STUDENT GUIDE

Graduate Programs in Educational Psychology

**Department of Leadership,
Educational Psychology & Foundations**

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General Introduction

What is Educational Psychology?

Adapted from 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, and mathematics 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 1) studying how people of all ages learn from instruction, and 2) 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 figuring out how to improve learning.

Educational psychology has a long and varied history that dates back to the era in which teaching, learning, and schooling first became subjects of inquiry. Today, educational psychologists are committed to questions about learning and development in multicultural and increasingly interdependent contexts—all defined by escalating expectations and social inequalities. Many educational psychologists are deeply involved in teacher education, but they can also be found in just about any type of work environment. Educational psychology research is typically disseminated to families, teachers, schools, corporate leaders, and educational policy makers.

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 educators, and/or develop statistical and research methods. Also at the college level, educational psychologists may work in study skills programs, and/or curriculum development projects.

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

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.

How do educational psychologists help to improve 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 yields new information on a variety of topics such as what motivates people, how social contexts affect learning, and how people differ.

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 and research rather than fads or unverified opinions, educational psychologists can contribute to the betterment of all citizens.

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 Ed.D.) or masters (M.A. or M.S. Ed.) 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.

For more information about careers in educational psychology, go to apadiv15.org, the website of Division 15, Educational Psychology, of the American Psychological Association (APA). Or go APA's main website: www.apa.org.

Brief Description of Programs

Master of Science in Education in Educational Psychology

The M.S.Ed. program in educational psychology promotes the understanding and practical application of theory and empirical knowledge regarding human development, learning, and motivation in sociocultural contexts. Courses relate to learning and developmental processes within educational settings (e.g., schools, family, work, neighborhood). The program requires the successful completion of a master's thesis or project. The thesis option is recommended for students who plan to pursue doctoral studies. Students who don't plan to pursue graduate study may choose the project or the thesis. More information on these two options is provided in Chapter 4.

The M.S.Ed. program in educational psychology is relevant for a range of careers. It especially appeals to educators in a variety of contexts, including schools, museums, business and industry. The degree has enhanced graduates' skills in a variety of positions, including (but not limited to) master teachers, community college instructors, educational program managers, and curriculum and museum evaluators.

Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology

In the Ph.D. program in educational psychology, students acquire an understanding of psychological processes that underlie human development, learning, and teaching and develop necessary skills to interpret and design research in educational settings. The program provides students with opportunities to develop original and creative thinking and research in the areas of human development, learning, and motivation. Students also may relate the knowledge and skills they gain to selected areas of interest, such as research methods and assessment, teacher education, sociocultural, historical, and philosophical foundations of education, special education, or instructional technology.

The Ph.D. program prepares graduates for a variety of roles in colleges and universities, such as teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses, conducting research, and developing and evaluating instructional programs. In addition, educational psychologists may train staff, develop and implement educational programs, and/or analyze educational data in government, school, or corporate settings. Graduates of our doctoral program have obtained positions as university faculty, program evaluators, school administrators, and educational consultants, among others.

Faculty in the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations

For a current listing of faculty in the department, see the department web page.

Reminders from the Graduate School

This chapter highlights a few general university requirements and provides some hints about communicating with Graduate School Advisers. The purpose is to assist the student with making smooth progress through our degree programs and facilitate efforts toward graduation. For complete information, students must refer to the Graduate Catalog effective the semester they were admitted; the information in the appropriate catalog supersedes information provided here.

Advisers in the Graduate School

The Graduate School admissions/records staff is responsible for maintaining records of graduate students and applications for admission. Routine communications pertaining to graduate students' records and progress toward graduation should be directed to those individuals.

Below is a chart that designates students' Graduate School Admissions and Records Officers. Please note that staffing changes occur often, so this list will not always be current. The phone numbers below should connect you with the graduate school office, even if specific staff has changed.

Note that it is often helpful to consult the LEPF Graduate Advisor, David Snow, about graduate school related questions. He is able to assist with much of the paperwork that must be filed with the graduate school.
David Snow: Graham Hall 225A, 815-753-1465, dsnow1@niu.edu

Graduate School Dean's Offices (Adams Hall)

	Office	**Phone # 815-753-xxxx**
Dr. Bradley Bond	212	9402
Dana Hughes	211	9403
Recruitment		
Lyndon Perkins	220	1946
Bonni Feltz Sec.	221	9654
Brigitte Bingham(GA)	219	9406
Mgr of Info Services		
Eric Biletzky	205	3439
Readers (thesis & dissertation)		
Diane Johns	222	9405
Carolyn Law	222	9405
www.thesis.niu.edu		
Grad School Admissions		
Reception Area	223	0395

Admissions Team

Tabitha Ann Sims	203	9409
LaKeisha Jackson	202	9414

Enrolled Student Team

Theresa LaRocco	232	9411

Colloquium

Debbie Williams	210	0425

Financial Aid

Diane Dombek	227	8240

Adam's Hall Fax: 753-6366
E-Mail address: gradsch@niu.edu

Enrollment Requirements

A graduate student must register in the term for which he or she is admitted, or request deferral of admission (for up to two years, subject to departmental approval). Otherwise, admission will be canceled. Provisional admission is not subject to deferral. If a student admitted provisionally is unable to enroll in the term for which provisional admission was granted, the student is expected to arrange to supply the missing credentials in order to be eligible for unconditional admission in a subsequent term.

A student who has been enrolled in a graduate degree program but did not graduate from that program, and whose enrollment has lapsed for 12 months or more, must reapply for admission to the Graduate School in order to pursue either the same or a different graduate program, unless a leave of absence was obtained. (Such leaves are provided for only in the context of requirements for continuous enrollment in courses numbered 699/799; see below.) A student who is readmitted to the same degree program is bound by the program requirements of the catalog in force in the term for which the admission was most recently granted.

As a general principle, a student's level of enrollment in any term should reflect the level of scholarly activity being undertaken. Also, a student making use of the staff or facilities of the institution in any way that relates to fulfilling degree requirements or earning course credit should be registered; for example, a student must be enrolled in the term in which the comprehensive examination is taken. (However, a student who is not otherwise required by departmental or Graduate School regulations to be enrolled need not be registered in the term of intended graduation from a degree program in order to graduate.)

A student who would normally be required to register during some period of time to maintain continuous enrollment in a course numbered 699/799 may occasionally experience circumstances that render continuous enrollment infeasible (prolonged illness, military obligations, enforced absence from the country, etc.). In such a case, the student may petition the Graduate School for a leave of absence for the duration of the special situation. The approvals of the major department and of the associate dean of the Graduate School are required. Note that approval of a leave of absence only relieves the student of the obligation to maintain continuous enrollment and/or to reapply for admission to the Graduate School upon completion of the leave if this would otherwise be required; it does not extend the period of time allowed for degree completion.

