

Educational Psychology Ph.D. Program

School of Psychological Sciences

University of Northern Colorado

Program Handbook

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## I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

### 1. Purpose of the Student Handbook

This handbook was created to provide students admitted to the doctoral program in Educational Psychology (EPSY) at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) with information about the policies and procedures for the completion of their doctoral degree. This handbook covers policies and procedures specific to the doctoral program in Educational Psychology. This handbook content may change from year to year. You should make sure that you consult the most recent version of the student handbook for accurate information. Questions about the content can be directed to the graduate coordinator of the doctoral program. Information related to policies for graduate education are found at the following websites.

- Graduate Program in Educational Psychology: <https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-sciences/current-students/doctoral-students/>
- School of Psychological Sciences: <https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-sciences/>
- College of Education and Behavior Sciences: <https://www.unco.edu/education-behavioral-sciences/>
- Graduate School: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/>

### 2. Doctoral Program Philosophy and Learning Outcomes

The mission of the program is to engage students and experts in collaborative educational, research, and teaching experiences. Students will be trained as teacher-scholars who investigate applied problems in educational contexts as educators, scholars, and/or industry leaders capable of original basic and applied research in psychological and educational processes. We support and develop inclusivity-minded engaged teacher-scholars through our combination of educational, research, and teaching experiences. These experiences guide the responsibilities and duties for the faculty and school as well as responsibilities and expectations for students. Faculty are expected to provide and model educational, teaching, and research experiences that promote the qualities of engaged teacher-scholars in students. Students are expected to demonstrate their research expertise in applied problems in educational contexts, teaching excellence, and engagement.

- **Educational Experiences:** Faculty and students in our program are life-long learners who understand and apply principles and theories of learning to their own learning. Through experiences such as coursework, mentorship, extracurricular activities (e.g., Teaching Circles, Antiracism Journal Club), professional development, and scholarship, students and faculty members gain valuable and diverse educational experiences.
- **Teaching Experiences:** The coursework in EPSY provides a foundation for pedagogy and promotes your movement toward being an engaged teacher-scholar. Because core to our program is training highly effective teachers, the faculty members teaching these courses must also be effective teachers and knowledgeable on the most recent pedagogical knowledge. Out-of-class experiences (e.g., Teaching Circles, guest lecturing, and serving as instructor-of-record) with feedback from your advisor(s) will provide additional avenues for gaining expertise in teaching.
- **Research Experiences:** The foundation of a PhD degree is research, and we believe it is essential that our students are engaged scholars in an area of interest that aligns with an EPSY faculty member's research expertise. The EPSY, and School of Psychological

Sciences, faculty members are productive scholars who provide mentorship and guidance throughout the research process. From a required research apprenticeship to annual research requirements, these research experiences promote the scholarship aspect of being a teacher-scholar.

The doctoral program in educational psychology has seven student learning outcomes (SLO) that address the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that graduates of our program attain by the end of their degree. These learning outcomes span coursework as well as research and other professional experiences.

- a. SLO 1: Students will exhibit the necessary foundation of theoretical knowledge within the field of educational psychology. This theoretical foundation includes human development, motivation, culture and diversity, measurement, and statistics/research methods.
- b. SLO 2: Students will demonstrate knowledge of research methodology, statistical analysis, and the ability to evaluate and communicate research in accord with professionally accepted criteria.
- c. SLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to conduct independent, quality research as demonstrated by independent projects and/or progress toward Comprehensive and Dissertation research.
- d. SLO 4: Students will show mastery of the applicability of educational psychology content to varied learning environments.
- e. SLO 5: Students will demonstrate understanding of measurement and assessment as applied to teaching, learning, and scholarship.
- f. SLO 6: Students will comprehend and exemplify the ethical issues surrounding educational psychology.
- g. SLO 7: Students will develop engaging and successful teaching skills.
- h. While not a learning outcome, we also expect our students to develop successful professional skills (e.g., collaboration, engagement, responsiveness, goal-setting, communication, boundary-setting, time management) that are at the level of a professional academic by the time they end their program. Students should seek feedback from your advisor(s) and instructors and attend to provided constructive feedback.

### 3. Governance

#### a. Graduate Committee in Educational Psychology

The Graduate Committee consists of all educational psychology faculty as well as faculty from School of Psychological Sciences who are involved with graduate education. The Graduate Committee in Educational Psychology aims to oversee the operations of the graduate programs in Educational Psychology. Duties include creating and updating policy and procedures for admissions, comprehensive examinations, and research requirements; making curricular changes; making decisions regarding student admissions; evaluating students' academic performance and progress in the programs; and making decisions about students' continuation and termination.

#### b. Graduate Student Representative on Graduate Committee

To ensure student representation on the Graduate Committee, each year one doctoral student and one master's student will be selected by the Graduate Committee faculty to serve a

one-year position as the Graduate Student Representative. All doctoral students will be eligible to apply for this position (via an email to the EPSY graduate program coordinator expressing interest) by the second week of the fall semester. The Graduate Student Representatives will be responsible for attending Graduate Committee meetings (excluding meetings in which confidential information is discussed, e.g., admissions and continuation meetings), communicating Graduate Committee decisions to the student body, and communicating student concerns and issues to the Graduate Committee.

#### 4. General Program Information and Graduate School Policies

##### a. Graduate School and Program Deadlines

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that necessary forms are submitted to meet Graduate College deadlines (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/preparing-for-graduation/graduation-deadlines.aspx>). In addition to the Graduate School forms, the department has several required forms (included in appropriate sections). See the suggested timeline in Appendix A.

