



**Learning Sciences
Graduate Student Handbook
2011-2012**

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[**Note:** Information about university rules and requirements provided in this Handbook is intended for students’ convenience. They are not meant to be complete and may not reflect current regulations. The TAMU Graduate Catalog and the Office of Graduate provide a comprehensive and definitive account of all matters governing graduate study at this university. University policy dictates that “Each student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with and to comply with the *Texas A&M University Student Rules*”

<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>. Other pertinent information can be found at <http://www.tamu.edu/academics/>.]

I. The Department of Educational Psychology

The Department of Educational Psychology is one of four departments in the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD). The heads of the various departments work with the Dean of the College and Human Development on matters of departmental or college interest.

At the graduate level, the department offers the Master of Science, Master of Education, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Students can specialize in Bilingual Education, Counseling Psychology, *Learning Sciences*, Special Education, and School Psychology. In addition to department and program requirements, graduate study in the CEHD is subject to the administrative control of the Office of Graduate Studies.

In addition to its graduate programs, the department offers undergraduate courses designed to assist prospective educators and other students understand creativity, Hispanic bilingual education, human learning and development, special education, and statistics. These courses are presented as a service to students who are majoring in various fields of study other than educational psychology and who require these service courses for teacher certification with the Texas Education Agency or similar agencies in other states.

II. Educational Psychology Faculty

Currently, there are 47 faculty members in the Department of Educational Psychology (<http://directory.cehd.tamu.edu/?sortby=&dept=EPSY&g=10>), 10 of whom are within the LS program. The academic backgrounds and research interests of LS faculty members are listed below. In addition, students and faculty in the program work closely with faculty in other programs and departments.

Learning Sciences Faculty

Ernest T. Goetz, PhD
University of California, Urbana-Champaign (1977)
Professor & LS Program Coordinator

Robert Hall, PhD
University of California at Los Angeles (1977)
Associate Professor

Joyce Juntune, PhD
Instructional Associate Professor
Texas A&M University
(1977)

Oi-Man Kwok, PhD
Arizona State University (2005)
Associate Professor

Jeffrey Liew, PhD
Arizona State University (2005)
Associate Professor

Professional and Research Interests

Text Comprehension & Memory
Learning and Study Strategies
Cognition, Motivation, and Instruction
Imagery and Emotional Response in
Reading

Research, Methods, and Statistics
Information Processing
Individual Differences

Intelligence and Creativity
Gifted and Talented Education
Classroom Instruction

Multilevel Modeling
Structural Equation Modeling

Child and Adolescent Development
Emotion and Self-Regulation
Self-directed Learning

Susan Pederson, PhD
University of Texas-Austin (2000)
Associate Professor

Educational Technology
Instructional Design
Multimedia Design

Laura Stough, PhD
University of Texas-Austin (1993)
Associate Professor

Effective Instruction
Behavior Management
Moderate/Severe Disabilities
International Education

Bruce Thompson, Ed.D.
University of Houston (1976)
Distinguished Professor

Measurement
Multivariate Statistics
Research Design

Victor L. Willson, PhD
University of Colorado (1973)
Professor & Department Head

Research & Measurement
Cognitive Psychology
Gifted & Talented Education

Robert S. (Jay) Woodward, Jr., PhD
Texas A&M University (2000)
Lecturer

Creativity Theory and Cultivation
Gifted and Talented Education
Adolescent Development
Cognition

Myeongsun Yoon, PhD
Arizona State University (2007)
Assistant Professor

Categorical data analysis
Measurement invariance
Psychometrics
Structural equation modeling

III. Academic Advisor

Kristie Stramaski, the Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) Academic Advisor, and her staff are located in the department office in Room 704 EDCT. They provide help with the following:

- Applications and advising for EPSY programs.
- Registration.
 - Information and assistance
 - Drop/Add forms
 - Q-drop
 - In-absentia registration and information
- Deadlines, information, and forms.
 - Written and oral preliminary examinations (doctoral students only)
 - Final examinations (masters and doctoral)
 - Dissertations and theses
 - Graduation
- Procurement of rooms for student Advisory Committee meetings.
- Grade sheets for teaching assistants and faculty.
- Maintenance of student records.
- Grade changes (through instructors).
- Variable credit course enrollment (e.g., EPSY 485, 683, 685).
- Student Information Management System (SIMS): Current information such as enrollment, grades, and student status.
- PhD qualifying exam information.