Time Limitations and Revalidations of Outdated Course Work

The M.S.Ed. and Ed.D. programs in educational psychology are designed so that full or part time students can graduate well in advance of the time limits stipulated by the Graduate School. However, in the event that a student takes longer than expected to complete program requirements, the following selections are important to review:

<u>Master of Science in Education</u>

The student must fulfill all requirements for a degree within the six consecutive years immediately preceding the date of the student's graduation for that degree program. This time limit applies to enrollment in all graduate course work in the student's program including work for which transfer credit is allowed.

If an NIU course taken to complete the requirements for the master's degree does not fall within the six-year period allowed for the degree program, the student's major department may require the student to retake the course for credit or may allow the student to demonstrate current knowledge of the subject matter [revalidate a course]. In the latter case, currency must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department offering the course through successful completion of an appropriate examination or other assessment if available from the department. Otherwise, the outdated course work must be deleted from, and other course work must be substituted in, the program of courses. Transfer courses falling outside the limitation of time may not be used in a graduate program. (*Graduate Catalog*)

<u>Doctor of Education</u>

Except as indicated below, the student must fulfill all requirements for a doctoral degree within nine consecutive years immediately preceding the date of the student's graduation from that degree program.

At the discretion of the student's major department, * the nine-year limit need not apply to some or all of the earliest 30 post-baccalaureate semester hours of credit (earned while the student was obtaining a master's degree) included in the student's doctoral program of courses. The time limit applies to enrollment in all graduate course work in the student's program including work for which transfer credit is allowed. If any such NIU course does not fall within the time limit defined previously, the student's major department may require the student to retake the course for credit or may allow the student to demonstrate current knowledge of the subject matter [revalidate a course]. In the latter case, currency must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department offering the course through successful completion of an appropriate examination or other assessment if available from the department. Otherwise, the outdated course work must be deleted from, and other course work must be substituted in, the program of courses. **Transfer courses falling outside the limitation of time may not be used in a graduate program.** (*Graduate Catalog*)

*In the Department of LEPF, the nine-year limit does not apply to credit hours accepted from the master's degree.

Revalidating Courses

To revalidate a course, the student must contact the department from which the course is offered currently and follow the appropriate procedures for demonstrating currency as described. In our department, students can demonstrate currency in courses in a variety of ways, including passing exams in current courses, writing persuasive papers describing their use of the subject matter of the course in their current professions, and/or responding satisfactorily to a professor's questions about their knowledge of the subject matter. The decision to require a student to re-take an expired course is at the discretion of the faculty.

Graduation

A student hoping to graduate at the close of a given academic term must have applied for graduation by the deadline in the *Graduate School Calendar* (may be obtained on the website www.niu.edu) . This is true whether or not the student wishes to participate in the commencement exercises. All students who apply for graduation by the deadline are put on the preliminary graduation list for that term (the Application for Graduation form is obtained directly from the Graduate School website.

If a student applies for graduation in a given term and does not graduate, the applicant must contact the graduate school to defer graduation, and then must make appropriate arrangements with the graduate school to re apply for graduation at the appropriate time.

Clearance for Graduation

After the Graduate School receives the graduation application, and the student's name is placed on the list of potential graduates, the records staff checks the student's file for eligibility to graduate. A letter is sent to the student, with a copy to the department, indicating any requirements that apparently have not been met. Only one such notification is sent to each student on the graduation list for any given term. It is the student's responsibility to follow up as necessary. However, the student or adviser may at any time check with the appropriate Graduate School records officer regarding the student's status with respect to graduation, whether or not problematic issues have been resolved, and so on.

Students who are cleared for graduation at the close of the term are sent a certificate of completion at that time; the diploma follows some weeks after Commencement. A student who has applied for graduation and has completed all requirements for the degree well in advance of the end of the term may also obtain the certificate of completion prior to the end of the term, upon submission of a written request; the certificate can be sent either to the student or directly to another individual or agency, as the student prefers. Typically, the certificate of completion is accepted without question as "proof of degree." However, if the student so requests, the associate dean will send a supplementary letter to any employer or other agency, explaining the academic situation.

Participation in Commencement Ceremony

Students on the graduation list automatically receive information about the commencement ceremony and a reply card that they are asked to return if they wish to participate. Should they lose or forget to return this card, they may still participate, provided that they are on the graduation list (however, this omission makes the associate dean's planning of the event rather more complicated). Students should not plan to participate in the ceremonies before their degree requirements are completed.

With advance notice, accommodation can be made for graduates or guests with vision or hearing impairments, limited mobility, or other special circumstances; please contact the associate dean concerning any such case.

The Graduate School commencement ceremonies are held in the Convocation Center. Please see the Graduate School website for details.

Financial Support

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are normally awarded to begin in the fall semester. A prospective student wishing
to receive fullest consideration for an assistantship must apply for admission and submit the Application for
Graduate Assistantship form by January 15. If assistantships remain available after this date they will be
filled as needed. Students seeking assistantships are advised to consult with the program area coordinator.

The Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations is occasionally able to hire graduate assistants to
assist with departmental tasks, faculty research, and/or teaching courses each year. Students who are interested in these
positions should inquire about the availability to the program area coordinator.

Part-time Instructor Positions

Doctoral students with master's degrees and appropriate experiences may apply for positions as part-time instructors in the
Department of Leadership Educational Psychology and Foundations. Students may be eligible to teach undergraduate
courses in educational psychology and child or adolescent development. Students who wish to be considered for an instructor
position should submit a letter of interest and vita to the department chair or assistant chair.

Scholarships, Fellowships & Financial Aid

Information about scholarships for College of Education students can be obtained online at the following link:
http://cedu.niu.edu/scholarships/. Applications are typically due by the spring semester for the following academic year. The
Margaret Many scholarship is designated for a graduate student in educational psychology.

Comprehensive information on financing your education at NIU is available at this link:
http://www.grad.niu.edu/grad/financing/index.shtml

For information on additional education scholarships for which you may be eligible, please check the following:
- Illinois Student Assistance Commission: http://www.isac.org/
- Advanced Degree page: http://www.isac.org/students/during-college/advanced-degree/
- Phone: 800.899.ISAC (4722)   Fax: 847.831.8549   8 a.m. - 5 p.m. CT
- E-mail: isac.studentservices@isac.illinois.gov Spanish-speaking counselors are also available.
- Hearing Impaired   Voice: 800.526.0857   TDD: 800.526.0844

Conference and Travel Support

Some divisions or special interest groups within professional associations, such as the American Educational Research
Association (AERA), will offer financial assistance (covering a portion of travel and conference fee costs) to graduate
students whose conference proposals were accepted for presentation. Ask your faculty adviser if he/she is aware of such
opportunities available. The LEPF Department may award graduate students some travel funding if the budget allows.
Students must submit an application for support to the department as soon as possible after they have been notified that they
will be presenting at a conference.

Chapter 4

Educational Psychology Programs

Students have several advisors who serve different functions during their progress toward graduation. In chapter two of this guide, the role of graduate school advisors was described. In this chapter, the roles of program advisors, department chair, and thesis/project/dissertation chairs are described.