##### b. Graduate School and Program Policies

- Academic Policy (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/academic-policies-and-deadlines.aspx>)
- Research Ethics Policy (<https://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/>)
- University-wide Graduate Student Handbook (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/pdf/Graduate-Student-Handbook-082018.pdf>)
- Syllabus statements ([https://www.unco.edu/center-enhancement-teaching-learning/teaching-resources/syllabus\\_statements.aspx](https://www.unco.edu/center-enhancement-teaching-learning/teaching-resources/syllabus_statements.aspx))

#### 5. Graduate Assistantships

##### a. Overview

Our program is committed to supporting students secure funding for each year in their first four years during their doctoral studies. Funding of graduate students through assistantships at all levels is subject to internal and external sources available of funding policy and/or budgetary constraints at the school, college, and university level. In the provision of available funds, first year students receive high priority for graduate assistantships that include a stipend for the academic year and tuition waiver. However, it should be noted that more advanced students may be selected when specific skills for funded positions are required. Although it is likely that students will be funded in their second year, the possibility of funding decreases in the third and fourth year in the doctoral program. Funding is less certain after students' fourth year in the program and becomes more contingent on progress.

**Special note for out-of-state students: You must file for Colorado residency after your first year in the program to continue receiving an Assistantship. Here is the link to UNC's residency information: <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/Residency/>**

Assistantships will be awarded as either a Research Assistant (work with assigned faculty member) or a Teaching Assistant (serve as the instructor-of-record). This is dependent on need, funding, and student training. Guidelines and policies at the university level related to graduate assistantships can be accessed through the University's Graduate School, see:

<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/funding/assistantships.aspx>.

b. Policy on Graduate Assistantships

Assistantships in the doctoral program in Educational Psychology in the School of Psychological Sciences serve three objectives. First, assistantships are designed to offer graduate student with professionally and academically valuable experiences, typically in the form of research and/or teaching support. Second, assistantships are a form of employment whereby students are compensated for their contribution to the academic work in the school. Third, assistantships are intended to encourage graduate students to devote their full attention to their studies without the distraction of other part-time employment. The school assumes that post-graduate training may be ideally pursued on a full-time basis through providing tuition-remitting assistantships and stipends.

c. Assistantship Responsibilities

Graduate students who receive assistantships are typically asked to collaborate in all aspects of research (e.g., conduct literature reviews, collect and score data; manage data files; analyze data, and so on); teach an undergraduate class; supervise or mentor undergraduate assistants; and otherwise perform duties that are commensurate either at one's academic and professional development or else deemed required for the efficient operation of the program or department.

Students are expected to attend orientations (e.g., TA Conference) sponsored by SPS and the Graduate School; to attend departmental and collegiate colloquia and workshops (e.g., workshops provided through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at UNC, Teaching Circles, SPS Journal Club-Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion, Anti-Racism Working Group); to complete the Annual Review (see below for more details) which includes a section on Assistantship performance; to participate in the School's hiring processes; and to otherwise participate in the various academic and social functions of the school.

If students specifically apply to teaching assistantships, students are required to complete the Seminar in College Teaching (PSY 654) before teaching; are expected to submit Teaching Assistantship Applications that are available early each spring semester at the SPS office; are expected to get interviewed by a faculty committee; and are expected to receive mentoring from faculty supervisors. A faculty committee makes recommendations for TAs for the following year. Please, note that the requirement of completing the Seminar in College Teaching may be waived for those who have substantial experience of college teaching through an interview with the Director and a faculty committee. Your program advisor will observe your teaching at least once per academic year and provide you with formative feedback.

The graduate assistantship requires 18 hours of work per week over 17 weeks (15-week semester plus 1 week each before and after class) as the standard. The structure and schedule of hours can be typically negotiated between the student and his or her assigned faculty supervisor. Graduate students must maintain full-time graduate status (enroll in 3-10 credit hours per semester) to be eligible for a departmental assistantship. Students enrolled for dissertation hours only will be allowed to hold an assistantship for a maximum of two (2) semesters provided they are enrolled for a minimum of (6) hours of dissertation each semester. The faculty mentor is responsible for supervision. All supervising faculty members should provide formal feedback

through a student annual evaluation at least once each academic year.

d. Evaluation/Renewal/Termination of Assistantships

As part of the program Annual Review, students who receive an assistantship will be evaluated every spring semester. Faculty will evaluate student performance, professionalism, timeliness, and outcomes in the assistantship. These evaluations will be included in the annual review of doctoral students and included in the continuation letters.

If a faculty member is significantly dissatisfied with a graduate assistant's performance, or, alternatively, if a student is significantly dissatisfied with the conditions of their assistantship, then either party should inform the school Director of the grievance. The school Director should attempt to resolve the matter informally. If this proves insufficient, then the school Director will re-assign the assistantship. However, reassignment may not always be possible in every case, and a student may be reassigned prior to the end of an academic term only in rare and unusual circumstances when really needed.

Assistantships can be revoked for significant causes including the failure to maintain minimum requirements for status as a graduate student; continuing and pervasive neglect of duties; and/or holding full-time or part-time employment within the University without approval of the school Director.

In addition to these school guidelines and policies, the Graduate School has policies related to the requirements and expectations for students receiving graduate assistantships. Students should be responsible to be aware of all these policies and remain in compliance with the University policy.

e. Stipend/Tuition Remission/Fees

Students who receive a full-time assistantship are provided with a stipend and a full tuition and fees waiver for full-time assistantships. Students who receive a part-time assistantship are provided with half tuition and fee waiver and a stipend half the amount of the full-time recipients. Stipend levels are determined by the School and/or University policy. Some fees may not be covered; students are responsible for certain fees. For more information, contact Financial Aid (<https://www.unco.edu/financial-aid/>).

