EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, PH.D.

The Educational Psychology Program offers a number of graduate programs leading to a master's (MA), Educational Specialist (EdS), and PhD degree. The mission of the program is to provide students with a thorough understanding of the theory and research related to the nature of the learner and to the processes of teaching and learning. All degree programs reflect this mission and prepare students for careers as faculty members, researchers, and school practitioners.

The PhD is an advanced research degree and is designed specifically for students interested in careers within academic and research settings. PhD students may develop areas of study in:

- a. learning
- b. motivation
- c. human development
- d. educational neuroscience (an established PhD concentration)

The PhD in Educational Psychology with a concentration in Educational Neuroscience is based on an emerging transdisciplinary field that incorporates findings, methods, and theoretical perspectives from various fields, including cognitive neuroscience, learning sciences, cognitive science, and educational psychology. The concentration is currently open only to educational psychology PhD students. However, graduate students from any program can enroll in the courses offered.

## Admissions

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission an application must include:

- A curriculum vita
- Three reference letters
- A Statement of Purpose that indicates a preferred track (i.e., learning, motivation, development, or educational neuroscience)

The Educational Psychology Ph.D. Program does not require GRE scores for admission, and applications without GRE scores will be given a full review. However, applicants are encouraged to submit GRE scores, especially if they are seeking an assistantship, applying without a master's degree, and/or if they do not have previous post-undergraduate research experience. A composite GRE score of 300 or better is required for all candidates, irrespective of degree program, who are seeking an appointment as a college-sponsored Graduate Assistant.

We will start reviewing all applications on December 15th for fall admission. Please contact the graduate program coordinator if you have any questions.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

## Curricular Requirements

A total of 90 credit hours (including 24 dissertation hours) is required to complete the coursework requirements for the Educational Psychology PhD Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doctoral Required Core Courses (18 hours minimum)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEP 500 Adv Educational Psych</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD 500 Lifespan Human Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEP 501 Proseminar in Ed. Psychology in the first year of PhD or MA studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialization or Concentration Courses (15 hours minimum)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Choose courses based on specialization, including but not limited to BEP, HD, PY, and BEF courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations Courses (12 hours minimum)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>These courses should inform student research at a foundational level, especially covering philosophy, history, or broad epistemological/methodological topics. Such courses may include, but are not limited to, HD, PY, and BEF offerings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEF History and/or Philosophy of Education (Suggested courses include BEF 503, BEF 504, or BEF 510.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BER 631 or Inqy As Interp: Qual I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Electives (6 hours minimum)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives can be any graduate-level course relevant to the student's focus and interests, including but not limited to courses from education, psychology, biology, human development, statistics, or computer science.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation Research</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Hours</strong></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Educational Neuroscience Concentration

**Concentration Courses**

Students in the Educational Neuroscience concentration are expected to fulfill all requirements of the Educational Psychology PhD Program. In addition, they are expected to complete the concentration courses and/or other relevant courses offered by other departments (e.g., human development, psychology, anthropology, and computer science). For the concentration students, the recommended progression is BEP 570 Foundations of Educational Neuroscience and BEP 670 Methods & Trends in Ed. Neuro.

Students choose a combination of courses to meet the minimum credit requirement (15 credits) to complete the Educational Neuroscience concentration. Students will choose from the course list shown in the table below. This list is not exhaustive, and students are encouraged to work with their advisors to develop a suitable plan-of-study.
the following criteria:
the development of the student's competencies and skills according to
Psychology program's comprehensive examination is designed to assess
courses, and received approval from their advisor. The Educational
Educational Psychology Core Courses and all areas of specialization
completed the majority of their coursework, especially all required
examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, a student must have
degrees will be granted. To be eligible to take the comprehensive
to successfully complete written comprehensive examination before
Graduate School information for the
assistant/associate deans of the College of Education.
of study are approved by the program advisory committee, area head, and
degree is not required for initial admission into the doctoral program,
student successfully completes doctoral screening. Although a master’s
discipline). Responses should highlight seminal
papers and people. Each response should include 10-12 pages of text
and approximately 40 references. Note that the prospectus is intended to serve as the basis
for the dissertation proposal.
Scoring of the Comprehensive Exam
• Written: Written exams are scored by faculty members. There
are seven scoring categories: evidence of knowledge, accuracy,
adequacy, depth, organization and flow, grammar, and format (e.g.,
APA style). Each category is scored 1-5, but the first five categories
are weighted two points while the other two are weighted one point.
A student must average 3.0 or more on each response to pass the
written exam.
• Oral: Oral exams are scored by prospective dissertation committees
(see Dissertation Proposal subsection below for further details about
the committee composition). Each committee member votes (pass/
fail) at the end of the student’s presentation. A student must receive
a majority “pass” votes to pass the oral exam and be deemed to be
capable of conducting independent research.
For further details about the timeline and deadlines, refer to the program
website.
Graduate School information for Comprehensive Exams.
Admission to Candidacy Requirements
PhD students advance to PhD candidacy when they pass their
comprehensive exam.
Graduate School information on Admission to Candidacy.
Continuous Enrollment Policy
Graduate School Policy on Continuous Enrollment.
Dissertation Requirements
Dissertation Proposal
Upon preparation of a dissertation proposal, students should form	heir dissertation committee and the committee should be approved
by the Graduate School. A dissertation committee, with the director
of the dissertation as its chairperson, supervises the preparation of
the dissertation. If the committee chair is not a faculty member of the
Educational Psychology Program, then the co-chair of the committee
should be a program faculty member. The committee shall have not
fewer than five members, all of whom are appointed by the dean of
the Graduate School. At least two committee members should be
Educational Psychology faculty members. All members of a dissertation
committee must hold Graduate Faculty status at UA and must represent
at least two academic departments. The chair of the committee must
be a full member of the Graduate Faculty. A majority of the Dissertation
Committee members must be regular UA faculty.
The proposal involves writing the first three features of the dissertation
– introduction, literature review, and methods. The proposal needs to be
presented orally to the dissertation committee who will provide feedback
and decide whether or not the student can progress to the next stage
by becoming a PhD candidate. This is known as the proposal defense.
Similar to the prospectus, the student will need to take account of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Neuroscience Concentration Courses</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEP 570 Foundations of Educational Neuroscience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEP 670 Methods &amp; Trends in Ed. Neuro.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select One of the following BEP Courses</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEP 641 Learning and Cognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEP 645 Dev Cognitive Neuroscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEP 656 Embod Situated Approaches Edu</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEP 671 Introduction to fMRI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other 600-Level BEP courses with advisor approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select Two of the following courses or consult with your advisor for a course that will best prepare you for the dissertation topic.</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other 600-Level BEP courses with advisor approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PY 650 Cognition And Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PY 655 Seminar in Cognitive Psych</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courses selected with advisor consultation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Hours **15**