Program Advisers

The program advisor is a faculty member in educational psychology. Advisement is given regarding planning one's program of study, selecting the timing of courses within and outside of the major, identifying areas of study, fulfilling deficiencies, meeting prerequisites, arranging internships (for doctoral students), discussing possible topics for the thesis, project or dissertation, and responding to general program questions. Students are responsible for contacting their advisors, making appointments, and communicating with them about their progress on a regular basis (at least once per semester is recommended). It is important to keep in mind that faculty are on nine-month academic year contracts and do not regularly work for NIU during the summer months unless they are teaching a summer course. (Faculty often conduct research, write for publication, write grant proposals, attend conferences, and prepare courses during this time period.) Some faculty members, however, may be available for consultation during portions of the summer. Students should inquire in advance about an individual's availability. Faculty advisors are responsible for making themselves available to their students, and for conferring with them on issues concerning their program. Program advisors are also responsible for making sure students fulfill deficiencies, as deficiencies are not tracked in the MyNIU system.

Students are assigned to an initial program advisor when they are admitted to the program. As soon as possible after admission, the student should make an appointment with the program advisor, who assists the student in selecting courses for the first semester and discusses the program of study. In most cases, the initially assigned program advisor continues to serve in this advisory role until the student has completed all course work and is ready to prepare the portfolio (described later in this chapter). At the time of the portfolio, the student chooses his/her portfolio committee chair and members, which may or may not include the program advisor. In rare cases where a change of program advisor is necessary, all parties involved (current advisor, new advisor, department chair) should be consulted about the change, and a form indicating this change should be submitted to the Graduate School. This form should be initiated by the educational psychology graduate secretary.

Program of Courses

Students should meet with their adviser regularly to plan their program of courses. It is especially important to consult course rotations as they are available, to plan course taking (e.g., the EPS website posts course rotations several years into the future). The program of courses is tracked and managed in MyNIU. Program advisors also have advising sheets that should be completed with students in order to plan courses for future semesters. For doctoral students, a maximum of 30 semester hours from a master's degree may be included in the program of courses.

Occasionally, courses will not automatically go into the correct 'course slot' in the official program of study maintained by the MyNIU system, and the system will show that a student has not fulfilled a requirement in his or her program when in fact the student has. In particular, for doctoral students, MyNIU does not automatically populate transfer credits from a master's program (up to 30 hours). A special request has to be sent by the department for the graduate school to do this. The department also has to initiate any course substitutions to MyNIU. The department's graduate advisor will communicate these changes to the graduate school. All changes to the program must be approved by the program advisor.

Master's Degree Requirements

The M.S.Ed. in educational psychology requires a minimum of 33 semester hours, including courses in learning theory, development, foundations, research methods, and elective courses. There are 2 different masters degree tracks. Following consultation with their advisor, students should select their degree track as soon as possible in the program and plan their course taking accordingly.

The two master's degree tracks are as follows:

Option A is designed for students who intend to enroll in a doctoral program. This option includes greater emphasis on statistics, and requires a thesis.

Option B is designed for students who are not considering enrolling in a doctoral program. This option requires a masters project rather than a thesis.

The specific course requirements for each option are outlined in the advising tables below. Courses should be selected in consultation with one's advisor.

M.S. Ed. In Educational Psychology – OPTION A (THESIS)   **Student Advising Form**

Student: _____   **Date:** _____

Advisor: _____   **Catalog year:** _____

Program filed: yes ___ no ___ _____ *(Please check one)* *(Date Filed)*	Semester taken/taking	Credit Hours	Grade Received
1. Core Courses (6 hours)			
EPS 501 - Psychological Foundations of Education			
EPS 523 - Application of Psychological Research to Educational Practice			
ETR 521 – Educational Statistics I			
2. Theories of Development - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPS 506 - Theories & Research in Child Behavior and Development			
EPS 508 - Theories & Research in Adolescent Behavior & Development			
EPS 510 - Adult Educational Psychology			
3. Research Methods or Assessment - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
ETR 522 - Educational Statistics II			
ETR 525 - Qualitative Research in Education			
ETR 530 - Test Construction and Evaluation			
ETR 531 - Program Evaluation in Education			
ETR 533 - Standardized Testing			
4. Foundations - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPFE 500 - Social Foundations of Education			
EPFE 510 - Philosophical Foundations of Education			
EPFE 511 - Philosophical Analysis of Current Educational Thought			
EPFE 521 - Historical Foundations of Education in the United States			
EPFE 530 - Comparative/International Education			
5. Electives - <u>One</u> must be in EPS (9 hours)			
6. Thesis (6 hours)			
EPS 699 A (Thesis)			
Minimum number of hours = 33			

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M.S. Ed. In Educational Psychology – OPTION B (PROJECT) Student Advising Form

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Advisor: _____ **Catalog year:** _____

Program filed: yes ___ no ___ _____
(Please check one) *(Date Filed)*

	Semester taken/taking	Credit Hours	Grade Received
1. Core Courses (6 hours)			
EPS 501 - Psychological Foundations of Education			
EPS 523 - Application of Psychological Research to Educational Practice			
2. Theories of Development - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPS 506 - Theories & Research in Child Behavior and Development			
EPS 508 - Theories & Research in Adolescent Behavior & Development			
EPS 510 - Adult Educational Psychology			
3. Research Methods or Assessment - <u>Two</u> of the following (6 hours)			
ETR 521 - Educational Statistics I			
ETR 522 - Educational Statistics II			
ETR 525 - Qualitative Research in Education			
ETR 530 - Test Construction and Evaluation, *or* ETR 531 - Program Evaluation in Education, *or* ETR 533 - Standardized Testing			
EPS 524 - Ethnographies in Hum Dev & Learning within Educational Settings			
4. Foundations - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPFE 500 - Social Foundations of Education			
EPFE 510 - Philosophical Foundations of Education			
EPFE 511 - Philosophical Analysis of Current Educational Thought			
EPFE 521 - Historical Foundations of Education in the United States			
EPFE 530 - Comparative/International Education			
5. Electives - <u>One</u> must be in EPS (9 hours)			
6. Thesis (6 hours)			
EPS 699 B (Cumulative Project)			
Minimum number of hours = 33			

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Composition of Thesis or Project Committees

As stated in NIU's Graduate Catalog, the thesis/project committee must consist of at least three voting members approved by the department chair or designee. All members of the committee must have graduate faculty status at NIU and in the LEPF department. Faculty who are from other departments or universities must have their graduate faculty status evaluated prior to submission of the thesis/project proposal. To be considered for graduate faculty status, the faculty member must submit a current CV to the department's graduate faculty status committee for review. This committee's decision is then forwarded to the graduate school for review. Students who plan to have committee members from outside of LEPF should plan to have enough time for these approvals prior to the proposal defense. The majority of the committee members must be full or senior members of the graduate faculty, and at least half of the committee members, including the committee chair, must have full or senior membership in the student's program.

The thesis/project committee must be approved by the department chair one month prior to the proposal defense. An approval form must be signed by all committee members and the department chair and sent to the graduate school. The graduate secretary will complete these forms, but it is the responsibility of the student and the committee chair to initiate this process.

