:

EPSY 5385: Foundations of Educational Research
EPSY 6001: Special Topics in Research Methods
EPSY 6301: Structural Equation Modeling
EPSY 6304: Qualitative Research Methods
EPSY 6305: Qualitative Data Analysis in Education (Archival Research Methods)
EPSY 6306: Longitudinal Data Analysis
EPSY 6307: Case Study Research in Education
EPSY 6349: Program Evaluation
EPSY 6349: Foundations of Mixed Methods Research
EPSY 6385: Causal Inference in Research

Please Note: With the advisor’s approval, students may take research courses offered within or outside of the College of Education.

3. Content Core (15 hours)

EPSY 5330: Motivation in Academic Settings
EPSY 5331: Human Development in Education
EPSY 5332: Educational Psychology
EPSY 6332: Advanced Educational Psychology
EPSY 6349: Cognition and Instruction

4. Professional Development Core (9 hours)
EPSY 6100: Professional Seminar in Educational Psychology (1 hr)
EPSY XXXX: Research Colloquium (1 hr, may be repeated)
EPSY 6101: Professional Seminar in Educational Psychology (1 hr) (focus on “Professional Development”)
EPSY 6102: Teaching Educational Psychology (1 hr)
EPSY 6103: Practicum in Educational Settings (3 hrs)

5. Area of Emphasis (18 hours)

Students may take courses in fields related to DLS such as Education, Psychology, Human Development and Family Science, Computer Science, Anthropology and Sociology. Additionally, students with their advisor’s approval, can enroll in EPSY 7000, which will provide them with opportunities to conduct research under faculty supervision.

6. Electives/Minor (15 hours)

Students may take additional courses in fields related to DLS such as Education, Psychology, Human Development and Family Science, Computer Science, Anthropology and Sociology. In lieu of electives, students may enroll in a minimum of 15 hours in a minor.

7. Dissertation (12 hours)
Educational Psychology Faculty

The DLS specialization faculty is comprised of six core members. The individuals listed below make decisions for the specialization, serve as advisors and dissertation chairpersons for educational psychology students, and teach courses required in the DLS specialization course sequence. Prospective students should examine the research interests of the faculty to obtain a more detailed sense of faculty expertise and research areas (see the department website: http://goo.gl/hJGBFp). The following are members of the specialization’s core faculty:

Hansel Burley, Professor (Ph.D., Texas A&M University). His research focuses on the antecedents to higher education remediation and the resilience of developmental education students. He also examines diversity issues, particularly when related to college access and success. Additionally, he studies institutional effectiveness, particularly how this is associated with large database analysis.

Lee S. Duemer, Professor (Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh). He specializes in history of higher education in the United States, and qualitative archival inquiry in education. Most recently he has been working on examining the philosophical foundations of qualitative research.

William Lan, Professor (Ph.D., University of Iowa). His research agenda includes psychological processes of motivation and learning, more specifically, developing self-regulated learners in regular and online learning environments. He is also interested in applying principles of positive psychology in enhancing individual well-being.

Kamau Oginga Siwatu, Professor (Ph.D., University of Nebraska) and the DLS specialization coordinator. His research areas have a broad focus on teaching, learning and diversity in K-12 educational settings. His research focuses on examining the nature of teachers’ culturally responsive teaching and classroom management self-efficacy beliefs and the factors that influence the formation of self-efficacy beliefs. He is also interested in examining the role of educational psychology in preparing culturally responsive teachers.

Affiliated Faculty. The DLS specialization is also supported by other faculty members in the Educational Psychology program. These faculty members teach courses required in the DLS specialization course sequence. The following are members of the specialization’s core faculty.

Lucy Barnard-Brak, Associate Professor (Ph.D., Texas Tech University). Her research interests pivot on examining the educational experiences of and outcomes for individuals with disabilities across the lifespan. Her research currently focuses on measurement issues as they relate to the assessment of individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable populations.

Jaehoon (Jason) Lee, Assistant Professor (Ph.D., University of Kansas) and associate director of the Institute for Measurement, Methodology, Analysis, and Policy (IMMAP). His research interests are primarily in the evaluations and applications of latent variable modeling, multilevel modeling, mixture modeling, item response theory, propensity score analysis, survey data analysis, and Bayesian statistics.
Todd D. Little, Professor (PhD, University of California) and director of the Institute for Measurement, Methodology, Analysis, and Policy (IMMAP). Dr. Little’s research interests are statistics and methodology: modeling individual, group, and developmental differences; general structural equations modeling techniques (e.g., LISREL, MACS, growth curve, HLM), construct validation; measurement; selection effects; and missing data estimation. His research also focuses on developmental psychology: action-control processes; motivation; self-regulation; school achievement; peer and friendship relationships; adjustment and well-being; the social-personality nexus; cross-cultural and socio-contextual influences; and childhood and adolescence.