## II. EXPECTATIONS OF PROGRAM FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Successful completion of a doctoral degree in educational psychology necessitates ongoing communication between faculty advisors and students. Faculty serve as instructors, mentors, supervisors, and guides to students in the programs; students serve as learners, mentees, and eventually peers in the program. For this to work effectively, both faculty and students must meet certain expectations. Faculty advisors may provide additional expectations for their students.

**Faculty Expectations:** Faculty supervisors/advisors are expected to hold individual face-to-face (online or in person) supervision for each doctoral student August-May for at least 1-hour per week. Faculty should respond to email communication from their students within 2 business days. Faculty are expected to provide guidance and mentorship on pedagogical, scholarly, and service professional skills to their students. Faculty are expected to encourage and support student's professional and scholarly work; this may include providing feedback on conference submissions, manuscript preparation, and professional development. You should be an active and engaged faculty member by participating in EPSY activities (e.g., EPSY Society, Teaching Circles, CETL workshops). Faculty are expected to approve/deny comprehensive exam project topic but not provide feedback throughout the comprehensive exam process. During the dissertation stage, faculty should provide feedback on dissertation drafts within a timely manner.

**Student Expectations:** Students are expected to attend all supervision meetings prepared to take notes and ask questions. Students should respond to email communication from their advisor within 2 business days. Students are expected to receive and attend to feedback on pedagogical, scholarly, and service skills. Students should be self-motivated but appropriately seek help or guidance. You should be an active and engaged student by participating in some extracurricular activities (e.g., EPSY Society, Teaching Circles, CETL workshops, UNITE). Students must have their comprehensive exam topic approved by their advisor but are expected to complete the comprehensive exam independently. Students should provide faculty with drafts of projects (including dissertation and apprenticeship work) with enough time (2+ weeks) for faculty to complete reviews.



### III. COURSEWORK AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

#### 6. Course Requirements

##### a. Competencies

The coursework in the Educational Psychology PhD program is intended to provide students with breadth and depth of competency in core content. This includes learning, motivation, assessment, measurement, human development, research design, and statistics. Students can also elect to enroll in directed studies (PSY 622) courses to explore specific interests in more depth. Students are required to select a doctoral minor to support knowledge competency in a more specialized area. Doctoral minor options include can be [found by clicking here](#), though we encourage students to minor in applied statistics and research methods; students can select more than one doctoral minor.

##### b. Required course work

The EPSY PhD program is a 68-credit program post-Master's degree.

If you are an MA en route to PhD student, You are required to complete 68-credits for the doctoral program beyond the courses required for your MA degree. You will complete the credit requirements for the MA degree (30 credits) **and** the credit requirements for the PhD (68 credits). The total required credits for a master's en route student is 98. Any overlapping courses (such as PSY 654 or PSY 575) must be substituted for other elective courses in the PhD program. The substituted courses must be noted in your Plan of Study (see p. 13). Work with your advisor to select courses.

If you are accepted to the EPSY PhD program without a strong psychology or education background (as determined by the Graduate Committee), you may be asked to take foundational courses (e.g., PSY 540, SRM 602) before completing required coursework. These foundational courses will apply to your overall credits but not your required program course credits. Your need to take foundational courses will be decided after discussion with your advisor.

#### Degree Requirements – 68 Credits

##### Proseminar – 3 Credits

PSY 705 Proseminar in Doctoral Studies	3
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##### Foundations – 12 Credits

PSY 630 Child and Adolescent Development	3
PSY 644 Motivation in Education	3
PSY 654 Seminar in College Teaching	3
PSY 681 Learning and Instruction	3

##### Diversity and Cultural Awareness – 3 Credits

Select ONE of the following options:

PSY 640 Cultural Issues in Educational Psychology	3
ECLD 593 Language, School and Society	3
ECLD 602 Teaching Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Learners	3
EDF 777 Social Justice in Education Reform	3
HESA 655 Multiculturalism in Higher Education and Student Affairs	3
HESA 665 International Higher Ed and student affairs	3
TIP 527 Social Justice in the Digital Age	3

### **Doctoral Seminar**

PSY 710 Advanced Doctoral Seminar	1
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### **Research Core – 12 Credits**

PSY 600 Graduate Research Methodology	3
PSY 663 Apprenticeship	3-6
PSY 674 Measurement I: Classical Test Theory	3
SRM 700: Advanced Research Methods	3

### **Research Tools – 12 Credits**

Total credits from Research Tool I and II must add up to 12 credits.

#### *Research Tool I: Quantitative Methods – 6-9 Credits*

SRM 603 Statistical Methods II	3
SRM 610 Statistical Methods III	3
Optional additional courses:	
PSY 675: Measurement II: Contemporary Test Theory	3
SRM 608 Experimental Design	3
SRM 625 Applied Multiple Regression Analysis	3
SRM 626 Applied Multilevel Modeling	3
SRM 627 Survey Research Methods	3
SRM 629 Structural Equation Modeling	3

#### *Research Tool II: Qualitative Methods – 3-6 Credits*

SRM 680 Introduction to Qualitative Research	3
Optional additional courses:	
SRM 685 Educational Ethnography	3
SRM 686 Qualitative Case Study Research	3
SRM 687 Narrative Inquiry	3

### **Elective Coursework – 9 Credits**

Discuss with your advisor.	9
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## Dissertation – 16 Credits

PSY 797 Doctoral Proposal Research	4
PSY 799 Doctoral Dissertation	12+

### c. Doctoral Minor

You are encouraged to select a doctoral minor outside of the School of Psychological Sciences to provide more specialized knowledge in an area related to your interests and professional goals. You can select more than one minor (though consider your funding situation), though we encourage all EPSY students to minor in SRM. You can find the list of doctoral minors here (<https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Current/Graduate-Catalog/Graduate-Programs/Doctoral-Minors>). The 9-credits of required elective coursework can be for your doctoral minor.