Master's Program Cumulative Assessment Options

Option A: Thesis Option
- Writing a thesis is strongly recommended for students who anticipate pursuing a doctoral degree. The Educational Psychology Program at NIU requires a thesis, as do most other doctoral programs.
- Students complete a master's thesis under the direction of a thesis committee chair from the educational psychology faculty who is selected by the student (this may or may not be the program advisor), and at least two other faculty members.
- Development of the thesis may be initiated at any point during the student's course work; it is recommended that students initiate discussions with their advisor early in the program, though thesis hours (EPS699A) are typically taken at the end of the program when thesis work is most concentrated.
- Students should consult the Graduate Catalog and obtain The Graduate School Manual for Theses and Dissertations for guidance about conducting and writing a thesis. See also the section later in this chapter regarding the Dissertation process, as much of that content applies here.
- Prior to conducting the thesis research, the student must submit a thesis proposal to all committee members. The proposal essentially constitutes the first three chapters of the final thesis (Introduction and problem statement, review of literature, and method). Following advisement from the thesis chair, the student will submit the proposal to all committee members two weeks prior to making a formal presentation of the proposal. During the proposal presentation, the student makes a 20-minute presentation outlining the purpose, justification and method to be used in the study, and committee members provide constructive feedback, specifying changes that must be made to the thesis document and/or study design prior to conducting the proposed study. See the Table later in Chapter for on the format of Proposals for Theses, Projects, and Dissertations.
- Before collecting data but after the proposal has been approved and an IRB application must be submitted and approved (see outline for dissertation or thesis proposal and process for submitting IRB proposal, later in Chapter 4).
- The student should have regular communication with their committee chair during the process of collecting and analyzing data, and writing up the thesis. It is the students' responsibility to initiate this communication.
- The final thesis typically (though not always) consists of 5 chapters. In addition to the first three chapters described in the proposal process, there is a fourth chapter focused on presentation of results and a fifth chapter focused on discussion of the results in light of the research and theory presented in the review of literature. See the Graduate School Manual for Theses and Dissertations.
- The student provides copies of the final thesis to be defended to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the defense date[1]. The thesis chair and committee members must attend the oral defense of the thesis. College of Education faculty and students may be invited to attend the defense meeting. The student presents a justification and overview of the thesis research, and directions for future research in a 20 to 30 minute oral presentation. The

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[1] When planning the defense date, be sure to check the graduate school deadlines for submission of the thesis and supporting documentation. Plan the defense date well in advance of these deadlines to allow time for thesis/project revision and fulfillment of all requirements for graduation.

presentation is followed by a questioning period, and then the thesis committee confers about the passing of the oral defense and determines further revisions to be made before the student is able to submit the final copy of the thesis to the Graduate School.

Option B: Cumulative Project Option

- Conducting a project is recommended only for those students who do not ever anticipate pursuing a doctoral degree. It is an appropriate option for teachers who wish to use it as an opportunity to improve, inform, or reflect upon their practice.
- Students who elect this option must complete a cumulative project under the direction of a project committee chair from the educational psychology faculty who is selected by the student (this may or may not be the program advisor) and at least two additional faculty members. The purpose of the cumulative project is to provide students with an opportunity to integrate their learning across courses and content areas, to demonstrate their skill in employing the acquired knowledge, and to contribute to research and/or practice in the field.
- Development of the project may be initiated at any point during the student's course work; it is recommended that students initiate discussions with their advisor early in the program, though project hours (EPS699B) are typically taken at the end of the program when project work is most concentrated.
- The cumulative project can take a variety of forms, including but not limited to the following activities:
  - action research project and report
  - development of test, assessment, questionnaire, etc; including item bank and evidence of good psychometrics;
  - program evaluation project;
  - theoretical paper on an educational or psychological issue;
  - paper presentation at a professional conference;
  - other types of projects based upon consensus of advisor and committee.
- Students must develop a proposal outlining and justifying the proposed project. The proposal essentially constitutes the first three chapters of the final project write up (Introduction and problem statement, review of literature, and proposed activities and timeline). Following advisement from the project chair, the student will submit the proposal to all committee members two weeks prior to making a formal presentation of the proposal. During the proposal presentation, the student makes a 20-minute presentation outlining the purpose, justification and process to be used in the project, and committee members provide constructive feedback, specifying changes that must be made to the project document and/or project plan prior to conducting the proposed project. See the Table later in Chapter for on the format of Proposals for Theses, Projects, and Dissertations.
- IRB approval is typically not required for projects. Consult with your advisor and/or the LEPF department IRB representatives to be sure.
- The student provides copies of the final project to be defended to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the defense date[2]. The project chair and committee members must attend the oral defense of the thesis. College of Education faculty and students may be invited to attend the defense meeting. The student presents a justification, overview, and reflection of the project work in a 20 to 30 minute oral presentation. The presentation is followed by a questioning period, and then the project committee confers about the passing of the oral defense and determines further revisions to be made before the final project is accepted.
- Masters projects are not submitted to the Graduate School.
- Criteria for a satisfactory evaluation of the cumulative project will necessarily vary to some extent depending upon the particular project. Criteria for a satisfactory evaluation of the cumulative project will be determined in consultation with the student's project committee members and the student before the project is undertaken.

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[2] When planning the defense date, be sure to check the graduate school deadlines for fulfillment of all requirements for graduation.

Time to Completion of Master's Thesis or Project

Students usually complete the thesis or project within two semesters, sometimes three. The first semester (when registered for three semester hours of EPS 699A or 699B) is often spent working on preparing and obtaining approval of the thesis/project proposal by the designated committee, and starting data collection (as appropriate). The second semester (when registered for the final three semester hours of EPS 699A or 699B) is spent analyzing data, completing the project, presenting, and finalizing the written product.

To be able to complete this time intensive work within the recommended two-semester time frame, it is necessary for the student to select a topic for the thesis/project in consultation with their appointed advisor and selected chair and conduct some of the literature review in advance. If thesis work will take longer than two semesters, the student may register for additional hours of EPS 699A/B or can register for fewer than 3 credit hours in the first two semesters. Bear in mind that students must be continuously enrolled (excluding summers) in order to graduate, and must be registered in the semester of graduation.