- Master's exams and theses
- Records of addresses and phone numbers of current graduate students.
- Applications for professional organizations.
- Information about regulations and services for international students.

IV. Learning Sciences Program Philosophy

The Learning Sciences program is based on the belief that psychological theory and empirical research can inform and improve education by increasing our understanding of how people learn, develop, think, and solve problems; and how instruction and technology influence these processes. Development and application of measurement statistical methods to facilitate empirical research on these issues also are viewed as crucial. Graduate study in Learning Sciences is based on the *apprentice scholar* model, in which students acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to function as faculty, researchers, and other educational professionals and leaders.

Structured around a core of courses common to all students in the program, Learning Sciences permits students to build an interdisciplinary program of study that meets their individual needs and professional objectives. Learning Sciences students can specialize in **Learners and Learning Environments (LLE)** or **Research, Measurement, and Statistics (RMS)**.

Graduate study in Learning Sciences is based on the Apprentice Scholar model, in which students not only become immersed in the literature outlining what is known, but in the process of exploring what is yet to be learned. Learning Sciences students actively participate in research designed to advance our understanding of these issues, and in the development and evaluation of applications based on theory and research in the learning sciences. Through these experiences, together with the courses that support them, students acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need as university faculty, researchers, and leaders in schools, business, and industry. Learning Sciences enables students, with the guidance of faculty mentors, to build a program of study that meets their individual needs and professional objectives.

V. Learning Sciences Missions and Learning Outcome Goals

A. Missions

The missions of the Learning Sciences (LS) program are to:

- Contribute to the advancement of understanding of:
 - developmental, learning, cognitive, creative, motivational, and instructional processes;
 - influences and implications of diversity in people's social, cultural, linguistic, and home backgrounds and their intellectual, creative, and other talents;
 - characteristics of effective educational technology and the processes involved as learners interact with this technology; and
 - research, measurement, and statistical techniques appropriate for use in education and the social sciences.
- Develop and evaluate applications based on theory and research in these domains.
- Prepare scholars who will provide leadership in the development, application, and dissemination of knowledge in the Learning Sciences as defined above.
- Support the preparation of scholars and educational leaders from other programs and departments by providing essential instruction and training.

B. Learning Outcome Goals

Graduate training in Learning Sciences is directed toward the following learning outcomes:

Research Skills

Learning Sciences doctoral students will be able to:

- acquire, analyze, interpret, critique, and synthesize pertinent information from a broad range of relevant social science literatures.
- conceptualize, develop, evaluate, and select research questions and hypotheses.
- develop appropriate means of investigating research questions and hypotheses.
- conduct research following legal and ethical practices.
- develop appropriate means of analyzing and interpreting research results.
- prepare research reports and presentations that effectively communicate findings and conclusions to a variety of audiences in formats appropriate to the outlet and/or setting.
- apply conceptual, theoretical, and empirical knowledge to improve practice.
- design and develop proposals to funding sources.

Knowledge of Learning Sciences

Learning Sciences doctoral students will demonstrate comprehension and application of:

- learning, cognitive, developmental, creative, motivational, and instructional processes.
- characteristics of effective educational technology and the processes involved as learners interact with this technology.
- research, measurement, and statistical techniques appropriate for use in education and the social sciences.
- assessment and evaluation techniques appropriate to diverse learners and contexts.

Diversity

Learning Sciences students will:

- understand the influences and implications of diversity in people (e.g., social, cultural, linguistic, home backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, cognitive and physical abilities).
- demonstrate the ability to communicate and work effectively with diverse individuals across different settings.
- apply research and interventions that respect diversity in people (e.g., social, cultural, linguistic, home backgrounds, gender, sexual, orientation).
- create research and intervention environments of respect and rapport that foster a positive climate.

VI. Program Planning

The Learning Sciences program offers MEd, MS, and PhD degrees in Educational Psychology. Degree plans for MS students typically place a greater emphasis on research than MEd degrees, and most MS students in Learning Sciences complete a research project culminating in a thesis. Information on the University requirements and regulations regarding these degrees can be found in the TAMU *Graduate Catalog*. These catalogs are available online at:

<http://www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/>

They can also be obtained in the Graduate Advisors office.