### d. Credits Hours per Semester

Doctoral students receiving graduate assistantships may take 10 hours of credit each fall and spring semester. Students will only be permitted to exceed this limit under special circumstances, and with approval from the Graduate School. If deemed necessary and with permission of the Program Director, students may apply to the Graduate School for an overload to take additional credits. You should submit the graduate student permit to carry an overload form to the Office of the Registrar (<https://www.unco.edu/registrar/pdf/reg-overload-gr.pdf>). Please, find the detail in the Graduate School (<https://www.unco.edu/registrar/registration/course-load.aspx>).

If students register for fewer than 6 hours in a given semester, they risk the loss of their assistantship. Moreover, students who fail to register for courses or dissertation hours in a given semester will be deemed *Inadequate for Progression* during their yearly evaluation unless extenuating circumstances are present. If you experience extenuating circumstances, you should contact your advisor and the Graduate School, pay a fee, and receive a designation of *Continuous Registration*. You can do this for two semesters after which you must register or become inactive at the Graduate School. Students who fail to register for courses or dissertation hours for two consecutive years (i.e., 2 fall and 2 spring) risk being asked for *Voluntary Resignation* from the program. Students who fail to resign or enroll in credit hours for one year following this evaluation will be *Terminated from the Program*. See more details in the termination policy in this handbook.

### e. Transfer of Credits

For the doctoral degree, students with a master's degree must complete at least 40 hours out of the 68 required hours at the University of Northern Colorado. Students without a master's degree must complete 64 of the 94 required hours at UNCO. Students are highly encouraged to take all relevant core courses at UNCO and enroll in the on-campus sections for the foundational program courses. In general, students will be advised to transfer no more than three courses into the program (though the Graduate School will allow up to eight courses), and these transferred courses must meet standards such as a minimum grade of B (but not B-) and completion of those courses within the past six years. Students who wish to count graduate coursework from other universities must also provide syllabi in English for those courses that they wish to transfer. The Graduate Committee will review the syllabi and render a decision

about transfer courses.

Find the section on Transferring Credit in the Graduate Student Handbook:  
<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/pdf/Graduate-Student-Handbook-082018.pdf>

You can find the graduate policies and procedures of Transfer Credit here:  
<https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Graduate-Catalog/General-Information/Policies-and-Procedures/Transfer-Credit>

To transfer credit, you must complete this Transfer of Credit form:  
<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/pdf/Transfer-of-Credit.pdf>

f. Suggested Course Sequence

Table 1 provides the recommended sequence for full-time doctoral students planning on completing courses in 3 years. This sequence aligns with scheduled course offerings. Students are free to alter this sequence to fit individual interests and needs. Students who are MA en route to PhD will have a more individualized course sequence. You should work closely with your advisor to develop your course sequence.

Table 1. Recommended Course Sequence for Students with an MA/MS

Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
PSY 705 Proseminar in Doctoral Studies	PSY 644 Motivation in Education	PSY 654 Seminar in College Teaching	PSY 674 Measurement I: Classical Test Theory	SRM 700 Advanced Research Methods	PSY 710 Advanced Doctoral Seminar (1 credit)
PSY 600 Graduate Research Methodology	SRM 603 Statistical Methods II	SRM 610 Statistical Methods III	PSY 630 Child and Adolescent Development (odd year) OR Elective course (3 hours; even year)	Course for Research Tools (3 hours)	PSY 630 Child and Adolescent Development (even year) OR Elective course (3 hours; odd year)
PSY 681 Learning & Instruction	PSY 663 Apprenticeship (1-3 hours)	Diversity and Cultural Awareness course	SRM 680 Introduction to Qualitative Research	Elective course (3 hours)	Elective course (3 hours)
PSY 663 Apprenticeship (1-3 hours)					

## 7. Advising and the Development of a Plan of Study

- You should meet regularly with your program advisor. Your advisor will provide course suggestions and professional mentorship.
- By the end of your second semester in the program, you should submit a Plan of Study to the Graduate School (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/pdf/Plan-of-Study.pdf>). The Plan of Study lists the courses that you will take during your program and is an official university document. Your plan will be converted to a Degree Works file for you and your advisor on Ursa. Work with your advisor to develop this plan. Course substitutions and transfer credits must be noted on your Plan of Study.
  - Note: courses submitted on your Plan of Study are required unless you and your advisor submit a modification. You can complete courses not listed on your Plan of Study without submitting a modification.

## 8. Research Requirements

- While coursework provides a solid foundation for knowledge and skills, earning a **PhD** requires completing and communicating high-quality research products. It is expected that you will practice and develop research skills throughout the program through both supervised and independent research projects that are disseminated to the scholarly community.
- Research Apprenticeship: During your first year in the program, you must complete a required Research Apprenticeship (PSY 663). This Apprenticeship serves to introduce you to your advisor's research, expose you to the research process at the doctoral level, and provide opportunities for you to begin disseminating scholarship as a coauthor.
- Course Projects: We encourage students to thoughtfully consider the projects you complete in your courses, as these projects can be steppingstones for larger research agendas. It is quite common for students in our program to earn conference presentations and article publications from class projects.
- Table 2 below shows the research requirements for each year in the program.