Master's Degree Checklist

PHASES OF GRADUATE STUDY	WHAT TO GET DONE AND WHAT TO ANTICIPATE	FORMS REQUIRED
On acceptance	Meet with program advisor Register for classes[3]	
First and/or second semester	Develop program of courses (with advisor) Take required courses (e.g., EPS 501, 523) Choose thesis or project	Student advising form to assist in developing the program of courses
Thesis/project and preparing for graduation phase	Select thesis or project committee members in consultation with program advisor.	Thesis/project committee form, in which all committee members agree to serve. If committee members are from outside LEPF, graduate faculty status must be granted by department committee (faculty to submit CV)
	During the semester in which coursework will be completed, work may begin on thesis/project. Continuous registration in EPS 699A or 699B must be maintained until thesis/project is approved.	When EPS 699 registration begins, a permit for each semester must be obtained from the secretary and approved by the thesis/project chair (all done via e-mail)
	When thesis/project proposal is approved by the committee, and Institutional Research Board (IRB) approval is obtained to conduct research (there may be exceptions for project), student may then begin to collect data.	Approval of Thesis/Project Proposal form needs to be filed with the graduate secretary. IRB form (available online); approved by thesis/project chair and appointed LEPF faculty IRB reviewer, then submitted to IRB.
	Check graduate school website for important dates and deadlines. Apply for graduation with the GS in the appropriate semester.	The Application for Graduation form needs to be obtained from the GS website by the student during the same semester (or before) the student is ready to graduate
	Contact GS advisor, make all appropriate changes to program of courses through program advisor, chair, and graduate advisor.	Submit any changes on Program of Courses form, if necessary (with Graduate Adviser)
	Arrange for defense of thesis or presentation of project (student arranges date and time with advisor and committee). Advise graduate secretary of the defense date and time so proper paperwork can be prepared.	Director obtains rubric from secretary for evaluation of thesis/project When student passes the oral defense of thesis or presentation of project, the secretary will file the appropriate form
	Make changes to thesis/project required by the committee.	Submit Final Version of Thesis/Dissertation to the Graduate School electronically.
	Receive clearance from GS for graduation (indicated on MyNIU).	

This checklist supplements, but does not replace, the information contained in the Graduate School Catalog.

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[3] A prospective student may register for classes as a student-at-large while awaiting the decision of acceptance; up to 15 of student-at-large or transfer hours may be counted towards the master's degree in educational psychology.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

The Ph.D. in educational psychology requires a minimum of 93 semester hours, including courses in learning theory, development, foundations, research methods, elective courses, and research internship. Up to 30 hours of relevant course work can be credited from the master's degree.

Course requirements appear in the advising form on the following page.

Ph.D. In Educational Psychology   **Student Advising Form**

Student: _____   **Date:** _____

Advisor: _____   **Catalog year:** _____

Program filed: yes ___ no ___ _____ *(Please check one)* *(Date Filed)*	Semester taken/taking	Credit Hours	Grade Received
1. Core Courses (15 hours)			
EPS 701 – Professional Practices in Educational Psychology			
EPS 713 – Advanced Educational Psychology			
EPS 723 – Design of Research on Human Development and Learning in Educational Settings			
ETR 522 – Educational Statistics II			
EPS 524 – Ethnographies in Human Development and Learning within Educational Settings			
2. Theories of Development - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPS 705 – Advanced Seminar in Child Development			
EPS 708 – Advanced Research Seminar in Adolescent Development			
EPS 710 – Seminar in Lifespan Human Development			
3. Research Methods or Assessment - <u>Two</u> of the following (6 hours)			
ETR 526 – Advanced Technologies in Qualitative Research			
ETR 562 – Applied Categorical Data Analysis			
EPS 706 – Research in Educational Settings			
ETR 722 – Methods of Multivariate Analysis			
ETR 735 – Theory of Measurement			
EPS 739 – Fieldwork Methods in Educational Research			
EPS 745X – Interpretive Methods in Educational Research			
4. Foundations - <u>One</u> of the following (3 hours)			
EPFE 712 – Ethics and Education			
EPFE 715 – Foundations of Educational Policy			
EPFE 721 – Seminar in American Educational Thought			
EPFE 530 – Comparative/International Education			

	Semester taken/taking	Credit Hours	Grade Received
5. Course Work in Cognate Area - Selected in Consultation with Adviser (18 hours)			
6. Internship (6 hours)			
EPS 786 - Internship			
EPS 786 - Internship			
7. Dissertation (minimum 12 hours)			
8. Master's Courses (maximum 30 hours)			
Minimum number of hours = 93			

Revised July 2014

Sample Cognate Areas of Study–Doctoral Program

The doctoral program provides the opportunity for students to develop expertise in an area of interest through taking elective courses (for 18 semester hours) and pursuing an internship and dissertation work in that area. The following examples show how students could pursue particular interests. Many options are possible:

Sample Area of Study: Adolescent Motivation
EPS 708 Advanced Research Seminar in Adolescent Development
EPS 718 Research Seminar on Motivation in Education
EPS 706 Research in Educational Settings
ETR 722 Methods of Multivariate Analysis
EPS 739 Fieldwork in Educational Research
PSY 671 Human Motivation

Other areas of study may include combining courses within and related to the major; for example, students may be interested in focusing on:

Family/School/Community Relations
Moral Development and Education
Psychology of Literacy
Instructional Technology and Learning
Teacher Education
Special Education
Sociocultural, Historical, or Philosophical Foundations of Education

Course work for some areas of study may be appropriate to apply toward earning different types of Graduate Certificates. These certifications will be recorded on students' diplomas. For instance, the Advanced Certificates in Quantitative or Qualitative Methodology in Education is strongly recommended.

Research Internship

A research internship is required as part of the doctoral program. An research internship is undertaken with consultation from the student's program advisor and consent from the department chair or assistant chair. Students should select an internship that fits their study interests and furthers their professional goals. The internship requirement can only be fulfilled with an internship which spans two consecutive semesters. In order to meet the internship requirement, the student is expected to assist an educational psychology faculty member with his or her research, or conduct independent research under the close supervision of a faculty member for two consecutive semesters. On rare occasions and with the approval of the students' advisor and department chair, the internship may involve work with faculty outside of the department or university. The faculty mentor and student will determine the specific responsibilities for assisting with the formulation of a research project and/or data collection and analysis.

Students are expected to spend about 10 to 12 hours per week as an intern. Students are not paid but receive course credit (EPS 786) for successfully completing the internship requirement when the faculty mentor submits a satisfactory grade. The expectation is that at the end of the internship, the student will produce a research paper for presentation or publication that may be used in the portfolio as evidence of effective written communication and/or knowledge of research methods.

Composition of Portfolio (Candidacy Examination) Committee

The committee to conduct the portfolio examination will be chosen by the student. The portfolio committee consists of at least 3 faculty members, the majority of whom are tenured or tenure-track members of the educational psychology faculty. One member (selected by the student) is designated as the chair of the committee, and takes primary responsibility for overseeing the preparation of the portfolio. All members of the committee must be appointed to the graduate faculty of Northern Illinois University, and a majority, including the chair, must have full or senior graduate faculty status. At least 2 of

the 3 committee members should be on the educational psychology faculty. It is preferred (though not required) that members of the portfolio committee also serve on the student's dissertation committee.

Educational Psychology Doctoral Program Portfolio Requirements

The portfolio is submitted upon successful completion of all course work and prior to registration of dissertation hours (EPS 799). The purpose of this assessment is to help assure that doctoral students have the skills necessary to succeed as educational psychologists. In particular, this assessment is an authentic measure of the skills required in professional practice. Successful completion of the portfolio constitutes fulfillment of graduate school requirements for the doctoral candidacy exam.