Program planning and course selection are done with the guidance of the student's Temporary Advisor or the Chair of the Student Advisory Committee. Each student is encouraged to develop an overall plan detailing the semester-by-semester sequence of courses to be taken. Flexibility is necessary, however, because some change in the availability and timing of course offerings is likely, and student interests may change. Prerequisite courses and LS core courses should be scheduled early in the program. ***Research, measurement, and statistics classes should begin as soon as possible and be completed before students begin work on a thesis or dissertation.***

The university requires that MEd students complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of approved courses. For MS students, the minimum is 30 hours, but additional coursework may be required for the completion of a

thesis. For PhD students who have completed a master's degree, the minimum number of credit hours is 64; those entering with a baccalaureate degree only must complete at least 96 hours. The maximum academic load in the fall and spring for TAMU graduate students is 17-18 credit hours, but the recommended course load for most graduate students is 12-16 credit hours. All students are encouraged to keep their course loads manageable to enhance the learning process. Students who work outside the university or for whom English is a second language may find it beneficial to take fewer classes. Students on assistantships and fellowships and others who wish to retain full-time enrollment are required to take a minimum of 9 credit hours during the Fall and Spring terms; for Summer, they are required to take a total of 6 credits. Students must be registered for at least one hour of credit in order to maintain continuous enrollment. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment can lead to the termination of enrollment requiring the student to reapply for admission. In addition, there is a ceiling on graduate course credits allowable with in-state tuition; after 99 credit hours, all doctoral students (regardless of state residency) are charged out-of-state tuition.

A. Degree Plan

All graduate students are required to file an official degree plan with the Office of Graduate Students. Master's students are required to submit their degree plan during the semester they will complete 18 hours of coursework; for doctoral students, the plan is filed when they are completing 36 hours of coursework.

Before they can file a degree plan, students must form an Advisory Committee. The first step is to select the Chair of the committee. As discussed in section VII of this *Handbook*, students are not obligated to retain their Temporary Advisor the Advisory Committee Chair, although this often occurs. Requirements for membership of the committee are described in Section VII.

Filing and approval of degree plans is done on line. Students access the degree plan website through the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) website:

<http://ogs.tamu.edu/>

Once filed, the degree plan is reviewed by members of the student's Advisory Committee. If approved by the Committee, it must approved by the Department Head. OGS is the final stop in the approval process, but degree plans that come out of this department rarely encounter difficulties at that level. Students are responsible for ensuring that their degree plan is approved and accepted by the appropriate deadline.

Once the degree plan has been filed and approved, any subsequent changes in courses or committee must be made by filing a petition that outlines the changes with supporting reasons. The process is the same as for degree plans.

The core courses for Learning Sciences doctoral students are presented in Appendix A. These courses also serve as a guide in constructing degree plans for MEd and MS students. The number of required courses is sufficiently low that students have a great deal of freedom in designing a degree plan that suites their individual interests and professional plans.

B. Prior Graduate Coursework

Some new students have taken a considerable number of graduate hours in educational psychology and related fields. The Learning Sciences faculty believe there are so many exciting learning opportunities at A&M, both within and outside the Educational Psychology Department, that we do not want students to take courses that cover content previously mastered. On the other hand, we want to be sure that all graduates of our program possess the scientific and theoretical perspectives and the research competencies necessary to fulfill the roles we anticipate for our graduates. If a student believes he or she has met a course requirement in previous graduate course work, the student meets with a faculty member in our department who teaches the course in question. At the meeting, students present syllabi and examples of their work from the previous course. Faculty members have the option of requiring that the student demonstrate essential course competencies (e.g., by taking an examination, demonstrating a skill) prior to waiving a course requirement. If that faculty member believes the student has performed successfully in a course that is substantially equivalent to the course offered in this department, the faculty member indicates approval for waiving that course requirement by initialing the form. If

the course in question is taught outside the Department of Education Psychology, your advisor can make a determination as to whether you have met this requirement through prior course work and initial the form. When the student's degree plan is complete, this form should be placed in the student's file. Note that the number of hours of credit that can be transferred in is governed by University rules explained in the *Graduate Catalog* (http://catalog.tamu.edu/pdfs/GRAD_catalog11_12.pdf).