Table 2. Progressive Research Requirements

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
UNCO Research Day/Research Evening/Research Night presentation	X	X	X	X*	X*
Coauthor on regional conference submission	X*	X	X	X*	X*
Lead author on regional conference submission		X*	X	X*	X*
Coauthor on national conference submission		X*	X	X	X

Lead author on national conference submission			X	X	X
Coauthor on international conference submission			X*	X*	X*
Lead author on international conference submission				X*	X*
Coauthor on publication submission		X*	X	X	X
Lead author on publication submission			X*	X	X
Lead author on internal grant submission		X*	X	X	X
Lead author on external grant submission			X*	X*	X*

\*Recommended but not required.

## 9. Student Evaluations

- Annual Review
  - Student performance and progress in the program learning outcomes and research requirements is evaluated annually through both a self-evaluation and a faculty evaluation. Each spring, students and faculty will complete an Annual Student Review that will allow you to reflect on your progress and allow faculty to review your development, performance, progress, and outcomes. The review will be completed online and includes self-evaluation of performance in program learning outcomes, questions pertaining to professional activity, and request for an updated curriculum vita (CV). All School of Psychological Sciences faculty and staff complete a similar survey and evaluate your performance of program learning outcomes and professional skills and identify your strengths and weaknesses as a student, teacher, and scholar.
  - The program **faculty** review all materials and provide students with feedback in a letter of continuation in May of each year. The letter explains faculty- and self-evaluation of your performance and progress, provides a summary of your annual progress, and states any specific actions that must be taken for program continuation (if applicable).
  - Students who do not complete the self-evaluation will still be evaluated by the Graduate Committee, and it is noted in your continuation letter as an “area of concern.”

- Please note that Annual Student Reviews are completed for all students, regardless of their level in the program (including students who are ABD).
- Continuous Review  
Through a process of continuous review, you will receive formative feedback from your program advisor and the Graduate Committee on all aspects of your performance. It is expected that you will grow throughout the program and will be receptive to feedback intended to foster and support that growth.

#### 10. Termination Policy

- Program faculty and the Graduate Committee will provide you with formative and summative feedback on your progression through the program. If termination from the program is deemed necessary, the Graduate Coordinator will contact you via email to inform you of the Committee's decision. The Graduate Coordinator will also inform the Graduate School of the decision to terminate.
- Students who receive "areas of concern" in their continuation letter and do not complete the stated required actions within the designated time will be *Terminated from the Program*. Students who fail to register for courses or dissertation hours in a given semester will be deemed *Inadequate for Progression* during their yearly evaluation unless extenuating circumstances are present. If you experience extenuating circumstances, you should contact your advisor and the Graduate School, pay a fee, and receive a designation of *Continuous Registration*. You can do this for two semesters after which you must register or become inactive from the Graduate School. Students who fail to register for courses or dissertation hours for two consecutive years (i.e., 2 fall and 2 spring) risk being asked for *Voluntary Resignation* from the program. Students who fail to resign or enroll in credit hours for one year following this evaluation will be *Terminated from the Program*.

#### 11. Grievance Policy

- If you have a grievance to register about the program, please begin with the program director and/or faculty. The next level would be the School of Psychological Sciences Director, and then the Dean of the College of Education & Behavioral Science.
- If you have a grievance to register about a program decision (i.e., annual review outcome, termination), please contact the Graduate School to discuss official grievance policies.

## IV. DOCTORAL COMMITTEE SELECTION, ASSIGNMENT, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 12. Doctoral Committee Selection and Assignment

Students must have an advisor and a doctoral committee (i.e., doctoral dissertation committee) appointed before the written comprehensive exam is taken. Students should begin to build collaborative working relationships with the EPSY faculty members to establish a doctoral committee during the first and second year of their program. First, students should identify a qualified faculty member (i.e., Graduate Faculty Status with Doctoral Research Endorsement) to serve as the chair of this committee. Students are responsible for getting consultation with the faculty members and/or with the graduate coordinator of the EPSY program to establish optimal candidates to serve in the chair role. Also, it is the responsibility of the students to ensure the [university guidelines](#) for formatting a doctoral committee are followed. Once a chair is selected and agreed upon, the student and the chair will work collaboratively to identify a full committee that consists of at least four members. In general, the expectations of Doctoral Committee formation within the Educational Psychology program include:

- Chair (Research Advisor), who must be from within the program/discipline area and must hold a current Doctoral Research Endorsement [DRE] status. Faculty wishing to continue to serve as Research Advisor after retirement must hold a current Emeritus Graduate Faculty status with DRE (EGF/DRE).
- Two Committee Members, at least one of whom must be from the program/discipline area, and who both hold Graduate Faculty status;
- Faculty Representative from outside the School of Psychological Sciences and who holds a current Graduate Faculty status.

Once a committee has been selected, and all members have agreed to serve in their assigned roles, the student in collaboration with the Committee Chair will submit a [Request to Appoint a Doctoral Committee to the Graduate School](#). Once it has been appointed and approved, the student and committee members will receive a letter of confirmation through UNC email. You are allowed to change your committee membership or roles (faculty representative, co-research advisor, committee member); this requires a completed [change of committee membership form](#) sent to the Graduate School

### 13. Doctoral Committee Responsibilities

Members of EPSY doctoral committee are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings and provide appropriate guidance and feedback to the student. This includes both written feedback on proposals and final drafts, as well as content-related guidance. Role responsibilities include:

**Chair:** the Chair will serve as the primary research advisor to the student and should meet regularly with the student to provide mentorship, feedback, and support. The Chair should have expertise in the selected topic.