The portfolio is to be submitted electronically. There are several options for assembling the portfolio including Power Point presentations with hyperlinks, BlackBoard, LiveText, Drop Box, Google Docs, or constructing a website. Bear in mind that while a variety of formats can be used to grant faculty access to the portfolio contents, the contents do need to be archivable such that the LEPF department may retain an electronic copy of the contents. Discuss these options with your portfolio committee. Regardless of the format chosen, the portfolio should include a written reflective component. This can be done in the format of a single supplemental paper that provides an overview of the portfolio contents and summarizes, analyzes, and reflects upon the contents of each section of the portfolio, or reflections can be broken down and presented in sections with each corresponding section of the portfolio.

Competencies to be demonstrated in the portfolio, and suggested evidence for each competency are presented below. Each competency should be demonstrated with 2-3 pieces of evidence. In some cases, a very strong piece of evidence (e.g., a published empirical article) can be used to demonstrate multiple competencies (e.g. effective written communication and experience using research methodologies). Students are advised against excessive use of this kind of "double dipping."

1. Demonstrate proficiency in coursework based on individual goals for professional growth and development.

- Goal statement - initial statement completed early in the program (typically completed in EPS 701). Includes, teaching and/or research interests, and career goals.
- Evidence of a successfully completed program of study.

2. Demonstrate experience using research methodologies. One example must come from a research study
- Research proposal prepared for class
- Grant proposal
- Research or evaluation paper prepared for presentation or publication
- Written product from research internship
- Plan or conduct a program evaluation
- Any of the above may include quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies

3. Demonstrate in depth knowledge of theory and expertise in a domain within educational psychology.
- Empirical research paper with well-developed literature review
- Review paper
- Theoretical/thought piece
- Paper demonstrating integration of knowledge from two or more courses
- Theory-based critique of an issue
- Design a theory-based educational/psychological intervention or curriculum.

4. Demonstrate effective oral communication and presentation skills

- Presentation materials from a colloquium, conference paper, poster, or round table presentation
- Presentation materials from an in-service presentation at a professional conference, meeting, or program
- Presentation materials from a larger presentation made as part of a course
- The portfolio itself must be presented competently, as assessed by committee members, to pass this section

5. Demonstrate effective written communication and presentation skills.
- Research article
- Research review
- Thought piece/Theory piece
- Conference paper
- Grant Proposal
- Book review

6. Demonstrate knowledge and application of ethical standards.
- The final portfolio <u>must include</u> a brief statement signed by the student's academic adviser that the student did not violate ethical standards and student must not have any evidence brought forth by a faculty member to the contrary
- Signed checklist of the AERA and APA ethical standards
- Reflection paper on AERA and APA ethical standards (sometimes required in EPS701)
- Evidence of completion of training on IRB procedures for protection of research participants

7. Demonstrate evidence of successful research internship experience supervised by a faculty member.
- Letter from internship mentor affirming successful completion of internship
- Products of internship as appropriate: codebooks developed, reports written, proposals or papers developed, results of analyses, etc.

Faculty Evaluation of Portfolio (Pass/fail)

Two weeks prior to the presentation date, the student will provide a copy of the portfolio to the committee members. This final review will be a presentation open to all faculty. The presentation will last 20-30 minutes and will cover all competencies in the portfolio. Following the presentation of the portfolio, the faculty committee may ask questions regarding the contents of the portfolio. At the conclusion of the questioning, the portfolio committee will vote on each section. A two-thirds vote is required to pass each section. All sections must pass. If certain sections of the portfolio do not pass, then the student will receive formative feedback in writing from the committee about what needs to be revised, and will have one opportunity to revise these sections. The revisions will be given to committee members for a final decision. A final copy of the (approved) portfolio (electronic copy) will be submitted by the student for department files. Students who do not successfully pass all sections after one revision will not be admitted to candidacy and will ultimately have to leave the program without earning the doctoral degree.

The Dissertation Process [4]

Purpose of a Dissertation

to add to the knowledge base of the field of educational psychology
to contribute to the candidate's knowledge about the conduct of research

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[4] Most aspects of this process also apply to the conduct of a master's thesis. Check exceptions with your advisor.

Procedures

- The student initiates the process. The student selects and invites an educational psychology faculty member with expertise in the student's area of study who holds senior status with the Graduate School to chair his/her dissertation. If warranted given the focus of study and/or seniority of appropriate faculty, co-chairs may be selected.

- The student should consult the Graduate Catalog and obtain "Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Electronic Theses and Dissertations," found on the Thesis/Dissertation page of the Graduate School website concerning the conduct and writing of a dissertation.

- After a dissertation chair accepts the invitation and is approved by the Graduate School, the student, with advice from the chair, selects a committee. The committee will ultimately consist of at least 4 faculty members, including the chair. The committee members are chosen by the student for their expertise on the topic or methodology of the proposed dissertation. See the section on Composition of the Dissertation Committee for specific information.

- The student may then begin writing a dissertation proposal that identifies questions to be researched and the need for the study based on an extensive literature review. The proposal incorporates the first three chapters of the dissertation (introduction, literature review, methods). Plans for analyzing data are also included. (See the sample outline for a dissertation/thesis/project proposal presented in this chapter).

- The dissertation chair reads multiple drafts of the proposal and adds, deletes, modifies and discusses the ideas and plans presented. Committee members may also be involved in this phase.

  After a completed draft proposal is approved by the chair, the student contacts the dissertation committee and provides a copy of the draft proposal for review. A proposal meeting is scheduled for the student and committee to evaluate the proposed study. The meeting includes a presentation of the research questions, review of the literature and proposed design of the study. This presentation provides an opportunity for faculty members to interact with the student and address questions concerning the research being proposed. The proposal presentation requires the student to explain fully and carefully exactly what he/she plans to do and how it fits into existing literature. The student is expected to provide a very detailed explanation and justification as to why the research topic is worthy of study and how the proposed research will be conducted or analyzed. This meeting allows faculty to provide input at the beginning of the study when suggestions for improvement can be incorporated.

- When the proposal is tentatively approved by the committee, the student then redrafts the proposal as advised by the committee, which may involve expanding the related literature and research methodology. The revised proposal may or may not be reviewed again by the entire committee, and may or may not require an additional formal presentation. It is at the committee's discretion to decide the terms of revision.

- Once the expanded proposal meets the standards of the committee, the student must complete an application to the IRB, and have it reviewed by the LEPF faculty reviewer, prior to submitting it to the IRB. Once IRB approval has been granted, the candidate has the go-ahead to complete the study. The candidate must provide a copy of the approved proposal and IRB application to the department for filing purposes (see section below).

- After the proposal and IRB application have been approved, the candidate collects and analyzes the data, and then completes the final chapters of the dissertation (Results and Discussion). The candidate will also likely need to make minor revisions of earlier chapters in light of their findings or any modifications they needed to make along the way. Much time-consuming interaction occurs between the candidate and the dissertation chair and, when appropriate, with the other members of the committee, depending on the expertise needed.