Transfer Credit
Students may transfer up to 24 credit hours of coursework from previous
graduate studies, including a completed master’s degree, contingent
upon the relevance of the coursework and the approval of the advisor and
the department chair.

Graduate School information on Transfer Credit.

Doctoral Plan of Study
All Ph.D. students entering the program will be allocated a major advisor
who will represent the student’s major area of study.

Doctoral students are required to file official program of study forms
with the Graduate School at the beginning of graduate studies. These
forms require each student and her or his advisor to list the specific
course requirements necessary for the student’s completion of the
degree. Doctoral programs of study may not be completed until the
student successfully completes doctoral screening. Although a master’s
degree is not required for initial admission into the doctoral program,
the completion of a master’s degree is required before any student may
complete and file the official program of study form. Doctoral programs
of study are approved by the program advisory committee, area head, and
assistant/associate deans of the College of Education.

Graduate School information for the Doctoral Plan of Study.

Comprehensive Exam
All degree students in the Educational Psychology program are required
to successfully complete written comprehensive examination before
the degrees will be granted. To be eligible to take the comprehensive
examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, a student must have
completed the majority of their coursework, especially all required
Educational Psychology Core Courses and all areas of specialization
courses, and received approval from their advisor. The Educational
Psychology program's comprehensive examination is designed to assess
the development of the student's competencies and skills according to
the following criteria:

- **Written**: Students review current and historic literature in two of the
  four major areas of educational psychology (learning, motivation,
development, or neuroscience). Responses should highlight seminal
  papers and people. Each response should include 10-12 pages of text
  and approximately 40 references.
1. The student will need to send the proposal to their dissertation committee to read 10 working days before they attend an oral presentation of it.

2. The student will need to book a room and check availability of their dissertation committee who all need to attend a presentation by the student of their proposal.

3. The student will need to present their proposal to the committee and receive their signatures from all members of the committee.

4. After successfully passing the proposal defense, the student will need to consult with their advisor about dissertation committee feedback, apply to the IRB if it is necessary, start to conduct their project, and write their dissertation.

Dissertation

The dissertation involves completing 5 features of the dissertation – introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion. The dissertation needs to be presented orally to the dissertation committee who will provide feedback and decide whether or not the dissertation of the student is accepted to get a PhD degree. This is known as the dissertation defense. Similar to the proposal, the student will need to take account of the following:

1. The student will need to send the dissertation committee to read 10 working days before they attend an oral presentation of it.

2. The student will need to book a room and check availability of their dissertation committee who all need to attend a presentation by the student of their dissertation.

3. The student will need to present their dissertation to the committee.

The student will need to consult with their advisor about dissertation committee feedback, make necessary corrections on their thesis, get signature from the committee on the presentation form to submit it to the graduate school, and submit their thesis to ProQuest.

Graduate School information on Dissertation Requirements.

Time Limits for Degree Completion

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

Student Progress Requirements

Annual Review

As a way to provide students with evaluation about their progress and appropriate feedback on the direction of their studies, the program faculty conduct a progress review for each student at the end of each academic year. Review materials, including a summary of achievements in domains of teaching, research, and/or service and an up-to-date CV should be submitted to the Educational Psychology program coordinator at the end of each academic year. A request for these materials and a submission deadline will be provided during the Spring semesters. Once the faculty have reviewed these materials, they will make recommendations regarding the student’s continued progress in their Program of Study.

Additional Academic Requirements

1. Obtain a grade of A or B in all coursework

2. Produce one research or evaluation effort (e.g., presentation of a paper to a professional conference or have an article accepted for publication). Note that this is a minimal requirement—consult with your advisor to develop a more optimal plan

3. Pass First Year Review

4. Plan Ph.D. program with Program Chair and Program Committee

5. Pass written and oral comprehensive examinations