C. Research Experiences

Students are encouraged to engage in a broad range of research experiences prior to beginning their dissertation or thesis. Students should begin working with faculty on their research projects during their first or second semester in the program. Students may wish to work with a variety of faculty during their graduate studies to broaden their research apprenticeship experiences. Student initiated research, under faculty supervision, also is encouraged. The goal of the research team is to give students hands-on experience in a range of research activities prior to the dissertation or thesis experience. In addition, active participation in such research activities can lead to authorship credit on conference presentations and publications depending on the level of contribution.

A wide variety of research is conducted in the Department of Educational Psychology. Much of this research is grant related, while others reflect the research interests of departmental faculty and students who have not received such funds. Research teams support most research efforts and generally welcome new members to the teams. Doctoral programs in the department have varying requirements for participation in research, but all graduate students are encouraged to participate in research throughout their graduate career in preparation for the research required by their dissertation topic.

The Department of Educational Psychology has established research requirements for all doctoral students. The policy anticipates that all students will participate in research before completing work on a dissertation. Both conference presentations and submission of articles are encouraged. This policy is described in greater detail in Appendix B.

All students participating in research with human subjects must receive the training required by the Instructional Review Board (IRB) of the TAMU Office of Research Compliance prior to the initiation of their activities. In addition, all research involving human subjects must be approved by the IRB regardless of funding status. Information and forms related to IRB training and proposal submission are available at: <http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu/irb/welcome>.

VII. Advisors and Advising

A. Temporary Advisor's Role

Upon admission to the department, all students are assigned a temporary advisor by their program faculty. The role of the advisor is to assist students in interpreting university, departmental, and program regulations and requirements and help them plan their studies. Please consult with your temporary advisor prior to registering for the first semester of classes.

Individual students and faculty may differ somewhat in their interpretations of the advising role, and faculty differ in the demands of their schedules. Therefore, once students have begun their studies, they can change their temporary advisors with the mutual agreement of the faculty involved. Mentoring relationships evolve over time and occur partly as a function of the personalities and of changing research interests of students and faculty. Therefore, a student's temporary advisor may not prove to be the best Advisory Committee Chair, and students may wish to change Chairs once the focus of their dissertation or thesis becomes clearer. Changes in other members of the Advisory Committee members may be made for the same reasons.

B. Role of Student's Chair and Advisory Committee

The Chair or one of the Co-Chairs of your Advisory Committee must be a member of the departmental with full Graduate Faculty status. Advisory Committees must have at least three members for MEd and MS students,

and at least four members, one of whom is from another department, for PhD students. When students inquire with a faculty member about serving as Chair or Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee, they engage in a dialogue to determine if such a relationship is a good match based on their research interests and other factors. Together, the Student and the Chair or Co-Chairs determine which faculty should be asked to serve as the other members of the Advisory Committee. Potential Advisory Committee members are typically chosen on the basis of their expertise, although other factors may be considered. The student then meets with the identified faculty members to discuss their willingness to serve on the Committee. Once the membership of the Advisory Committee has been determined, potential changes of the Chairs or members, resulting from changes in the students' research topic or the availability of committee members should be approached in a direct but sensitive manner. In all such discussions, the best interests of the student should be the primary consideration, and there should be no fear of reprisal by the faculty member. Changes in the Chair or member of the Advisory Committee require petitions to the Offices of Graduate Studies.

The student's Advisory Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs) has the primary responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. The Advisory Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs) provides immediate supervision of the student's research and dissertation and determines when it is appropriate to call required meetings of the Advisory Committee and any other meetings considered desirable.

The duties of the Advisory Committee include responsibility for the degree program, dissertation or thesis proposal, preliminary examination (written and oral, doctoral students and some master's students), dissertation or thesis, and final examination. In addition, the Advisory Committee, as individual members and as a group, are responsible for counseling the student on academic matters, and, in the case of academic deficiency, making recommendations to the Learning Sciences faculty for the formulation of a plan to resolve the deficiencies.

