

Degree Requirements: Learning and Cognition PhD

Our doctoral program is designed to train research-oriented doctoral students who are conversant with current theory and research, and who are competent in methodological and statistical research skills. Students who complete their doctorates in our program become university faculty or researchers in a variety of settings, including with Pre-K-12 education organizations, government, think tanks, and private industry.

The PhD program in Educational Psychology: Learning and Cognition consists of 42 course credit hours and 24 Dissertation hours. Students develop their program of study in conjunction with their advisor. It takes approximately 3-4 years for fulltime students to complete the degree.

The requirements for the PhD degree include the following (courses other than those listed below may also qualify; please consult with your advisor and your supervisory committee):

Core Courses

Courses from Section A plus Section B must equal at least 21 credit hours.

A. Core Educational Psychology Courses (minimum 12 hours)

(Content courses taught in this and other departments may also qualify; please consult with your advisor and your supervisory committee.)

EDP 5300	Motivation and Emotion (3)
EDF 5935	Educational Psychology (3)
DEP 5068	Lifespan Development (3)
EDP 5216	Theories of Learning and Cognition in Instruction (3)
SYP 5105	Theories of Social Psychology (3)
EDP 5285	Group Processes in Instruction (3)
EDF 5431	Classroom Assessment (3)
EDF 6937	Seminar in Special Topics (3): Critical Thinking, etc.
EDH 5305	College Teaching (3)
EDF 6683	Family Support for Learning (3)
EXP 5508	Cognition and Perception (3)

B. Core Research Methods Courses (three of the following courses)

(Research courses taught in this and other departments may also qualify; please consult with your advisor and your supervisory committee.)

EDF 5481	Methods of Educational Research (3 hours)
EDF 5916	Research Proposal Writing (1 hour)—co-requisite to EDF 5481
EDF 6937	Seminar in Special Topics (3): e.g., Meta-analysis; Multivariate Analysis of Categorical Data, Grounded Theory Methodologies
EDF 5401	General Linear Model (4 hours)
EDF 5402	Advanced Topics in Analysis of Variance (3 hours)
EDF 6475	Qualitative Research Methods (3 hours)
EDF 5409	Causal Modeling (3 hours)
PSY 5916	Developmental Methods (3 hours)

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Other Program Requirements

As outlined in the progress in the Progress Monitoring Chart (see Appendix F), the requirements for the PhD are listed below.

A. Disciplinary Specialization/Context Minor (9 hours)

Students develop their program of study in conjunction with their advisor. For example, an elementary teacher or secondary teacher who is interested in studying children's learning as a teacher researcher would select courses from programs in early childhood, elementary or secondary education, instructional systems, multicultural/ multilingual education, reading, special education, or other relevant fields of study. In contrast, a program supervisor from a state agency might select courses from adult education, educational leadership, human services, management, psychology, social work, or sociology. Many students count these hours toward the requirements for earning a Certificate in another area of study (e.g., Measurement and Statistics, Program Evaluation).

B. Advanced Courses (12 hours)

Advanced quantitative or qualitative analysis (3 hours)

Measurement (3 hours)

Additional courses in Educational Psychology or related area (6 hours)

C. Preliminary Exam

Students complete an original research study, which includes defending a prospectus of the preliminary study, conducting the study, and defending the final write-up of the project before their supervisory committee. Students can register for up to a total of 18 credit hours of Preliminary Research credits (EDF 6912) while working on their prelim. Students may also/instead choose to register for DIS hours (EDF 5906), which can be converted to dissertation hours if the preliminary exam is passed and you are admitted to candidacy during the first 7 weeks of the semester. The study is expected to be suitable for potential publication in a research journal. The final defense of the Preliminary Exam usually takes place by the end of your second year and should be completed no later than the end of your third year. Students register for a 0-credit hour Prelim Defense the semester they defend the final write-up of their project.

D. Dissertation Prospectus and Dissertation (24 hours)

You will register for at least two credit hours during any semester in which you work with the faculty on your dissertation, and you must register for at least two credit hours during the semester in which you schedule your dissertation defense. Students complete an original research study, which includes defending a prospectus of the dissertation study, conducting the study, and defending the final write-up of the dissertation results before their supervisory committee. The study is expected to be suitable for potential publication in a research journal.