**Committee Members:** the two Committee Members will serve as advisory members to the student. Throughout the student's dissertation, they should seek the Committee Members for guidance on the Members' area of expertise (e.g., statistics, curriculum).

**Faculty Representative:** the Faculty Representative serves to ensure the protocols and



policies of the dissertation process are being followed.

## V. COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAMINATIONS

### 14. Comprehensive Exams

- Purpose

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is for students to evidence mastery of educational psychology content and skills through an independent research project. The comprehensive exam is completed near the end of coursework and before the dissertation and is comprised of both a written and oral proposal and defense.

- What is a comprehensive exam?

The comprehensive exam is comprised of an independently completed project, the topic of which your advisor has approved (an official form is not required). Each student is required to complete ONE major project that is an empirical, data-based project, either quantitative or qualitative. The student will coordinate the process with his or her advisor. The project must be approved by the advisor prior to its inception. The project will be primarily the student's own effort, though you may ask questions of your advisor and committee when appropriate. APA format is required. The project will be submitted to a professional conference or for publication upon completion. Submit one copy of your comprehensive exam paper to the members of your committee and one copy to the School of Psychological Sciences Office for your file.

- Timeline

There is a one-year timeline between the proposal and the oral defense of your comprehensive exams. You must complete your defense within one year of your proposal in the following order.

- i. Topic approved by advisor
- ii. Written comprehensive exam proposal passed
- iii. Oral comprehensive exam proposal passed
- iv. Conduct the project
- v. Written comprehensive exam passed
- vi. Oral comprehensive exam passed

- Eligibility

Eligibility for the Written Comprehensive Examination is based upon meeting the following criteria:

- i. Regular admission to the degree program.
- ii. Completion of 36 semester hours (60 semester hours if baccalaureate-only student) of core course work.
- iii. An approved statement of specialization.
- iv. An approved plan of study.
- v. A grade point average of 3.0 in graduate course work.
- vi. Satisfactory annual progress reports from the Educational Psychology Faculty.
- vii. [Appointment of doctoral committee.](#)
- viii. Approval of the program advisor.

Upon meeting the eligibility criteria, students should submit the [Permission to Take Written Comprehensive Examination form](#) and the [Comprehensive Exam Honor Code form](#) to the graduate program administrative assistant in the CEBS advising office.

- Before the written comprehensive examination
  - i. Before beginning work on the data-based comprehensive project and after consultation with the advisor, the student will develop a brief project proposal that is between 750 and 1250 words (5-7 pages) for the Doctoral Committee to review.
  - ii. The student will then schedule an oral defense (~30 minutes) of the written proposal that should include at least two of the three regular committee members (exclusive of the Faculty Representative). You will provide your committee with your written proposal 2 weeks prior to the oral proposal. At the oral proposal, you will present your research proposal and field questions from your committee.
  - iii. Proposal Evaluation: All three regular committee members (excluding the Faculty Representative) must approve the proposal for the student to be allowed to submit the [Permission to Take Written Comprehensive Examination form](#). The Faculty Representative will be sent the proposal and has an option to attend the meeting but will not vote on approval.
    - Your committee will either “approve” or “deny” your project based on the rubric.
    - If you receive an “approve”, you move on to completing your project.
    - If you receive a “deny”, you have an additional opportunity to make improvements and propose again. If you receive a “deny” a second time, you are discontinued in the program.
- Written comprehensive examination
  - i. After completing your project, you will defend your project to your committee in both written (APA-style manuscript) and oral (APA-style conference presentation) formats.
  - ii. Evaluation
    1. The comprehensive paper will be read by all members of the doctoral committee, with the exception of the Faculty Representative. A majority of this committee must pass the project for the student to move on to the Oral Examination. In the case of a tie, the Faculty Representative will read and evaluate the paper.
    2. The Comprehensive Written Examination is evaluated on a pass/fail basis with the results of the examination forwarded to the Graduate School. In the event of failure, one retake of the examination is permitted at the discretion of the student’s committee. The project will be evaluated according to the objectives of the comprehensive examination and the appropriate professional standards. The project will be evaluated as if it were submitted and reviewed in the appropriate professional journal. Specific standards will be determined by the advisor and student prior to the inception of the project. The committee will attend to the project's written form, theoretical rationale, literature review, methodological integrity,

ethical implications, and contributions to theory and educational practice. Documents comprising the comprehensive examination and written feedback from the committee concerning the student's examination will be placed in the student's file in the School of Psychological Sciences. You will be notified by a Written Comprehensive Exam Results form of your results. Allow two weeks for readers to evaluate your comps papers.

3. Guidelines used by faculty to evaluate the project and provide written feedback can be viewed here:
    - [Evaluation Rubric](#)
    - [Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exam Evaluation Form](#)
  4. Your committee will either "pass" or "fail" your comprehensive exam based on the rubric above.
  5. If you "pass", you are advanced to candidacy and are approved to register for PSY 797 (Dissertation Proposal).
  6. If you "fail", you are provided with one additional opportunity to improve your project and defend. If you "fail" a second time, you are discontinued in the program.
- Oral comprehensive examination
    - i. Purpose
 

The purpose of the Comprehensive Oral Examination is to assess the doctoral student's ability to orally communicate with other professionals about their specialization, the results of their research, and the fulfillment of other objectives of the comprehensive examination and the appropriate professional standards. Consequently, the Comprehensive Oral Examination may not be restricted to the project(s) in the Written Comprehensive Examination.
    - ii. Eligibility
 

You should successfully complete the written comprehensive examination before scheduling the oral comprehensive examination.
    - iii. Policies and Procedures
 

You should make sure the policies and procedures of the Graduate School including Check the Graduate School deadline for holding an oral defense.