- The dissertation proceeds until it is finally approved by the chair and/or dissertation committee for the defense. Upon verbal approval from the dissertation chair to schedule the defense, the student initiates scheduling with other committee members, and finds a room for the defense with the help of the graduate secretary. The committee chair initiates the appropriate paperwork for the defense. It is a good idea if both the student and faculty chair inform the graduate secretary of developments regarding the defense date and location.

Dissertation/Thesis/Project Proposal Outline

A dissertation or thesis proposal should present the first three chapters that will become the dissertation or thesis, as well as a plan for analysis.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Direct statement of the purpose of the study/project
Introduction to the problem and its importance
(connected to theory and research)
Research Questions (if applicable)

Operational definitions
Overview of methodology/project activities
Limitations

Chapter 2 – Framing of the Study (How this study/project connects to relevant research/theory)

Why this study/project is needed.
Discussion of relevant theories in relation to the study/project.

Analysis of prior relevant research demonstrating how research questions or action plans follow from the research cited. Explanation of why the participants, methods, and instrumentation for this study were chosen.

Chapter 3 – Methodology (note that depending on the project proposed, this could simply be a timeline and description of planned activities)

Setting and Participants
    Describe the characteristics of the setting in which the study will be conducted.
    Describe the participants.
        How many? Characteristics?
        Recruitment? Will the participants be assigned to groups? How many? On what basis?

Measures
    Interview Protocols
    Observation Protocols
    Reliability and validity for quantitative instruments.
    Who will administer each instrument?
    When will each be administered? In what order?
    Will they be pilot tested? On whom? How?
    What will be determined from that?

Plans for Analysis

Procedures
    How exactly will you collect data?
    Why are these procedures justified?
    Have these procedures been used by previous researchers?
    Have you conducted a pilot study?

Dissertation Defense

The candidate provides copies of the dissertation to be defended to the committee members and the graduate school at least three weeks prior to the defense date[3]. The dissertation chair, committee members, and an outside reader (dean's designee) must attend the oral defense of the dissertation, and the College of Education faculty and students are invited to attend the defense meeting. The candidate presents a brief justification and overview of the dissertation research, and directions for future research in a 20 to 30 minute oral presentation. The presentation is followed by a questioning period, and then the dissertation committee confers about the passing of the oral defense and determines further revisions to be made before the student is able to submit the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate School.

Composition of the Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee will consist of at least 4 members, to be chosen by the student. The members will advise the student throughout the dissertation process, being present at the dissertation proposal and advising until the final dissertation is approved. Committee members will include representatives of the student's major and minor fields. If not already selected by this point, committee members should be chosen soon after the student passes the candidacy exam (portfolio). In addition to the 4 members selected by the candidate, the Graduate School will select a dean's designee, who will review the dissertation manuscript submitted to the graduate school and attend the final defense. The graduate school invites the dean's designee and delivers the dissertation manuscript to the designee.

All members of the committee must be appointed to the graduate faculty of Northern Illinois University. At least 2 of the voting members of the committee must be tenured or tenure-track faculty members at Northern Illinois University; at least 2 of the members must be *senior* members of the graduate faculty; and at least 2 of the members, including the committee chair, must be graduate faculty members in the Educational Psychology program. The dean's designee from the Graduate School will serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the committee.

Responsibilities of Faculty and Students on Thesis/Project or Dissertation Committee

There are complementary responsibilities of students and faculty members with regard to work on master's projects, theses, and doctoral dissertation committees. They are all responsible for contributing constructively, actively, and knowledgeably to the process.

The professor will:

1. Be available by appointment to discuss projects, possible areas of interest, research design, proposals, and drafts.
2. Meet with the student on a regular basis, considering the student's requests and progress. Chairs and co-chairs assume this responsibility.
3. Share responsibility with the student and other committee members for the quality of the study's design, analysis, and writing.
4. Read and provide feedback on written material, usually within a two-week period.
5. Be reasonably available to provide more immediate feedback to a quick question or two by in-person appointments, e-mail, or phone conferencing (i.e., within a week).
6. In consultation with committee members, approve projects that meet standards of sound design, competent execution of study, appropriate analysis, and proficient writing.
7. Assume shared responsibility for the student's effective completion of the IRB application. The chair should review and approve the student IRB application prior to submission to the LEPF IRB representative.
8. Encourage students to participate in professional activities in the field. Be available to work within a reasonable time frame (i.e., a semester in advance) to help prepare students for public presentations related to their research.
9. Communicate with the graduate secretary to ensure completion and submission of all necessary paperwork regarding the composition of the dissertation committee, scheduling and outcomes of defense, and final approval of dissertation/thesis.

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[3] Check the graduate school for deadlines regarding the submission of pre-defense copies of the dissertation, and making graduation deadlines.

The student will:

1. Invite faculty to serve on committee (after consultation with program advisor).
2. Take initiative for maintaining contact through phone calls, e-mail, or other correspondence.
3. Provide any material for feedback at least two weeks prior to deadlines.
4. Communicate feedback from committee members with the committee chair, so that any inconsistencies can be addressed.
5. Address feedback given for written work. Edit or make final copies only after all revisions are made and agreed upon by committee and student.
6. Students are expected to prepare final proposal drafts and defense copies <u>as if</u> they were the final documents in a manuscript being submitted for publication (e.g., APA format, clean copies, pages numbered, all attached documents organized). This is an important part of the learning process, and conveys professionalism to the chair and committee members.
7. Check with the committee chair (and co-chair, if appropriate) that the project, thesis, or dissertation is of a sufficiently high standard before presenting it to committee members or before scheduling a defense date.
8. Schedule defense dates in consultation with the committee. Student needs to allow at least 3 weeks, preferably 4 weeks, to advise department staff of defense date, as a form needs to be filed with the GS 3 weeks prior. At this time, 3 weeks prior, student needs to submit a paper pre-defense copy to the GS.
9. After defense, student needs to electronically submit the dissertation to the GS, once approved to do so by chair and committee.

Process for Submitting Applications for Institutional Review Board (IRB Approval)

Students will be introduced to the ethical standards for the conduct of research with human subjects, and the procedures for obtaining approval for conducting research, in EPS 523, EPS 701, EPS 723, and in other research methods courses. All theses and dissertations and most projects in educational psychology require submission of an IRB application and approval before data can be gathered.   With the approval of their dissertation/thesis chairs, students may initiate the application process when they are finalizing their thesis or dissertation proposals. Students should obtain current guidelines, procedures, and forms for preparing applications from the NIU Office of Research Compliance (www.grad.niu.edu/orc). Students must submit completed applications and supporting materials (e.g., surveys, interview questions, consent forms), with the signature of their dissertation/thesis chair, to the EPF faculty member designated to review applications. (The designee frequently requires additional information and minor revisions before approving the applications; students are welcome to consult with the designee in advance.) When the department designee approves and signs the application, she or he will give it to the department secretary to copy for the office files and forward to the Office of Research Compliance. The student must receive written approval from the ORC before data collection may begin.