Additional information about the role and responsibilities of the Advisor/Chair can be found in the Expectations for Graduate Studies at TAMU:

http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/distance_grad_orientation/expectations-for-graduate-study-at-tamu/

VIII. Evaluation of Student Performance

A. Academic, Ethical, and Professional Expectations of Students

Texas A&M students must follow University rules including those on attendance policies, discipline, and academic dishonesty, including. Student Rules can be found at: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>. Students in the department are expected to maintain high levels of performance in the following areas:

- 1) **Academic performance.** The expectation for academic performance is that the student maintain a grade point average of 3.0 and continuous enrollment to meet the requirements set for good academic standing by the Graduate College as stated in the *Graduate Catalog* (3.0: Student Rules 10.4.3). Students must receive an A or B in order to get credit for completing a course. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate their knowledge effectively through papers, articles, reports, and other forms of written expression as well as tests. Students also are expected to actively participate in research and other activities designed to prepare them to function as scholars and professional leaders. Grades of "Incomplete" (other than those for dissertation and thesis work, which remain incomplete until the student completes the degree) are given only under extenuating circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor. Students can carry forward no more than X credit hours of Incomplete. These grades must be resolved by the end of the following "long" (i.e., fall or spring) semester. Students are responsible for abiding by Texas A&M University Student
- 2) **Academic misconduct.** Students must display the highest level of scholarly integrity in all of their work, both in class and in other activities. Academic misconduct such as plagiarism is a serious offense and will be dealt with accordingly. The sanctions that may ensue are described in section G below. University rules about academic misconduct can be found at: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule20>

- 3) **Ethical behavior.** Students will behave in accordance with the ethical standards of the American Educational Research Associate (AERA) and American Psychological Association (APA):
http://www.aera.net/uploadedFiles/About_AERA/Ethical_Standards/CodeOfEthics%281%29.pdf
<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>
- 4) **Professional behavior.** Students have an obligation to behave in a professional manner. Such professional behavior is exemplified by forming respectful relationships with faculty, staff, other students, and other people with whom they interact.

B. Annual Student Evaluation

Students' Temporary Advisors and Advisory Committees evaluate students' academic progress annually. To facilitate this review, students are required to provide and update the requested information using the on-line student evaluation system each year by March 1 at:

<http://myrecord.cehd.tamu.edu/portal/docreview/>

Students who fail to update their information will be blocked from registering from classes and may be judged to be failing to meet the program requirements for Continuous Program Progress. The student's Temporary Advisor or Advisory Committee is responsible for evaluating the student's progress toward a degree and notifying the student of any concerns. The Temporary Advisor or Advisory Committee can also recommend that the student be placed on probation or dismissed from the program. If such actions are taken, the student will be informed of the reason for the action, and in the case of probation, of the conditions that must be met to resolve the identified deficiency.

C. Overview of Degree Completion Process (Additional information can be found a: http://catalog.tamu.edu/GRAD_catalog09_10/degree_info/index.htm)

Doctoral Students

1). Preliminary Examinations

Doctoral students are required to pass written and oral preliminary examinations, also referred to as comprehensive examinations, as required by the University. The student's Chair and Advisory Committee members will determine the format of the preliminary examination. Although this format may vary according to the requirements of the Advisory Committee, the typical procedures are presented in Appendix C.

2). Dissertation or Thesis Proposal

Every doctoral or MS Thesis student must present a proposal delineating the scope and methodology to be employed in his or her dissertation. The student works with his/her Chair to prepare the proposal which is then shared with the Advisory Committee. At this time, the student will also schedule a proposal meeting at which time the committee members can offer suggestions, request changes, etc. in the proposal. Before beginning his/ her research the student must file an IRB and have the approval of the IRB Office. Department policies regarding the dissertation process, including dissertation proposals, can be found in Appendix D.

3). Dissertation and Final Examination (Dissertation Defense)

The student's dissertation must demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to conceive, develop, conduct, analyze, interpret, and report research at the level expected of a scholar with a PhD degree. At the dissertation defense, the student must present, explain, and justify the dissertation and answer any additional questions to the satisfaction of the Advisory Committee. Following the examination, the student makes any additional changes required by the committee. The final written form of the dissertation must be accepted by the University Thesis Office. Additional information regarding this process can be found at:

<http://thesis.tamu.edu/>

MS Thesis Option Students

MS Thesis Option students conduct a research project and report its results in a thesis. Although the expectations regarding the level of independence and expertise of the thesis are lower for theses than for dissertations, the process for the proposal and final examination are the same as those outlined for PhD students.