      1. Complete the [Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination form](#) from the Graduate School website. It requires your advisor's signature. Give a copy to the School of Psychological Sciences for your file and submit the form to the Graduate School.
      2. Work with your advisor and the rest of your committee to find a two-hour meeting time and location (see the administrative assistant in the office to schedule this room). The time and location of your oral will be published by the Graduate School.
      3. Send a copy of your written papers to each of your committee members 2 weeks prior to your oral defense, if they do not already have them.
      4. Before the oral, meet with your advisor to review the expectations for this meeting.
    - iv. Evaluation

At the end of your meeting, you will be asked to step outside the room while your committee discusses your performance. Comprehensive Oral Examinations are evaluated as:

1. pass;
2. will pass if meets stated conditions;
3. unsatisfactory, retake permitted; or
4. unsatisfactory, retake not permitted, program terminated with the results of the examinations forwarded to the Graduate School.

One retake of the oral examination is permitted. (See the Graduate School policies regarding comps in the UNC Bulletin.)

#### 15. Advancement to Dissertation Proposal

- After successfully receiving a “pass” on your comprehensive oral and written exams, your Chair will submit a [Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exam Evaluation Form](#) to the Graduate School. Once you receive confirmation of receipt from the Graduate School in your UNCO email, you can register for PSY 797: Dissertation Proposal hours. This decision should be made in consultation with your Advisor.

## VI. DISSERTATION

### 16. Doctoral Committee

- If the assigned committee from your comprehensive exam is not changing, you can progress to your proposal.
- If the assigned committee from your comprehensive exam is changing, you must complete [the change of committee form](#) and receive confirmation before progressing to your proposal.

### 17. Dissertation Proposal

- a. Before writing dissertation proposal
  - i. A student must successfully pass the written and oral portions of the comprehensive exam before starting the dissertation proposal.
  - ii. You should work with your advisor(s) to select a topic, select a format (conventional or manuscript) and to complete an acceptable proposal.
  - iii. You can find more details on the program webpage.  
<https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-sciences/current-students/doctoral-students/dissertation.aspx#fndtn-tabGettingStarted1-d19e197>
- b. During writing dissertation proposal
  - i. You will draft a dissertation proposal in consultation with your chair. If you have selected a conventional dissertation, your draft will consist of Chapters 1 (Introduction), 2 (Review of Literature), and 3 (Methodology). If you have selected a manuscript dissertation, your draft will consist of multiple introduction, literature review, and methodology sections per manuscript (minimum of two).
  - ii. Make sure that you are familiar with the Graduate School requirements (see the [Thesis and Dissertation Manual](#)) for the format of your proposal). APA format is required, but there are some Graduate School requirements that supersede APA.
  - iii. Your chair will decide when your proposal is ready to be read by the rest of your committee. *Note:* There is no official Graduate School Form to schedule a dissertation proposal meeting. This is done at the discretion of the committee.
  - iv. Your advisor may expect you to schedule a committee meeting to defend your proposal.
- c. After writing dissertation proposals
  - i. Submit a [committee-approved proposal](#) to the Graduate School from your UNC email address along with the following Dissertation Proposal Requirements:
    - A digital copy of your proposal in a MS Word or PDF file may be turned in by email or on a flash drive.
    - [Verification of Research Subject Compliance form](#) signed by you and your Chair (even if you do not need to go through the IRB or IACUC, you must complete this form).
    - IRB Approval
    - Signed signature page (Signatures of the entire dissertation committee are required on the proposal.)
  - ii. A Candidacy Letter will be emailed to your UNC email and a copy will be sent to the committee Chair.

- iii. Once you have received admission to candidacy, you can register for Doctoral Dissertation (PSY 799) hours.
- iv. Upon IRB approval, you may commence with the collection of data and completion of the dissertation.
- v. Submit the [graduation application](#).
- d. Other university guidelines
  - i. The oral defense of the proposal draft cannot coincide with the oral defense of the comprehensive examinations.
  - ii. Students are responsible for being aware of the details in the University guidelines: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/thesis-capstone-dissertation-checklist.aspx>

## 18. Dissertation Defense

- a. Before Dissertation Defense
  - i. University guidelines for dissertation format and deadlines for submission for graduation can be located from the Graduate School:
    - Guidelines: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/thesis-capstone-dissertation-checklist.aspx>
    - Deadlines: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/preparing-for-graduation/graduation-deadlines.aspx>
  - ii. Working with your chair and the rest of your doctoral committee, you will find a two-hour meeting time and location. The student asks the CEBS Graduate Student & Faculty Support Specialist to schedule a room. One member of the committee can attend virtually.
  - iii. Complete the [Request to Schedule a Doctoral Exam form](#) to schedule your Dissertation Defense at least two weeks prior to the requested date. It requires the Chair's signature. This is the same form that you filled out to schedule an oral comprehensive exam. Once approved, it will be scheduled on the [Graduate School Calendar](#) meaning that the time and location of the oral defense will be published by the Graduate School.
  - iv. Provide a copy of your written dissertation to each doctoral committee member for their review no later than 2 weeks prior to the oral defense.
    - a. The goal of the oral defense meeting is for you to defend your written dissertation.
    - b. Before the defense, you should meet with your Chair to review the expectations for this meeting.
- b. During Dissertation Defense
  - i. You should bring signature sheets to the oral defense.
  - ii. You will present your dissertation work to your committee, and they will ask questions about your outcomes, decisions, implications, and findings. At the end of this meeting, you will be asked to step outside the room while the doctoral committee deliberates. A decision will be made as to whether the student passes, passes with conditions (i.e., changes are needed prior to submission to the Graduate School), or does not pass his/her oral dissertation defense. (It is typical for corrections and revisions to be made to the document after the defense.)