Doctoral Degree Checklist

PHASES OF GRADUATE STUDY	WHAT TO GET DONE AND WHAT TO ANTICIPATE	FORMS REQUIRED
Initial advisement required core	In an acceptance letter from the department's graduate secretary, admitted students will be assigned an advisor and informed of any deficiencies to be addressed early in the program of study. After acceptance, schedule an initial meeting with program advisor to discuss your goals, interests, course sequencing, and plans to take care of deficiencies, if any. . Obtain and review the Educational Psychology Graduate Student Handbook Register for core courses; EPS 701 (must be taken within the first two years)[5] EPS 701, 713 and ETR 522 and EPS524 must be taken prior to EPS 723 Write goals for portfolio, begin collecting evidence for portfolio	
Area of study, courses, internship, portfolio phase	Take courses in area of study Plan internship experience with advisor When most of the required coursework has been taken, and the internship has been completed, student forms the committee for evaluating the portfolio Schedule date, room, time for portfolio presentation When portfolio assessment is passed, submit form to Graduate School notifying student has been admitted to candidacy	Request for Appointment of Committee to Conduct a Doctoral Candidacy Examination form, must be done at least two weeks before the portfolio defense. Report on Doctoral Examination form to Graduate School

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[5] A prospective student may register for classes as a student-at-large while awaiting decision of acceptance; up to 15 of student-at-large or transfer hours may be counted towards the doctoral degree in educational psychology.

PHASES OF GRADUATE STUDY	WHAT TO GET DONE AND WHAT TO ANTICIPATE	FORMS REQUIRED
Dissertation and preparing for graduation phase	Choose and appoint dissertation director; GS will return form when approved	Approval of Dissertation Director form to GS
	Work begins on dissertation, registration for EPS 799 (dissertation hours) may begin. A grade of IP (in progress) will be given if satisfactory progress is made each semester for the EPS 799 hours. Continuous registration must be maintained until dissertation is formally approved by GS. Obtain GS Guidelines and APA style booklet Schedule dissertation proposal meeting	When EPS 799 registration begins, a permit for each semester must be obtained from secretary and approved by the dissertation chair Approval of Dissertation Proposal form filed with department IRB form (found online) approved by dissertation chair and appointed faculty IRB reviewer
	Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for conducting research	
	Data collection may begin after IRB and dissertation committee approval is received	At least 3 weeks before scheduled defense, student needs to send pre-defense version of dissertation to GS, and provide copies for committee. Form also needs to be filed with GS advising of defense date (completed by graduate secretary) .
	When dissertation committee decides student is ready for defense, student schedules date, room, and time. Student should file the application for graduation form with the GS. Student should check the GS website www.grad.niu.edu or GS advisor for GS deadlines.	Director obtains rubric from secretary for evaluation of dissertation When student passes the oral defense, secretary will file Report on Doctoral Examination form and the Approval of Thesis, Dissertation or Documentation form with GS once approved by committee The student obtains the Application for Graduation form from GS, obtains advisor/chair signature, returns the form to GS the same semester of graduation
	Contact Graduate advisor, make all appropriate changes to program of courses through program advisor, department chair or assistant department chair, and secretary. Check GS calendar for deadlines. Make all changes to dissertation required by committee and electronically submit committee approved dissertation.	Submit change in Program of Courses form, if necessary
	Receive clearance from GS for graduation (letter sent to student with copy to department).	

The above schedule of events should be regarded as a checklist to help students conceptualize the steps to be taken in obtaining the Ph.D. degree in educational psychology. The checklist supplements, but does not replace, the information contained in the Graduate School Catalog.

Resources for Writing Proposals, Theses, and Dissertations

Required

"Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Electronic Theses and Dissertations" available at
http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/thesis_guidelines.pdf

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition)).

Recommended

There are a variety of references for writing theses and dissertations. The following are a few considered helpful:

Brause, R. (2000). Writing Your Doctoral Dissertation: Invisible Rules for Success. NY: Falmer Press.

Locke, L., Spirduso, W., & Silverman, S. (2007). Proposals that Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals, 5th Edition. Sage.

The Graduate School also features assistance on their web site, www.grad.niu.edu/thesis , which addresses frequently asked questions and general information about office procedures. Also available on this web site is a checklist that alerts students to the most common problems in post-defense versions of theses and dissertations, problems that often result in time consuming corrections for students. The one-page format should be convenient for students to use as they are working on their papers and to remind them to attend to simple issues before they become complex problems that cause frustrating delays.

Sample Theses and Dissertations–NIU

Copies of completed educational psychology theses and dissertations are available on the ProQuest Database or by asking your dissertation chair.

Preparing Theses and Dissertations for Graduate School Readers

Preparing the final dissertation document is very time consuming. If you are formatting your own dissertation, please plan to leave plenty of time for this process. If you are interested in hiring a professional formatter, the graduate school has a list of freelance thesis/dissertation formatters who are familiar with NIUs guidelines. These professionals can be found at: http://www.niu.edu/grad/thesis/

University Resources

Library Services

Website: www.ulib.niu.edu/

This site links to information about:
> Services for persons with disabilities
> Searching electronic sources
> Bibliographic instruction
> On-line tutorials

Full time graduates students can be assigned a locker at Founders Library. Inquire at the library.

Bookstore

Website: www.niubookstore.niu.edu

Learning Center

Website: www.cedu.niu.edu/learningcenter

Students will be able to find information about the Learning Center in Gabel Hall and information about the following:
- Computer Laboratory
- Videoconference classroom
- Media production lab and equipment

Office of Research Evaluation and Policy Studies (REPS)

Website: www.cedu.niu.edu/reps/

Provides research services such as transcription and, data entry.

Statistics Consulting Laboratory

Website: www.niu.edu/stat/consulting/

Graduate students may get help in having data analyzed through the Statistical Consulting Lab with written permission from their advisor.

Writing Center

Website: www.niu.edu/uwc/

Information is available about hours when tutors are available for assistance, how to get online assistance, and where to find other links for self-help, pointers about different types of writing and other helpful writing assistance. The writing center provides assistance to advanced writers as well as to struggling writers.

Student Services

Website: www.grad.niu.edu/grad/prospective_students/

Contains information about services for students such as housing, health services, recreation, student organizations, accessibility and more.

Women's Resource Center

Website: www.niu.edu/women/CampusANDCommunityResources/

Lists a number of services that can be accessed by students such as women's organizations and childcare.

Department Web Pages

Website: www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/

Chapter 6

Graduate Student Opportunities

Committees

Students who wish to serve on Departmental Search Committees are welcome to tell the department chair or area coordinator.

The department often gets request for student representatives on other university committees as well. Inform the department chair if you are interested in serving. Often, faculty will nominate students for such positions based on interest.

Professional Organizations

Students may become student affiliates of the American Educational Research Association.
For information, see www.aera.net.

Students may become student members of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association.
For information, see www.mwera.org

Student membership in APA Division 15, Educational Psychology, is recommended. It is not necessary to become a member of APA. See apadiv15.org