MEd and MS Non-Thesis Option Students

MS Non-Thesis Option students must pass a Final Examination that covers all work on the degree plan. At the discretion of the committee, the Final Examination may be written and/or oral.

D. Summary of the Major Steps Required in Fulfilling the PhD Degree

1. Meet with Temporary Advisor to plan courses for first semester and begin preliminary degree planning.
2. Meet with appropriate instructors regarding requests for course waivers (Syllabi needed).
3. Contact a faculty member to request that he/she serve as your Advisory Committee Chair.
4. Work with your Chair to determine other members for your Advisory Committee and refine your degree plan.
5. Complete the on-line University degree plan for Advisory Committee approval.
6. Schedule and pass written and oral preliminary examinations.
7. Complete formal course work listed on degree plan.
8. Receive acceptance of dissertation proposal by Advisory Committee.
9. Secure approval of dissertation research protocol by the IRB.
10. Collect and analyze data and write dissertation.
11. Apply for graduation.
12. Schedule final examination (defense of dissertation).
13. Submit a draft of the dissertation approved by the Advisory Committee Chair or Co-Chairs to the Advisory Committee at least four weeks prior to scheduled final defense.
14. Meet with staff in the Thesis Office regarding formatting.
15. Advisory Committee submits feedback on the draft at least two weeks prior to the final oral.
16. Submit a revised draft of the dissertation based on the feedback received to the Advisory Committee at least one week prior to scheduled final defense.
17. Pass dissertation defense and make any additional revisions required by the Committee.
18. Meet Thesis Office deadlines for submission of dissertation.

E. Summary of the Major Steps Required in Fulfilling a MS Thesis Option Degree

1. Meet with Temporary Advisor to plan courses for first semester and begin preliminary degree planning.
2. Meet with appropriate instructors regarding requests for course waivers (Syllabi needed).
3. Contact a faculty member to request that he or she serve as your Advisory Committee Chair.
4. Work with your Chair to determine other members for your Advisory Committee and refine your degree plan.
5. Complete the on-line University degree plan for Advisory Committee approval.
6. Complete formal course work listed on degree plan.
7. Receive acceptance of thesis proposal by Advisory Committee.
8. Secure approval of thesis research protocol by the IRB.
9. Collect and analyze data and write thesis.
10. Apply for graduation.
11. Schedule final examination (defense of thesis).
12. Submit a draft of the thesis approved by the Advisory Committee Chair or Co-Chairs to the Advisory Committee at least four weeks prior to scheduled final defense.
13. Meet with staff in the Thesis Office regarding formatting.
14. Advisory Committee submits feedback on the draft at least two weeks prior to the final oral.

15. Submit a revised draft of the thesis based on the feedback received to the Advisory Committee at least one week prior to scheduled final defense.
16. Pass thesis defense and make any additional revisions required by the Committee.
17. Meet Thesis Office deadlines for submission of thesis.

F. Summary of the Major Steps Required in Fulfilling MEd or MS Non-Thesis Option Degrees

1. Meet with Temporary Advisor to plan courses for first semester and begin preliminary degree planning.
2. Meet with appropriate instructors regarding requests for course waivers (Syllabi needed).
3. Contact a faculty member to request that he/she serve as your Advisory Committee Chair.
4. Work with your Chair to determine other members for your Advisory Committee and refine your degree plan.
5. Complete the on-line University degree plan for Advisory Committee approval.
6. Complete formal course work detailed on degree plan.
7. Apply for graduation.
8. Schedule and pass the final examination
9. Follow the procedures and timeline outlined above regarding the thesis if completing an MS degree.