Tara Stevens, Associate Professor (Ed.D, Texas Tech University) and the school psychology specialization coordinator. Her areas of research focuses on self-perspectives in mathematics achievement and gender and cultural differences in mathematics achievement.

Amanda Williams, Instructor (Ph.D., Texas Tech University). Her research interests include statistics anxiety and instructor-student relationships.
Admission to the Program and the Specialization

Applying to the Texas Tech University College of Education is a two-step process. First, prospective students must apply to the Graduate School. When beginning the application process students will be given an eRaider ID and activation information from the graduate school. Prospective students should submit the following materials when applying to the graduate school:

- Application Fee
- Official Transcripts
- GRE Scores which are no more than 5 years old at the time of application
- TOEFL Scores (International Applicants Only)

Next, prospective students must officially apply to the College of Education. Prospective students should submit the following materials when applying to the College of Education.

- Statement of purpose to include:
  - The prospective student’s interest in the field of educational psychology, learning and career goals, and special skills, knowledge base, and/or abilities
  - The names of faculty the student would like to work with
  - A statement explaining the reasons for undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA) below 3.00 or graduate Grade Point Average below 3.50

- Curriculum vitae (or resumé)
  - Educational background
  - Specialized training and licensure/certifications
  - Work experience
  - Conference presentations
  - Publications
  - Manuscripts in preparation
  - Awards, fellowships and scholarships

- Writing sample

- Three letters of recommendation
  - The three recommenders should include individuals with knowledge of the prospective student’s academic performance.

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Although the program will make admission decisions as completed applications are submitted, students should comply with the following deadlines to guarantee admission:

- All materials submitted prior to June 1 for Fall admission
- All materials submitted prior to October 1 for Spring admission
- All materials submitted prior to March 1 for Summer admission
To ensure eligibility for graduate assistantships and scholarships, prospective students should submit their application on or before October 1.

Upon admission, students will be assigned a temporary advisor to assist with financial support applications, registration, and orientation.

Conditional Admission Policy

An applicant may be considered for conditional admission into the program for one of two reasons. In each case, the conditions for full admission and the evaluation process may vary. Failure to remove the condition as specified will result in the student being dropped from the program.

Conditional admissions status may be granted to students who do not meet all admissions requirements or have incomplete applications. From time to time, student’s applications are incomplete due to missing letters of recommendations, a vague or poorly written statement of purpose, and/or missing or outdated GRE scores. Students who are conditionally admitted for one or more of these reasons must submit the required material prior to the end of the first semester in the program. Once the application materials are submitted, the EPSY faculty will reevaluate the applicant and forward their recommendation to the graduate school prior to the start of the second semester of coursework. The recommendation may be either to award or deny unconditional admission status.

Conditional admission status may also be granted to students in situations where the EPSY faculty need additional information to adequately assess a student’s ability to perform successfully in the doctoral program and/or whether the program is suited to meet the student’s short-term and long-term career-related goals. Students who are conditionally admitted for this reason will be required to satisfy specific conditions within the first 15 hours of coursework.

- Enroll in a series of courses as specified by the program faculty and maintain a 3.0 GPA. These courses will be determined on an individual basis.
- Enroll in EPSY 7000 during the second semester of coursework and actively collaborate with an EPSY faculty member on planning or conducting a research study.
- Meet with the temporary advisor each semester to complete a degree plan and identify the appropriate courses to take in the forthcoming semester.

Once these conditions have been satisfied, the EPSY faculty will meet to discuss the student’s progress, ability to perform successfully in the program, and academic fit. Following this evaluation, the EPSY faculty will forward their recommendation to the Graduate School. Their recommendation may be either to award or deny unconditional admission status.

Occasionally, we conditionally admit students for both of the reasons described above. In these situations, the student will be required to satisfy each condition as described. However,
the EPSY faculty will make their admission decision once the first 15 hours of coursework has been satisfied.

Any grievances regarding the policy and/or the process should be brought to the attention of the program coordinator (as described in the “student grievance” section of this handbook).

**Graduate Assistantships and Student Financial Support**

Students interested in assistantships and other financial support should submit applications with the assistance of their temporary advisor. Although assistantships and financial support are not guaranteed, the majority of students receive some form of support.