- iii. If you do not pass, you are permitted one retake of the oral defense. (See the Graduate School policies in the UNC Bulletin.)
- c. After Dissertation Defense
  - i. Confirm that your committee Chair has reported the results of your Dissertation Defense to the Graduate School by the published deadline.
  - ii. You will then turn in your final dissertation to the Graduate School.
    - Format check: You may schedule an appointment with [Carol.Steward@unco.edu](mailto:Carol.Steward@unco.edu). Please allow 15-30 minutes.
    - Final review: Prior to the deadline, email the following documents to [Carol.Steward@unco.edu](mailto:Carol.Steward@unco.edu) from your UNC email. All committee signatures must be obtained prior to submission of dissertation.
      - Approved dissertation in a .doc or .pdf format
      - [Verification of Research Subject Compliance form](#) with signatures from you and your Chair
      - IRB or IACUC Approval
      - [Thesis, Scholarly Project or Dissertation Processing Form](#).
      - Signed signature pages: Two originals with electronic signatures for the Graduate School.
      - *After all documents are received, it will be 2-3 weeks to complete your review. There is a limit of three reviews per student per semester.*
  - iii. Upon approval, the Graduate School will complete and email a Grad Check to the student through student's Bear Mail.

## VII. POLICY ON DOCTORAL MINORS IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY FOR STUDENTS WITH MAJORS OUTSIDE OF THE DEPARTMENT

### 19. Admission Requirements

The minor will be open to all students who are enrolled in good standing in a doctoral degree program at the University of Northern Colorado. Doctoral students must notify the Educational Psychology program coordinator by submitting: 1) a letter stating their intent to obtain a minor in Educational Psychology, and 2) a letter from their doctoral program advisor indicating approval of the minor.

### 20. Course requirements

Students who pursue a doctoral minor in Educational Psychology are required to take 15 credit-hours (minimum) in the following courses. Students may substitute the required courses with other courses if they are approved by the EPSY graduate program coordinator or the school director. The credit hours associated with an approved doctoral minor count toward the total doctoral degree program hours required only when they overlap with electives or research core requirements. No course is allowed to count for double credit hours. Please, find the Program Requirement in the Graduate School:

<https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Current/Graduate-Catalog/Program-Requirements/Doctoral-Degree-Requirements/Doctoral-Minor>.

<a href="#"><u>PSY 530</u></a>	Life Span Developmental Psychology	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 540</u></a>	Theories and Principles of Learning	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 575</u></a>	Educational Assessment	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 587</u></a>	Social Cognitive Neuroscience	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 590</u></a>	Seminar in History of Psychology	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 630</u></a>	Advanced Child and Adolescent Psychology	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 640</u></a>	Cultural Issues in Education Psychology	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 644</u></a>	Motivation in Education	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 661</u></a>	Trends and Issues in Educational Psychology	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 674</u></a>	Measurement I: Classical Test Theory	3
<a href="#"><u>PSY 681</u></a>	Learning and Instruction	3

### 21. Successful Completion

Completion of the doctoral minor will be indicated on the student's official transcript.



## VIII. APPENDIX A SUGGESTED TIMELINE

This timeline is a standard five-year progression through the program. It does not include summer semesters, though if you are able, you are encouraged to take courses and/or complete research products during the summer months. This timeline can and will be adjusted depending on student background, knowledge, and experiences in consultation with your program advisor.

Year 1 Pre-Fall: Meet with advisor to discuss courses and assistantship

Year 1 Fall: Meet with advisor; begin educational, research, and teaching experiences (see Table 2. Progressive Research Requirement); discuss Plan of Study

Year 1 Spring: Meet with advisor; continue educational, research, and teaching experiences; submit Plan of Study

Year 2 Fall: Meet with advisor; continue educational, teaching, and research experiences

Year 2 Spring: Meet with advisor; continue educational, teaching, and research experiences

Year 3 Fall: Meet with advisor; continue educational, teaching, and research experiences; discuss Committee membership

\* You are eligible to take a comprehensive exam in Year 3 as long as you have completed 36 semester hours of core course work.

Year 3 Spring: Meet with advisor; complete the required course work; continue educational, teaching, and research experiences; submit form and confirm Committee membership

Year 4 Fall: Meet with advisor; continue teaching and research experiences; propose Comprehensive Exam

Year 4 Spring: Meet with advisor; continue teaching and research experiences; submit Request for Doctoral Examination form; defend Comprehensive Exam; submit Results of Doctoral Examination form

Year 5 Fall: Meet with advisor; continue teaching and research experiences; propose Dissertation Project (register for PSY 797)

Year 5 Spring: Meet with advisor; continue teaching and research experiences; apply for graduation; submit Request for Doctoral Examination form; defend Dissertation Project (register for PSY 799); submit required Dissertation paperwork to Graduate School