G. Continuous Program Progress

Continuation of a student's studies is contingent on meeting the academic, ethical, and professional expectations described above and demonstrating progress toward completion of the degree. Students who fall behind in program sequences and activities will not meet program expectations in this area. In addition, doctoral students are expected to move through the sequence of preliminary exams, proposal meeting, and preparation and defense of the dissertation or thesis in a timely manner. Failure to maintain expectations in one or more of these areas will require the student to meet with program faculty in either a regularly scheduled student review session or a specially called session. In such cases, students will be given an opportunity to explain their circumstances to the faculty. After faculty evaluation of the student, the following actions are available to the faculty:

- 1) A plan for remediation of the problem that is agreed to by the Advisory Committee and the student can be implemented;
- 2) A formal reprimand from the Learning Sciences faculty—with or without a remediation plan or sanctions;
- 3) Formal probation within the program. Such probation would include a written list of tasks that must be accomplished or behaviors that must be displayed by the student during the probationary period and a description of sanctions that would occur if the requirements of the probationary period are not met. Such a probation plan will include a specific time frame in which these behaviors must occur;
- 4) Dismissal from the program.

The sanctions listed above do not have to be applied in any particular order; rather, fairness in determining sanction(s) appropriate to the student problem is the goal. Additional departmental expectations and procedures serve as a general guide as well.

IX. Student Grievance Process

A. Department Grievance Services

Students are encouraged to meet directly with the faculty member involved to try to resolve the problem. If a student has met with the faculty member and the problem has not been resolved, he or she should contact the Ombudsperson.

An EPSY faculty member selected by the Department Head helps students and faculty resolve conflicts and grievances. The current Ombudsperson is Dr. Laura Stough. In the event of a conflict of interest, an alternate faculty member may serve as Ombudsperson. There is also an Ombudsperson at the college level and in the Office of Graduate Studies.

OR:

If a student does not choose to meet with the faculty due to the nature of the problem or the faculty member, he or she can go directly to the Ombudsperson.

B. University Grievance Process

Students unable to resolve their grievance at the department or college level can initiate the TAMU grievance process. Student grievance procedures can be found at:

<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/studentgrievanceprocedures>

X. Student Organizations**A. Educational Psychology Student Organization (EPSO)**

All graduate students in the Department of Educational Psychology are eligible for membership in EPSO. The objectives of EPSO are to foster intellectual and social interactions among students and faculty as well as to provide an opportunity for students' families to interact with each other. In past years, EPSO has sponsored a series of workshops and seminars, trips to conferences, several faculty-student socials and numerous student parties. EPSO members have also been active in campus intramural sports.

Each of the programs in the department has an EPSO representative elected by students in the program representatives. The EPSO representatives participate in governing EPSO and provide student representation at faculty meetings and on faculty committees. The current Learning Sciences EPSO representative is Maria Lazo <mlazo@tamu.edu>.

EPSO dues are \$25 per year. Money earned through dues and fundraisers support approximately nine social functions for all graduate students and faculty in the department. More importantly, money may be available to help students defray costs of students who are attending conferences. Additionally, through EPSO students elect program representatives to faculty committees and meetings.

B. Professional Organizations

Reflecting the diversity of LS students and faculty, they are affiliated with a number of different professional societies, depending on their professional interests and activities. Some of the more common organizations include:

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

AERA (<http://www.aera.net/>) is the most prominent international professional organization dedicated to advancing educational research and its practical application. AERA members represent a broad range of disciplines including anthropology, economics, education, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, sociology, and statistics. Journals published by AERA include *American Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Sciences*, and *Review of Educational Research*. Learning Sciences faculty and students regularly publish in these journals and present papers at the AERA annual meeting. The AERA regional affiliate, **Southwest Educational Research Association (SERA)**, (<http://www.sera-edresearch.org/>) has annual meetings located in close proximity to College Station, providing additional opportunity for student presentations.

Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)

The mission of the AECT (http://www.jobtarget.com/home/index.cfm?site_id=1360) is “to provide international leadership by promoting scholarship and best practices in the creation, use, and management of technologies for effective teaching and learning in a wide range of settings.” With its annual meetings and flagship journal, *Educational Technology Research and Development*, AECT provides publication and presentation opportunities for Learning Sciences students and faculty with an interest in the use of emerging technologies learning and other areas of concentration.

American Psychological Association (APA)

With 55 divisions, the membership and activities of APA (<http://www.apa.org/>) include both research-focused and professional (e.g., Counseling, School) psychology. APA divisions of special interest to Learning Sciences students include: 2. Society for Teaching of Psychology; 3. Experimental Psychology; 5. Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics; 7. Developmental Psychology; and 15. Educational Psychology. Relevant journals include *Developmental Psychology*; *Journal of Educational Psychology*; *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*; *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*; and *Psychological Methods*. In addition to publishing in these journals, Learning Sciences students and faculty can present their research at the annual meetings of APA and those regional and state affiliates, Southwestern Psychological Association (SWPA) and Texas Psychological Association (TPA).

Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)

The purposes of the SRCD (<http://www.srkd.org/>) are to “promote multidisciplinary research in the field of human development, to foster the exchange of information among scientists and other professionals of various disciplines, and to encourage applications of research findings.” Research and training on the role of diversity in human development is one of their areas of focus.

XI. Facilities and Services

A. Departmental of Educational Psychology

The Department of Educational Psychology is housed on the seventh floor and parts of the first and sixth floor of the Harrington Education Center Tower (EDCT).

Educational Research and Evaluation Laboratory (EREL)

The EREL is located in room 718. This facility is designed to assist faculty and students in research design and quantitative analyses. In addition to consultation services, 10 computers with specialized statistical software as well as other standard capabilities are readily for student use.

Counseling and Assessment Clinic (CAC)

The CAC is located in two areas. Counseling services are provided in the Family Health Clinic location (on Texas Avenue in Bryan). Psychological assessments are done in the clinic location on the first floor of Harrington Tower. The CAC offers counseling services on a sliding scale to the local community. Equipped with one-way mirrors and video taping equipment, this clinic provides an excellent setting, as well as a wide array of clients, for practicum training in the program. An extensive test file affords students the opportunity to become acquainted with a wide variety of testing materials. Students can inquire with the CAC Director, Dr. William Rae, about research opportunities that might be afforded by the CAC.

C. TAMU Facilities and Services

Computing Services

The Computing Services Center (CSC) is a service facility dedicated to providing the best possible computation support promptly and at the lowest cost within the available resources. The Center provides a centralized data processing facility for academic, research, and administrative efforts of the University.

Students have access to the main frame computing system (students are assessed a fee for this service each semester). Computers are available for students in the Student Computing Center (located behind the Sterling C. Evans Library), the Academic Computing Center (located in the Blocker Building), and the Teague Computing Center (located in the Teague Building). Assistance is available at each center for those students needing help.

Department of Multicultural Services

The Department of Multicultural Services (<http://aggieculture.tamu.edu/>) provides multiple support services for current and prospective students from underrepresented populations, promoting student success through advocacy, mentoring, academic support, diversity education, and the enhancement of life skills. They also offer diversity education programs that foster inclusive learning environments for all students. The department's multicultural resources include video, audio, and printed material available for staff and student use; outreach programs to faculty and students on cultural diversity and racism in higher education; and *Aggie Culture*, a monthly newsletter promoting multicultural issues, programs and events. Scholarship/fellowship information, extracurricular and academic counseling, a career development institute, and racial and cultural sensitivity and awareness seminars also are offered by the department.

The Memorial Student Center (MSC)

The MSC (<http://www.msc.tamu.edu/>), which is currently undergoing renovation, combines a beautiful facility and a wide variety of services and programs intended to meet the cultural, social and recreational needs of the university community. This facility includes meeting rooms, printing center, the central ticket office, lounges, a cafeteria and snack bar, bookstore, a music listening room, bowling lanes and art galleries.

The MSC Council and Directorate is responsible for producing a wide variety of programs, ranging from ballet to leadership conferences, as well as for providing a laboratory for individual growth and development. All students are invited to become involved in MSC programs and to use the facilities and services of the MSC.

Recreational Facilities

Texas A&M University is generally recognized as having one of the best all-around recreational sports programs in the country, the center piece of which is the Student Rec Center, which is located across the street from Kyle Field. The Rec Center houses a broad array of facilities, including a large and well-equipped exercise room; numerous basketball, handball, and racketball courts; three swimming pools, including an Olympic size indoor pool; a climbing wall; and an archery range. Rec Sports (<http://recsports.tamu.edu>) offers the Intramural Sports Program, Sport Club Program, TAMU Outdoors, and informal recreational and fitness classes. Not only does it provide an opportunity for students to participate in a wide variety of sports activities, but it affords a splendid educational opportunity for the students serving as intramural officials and supervisors. Recreational Sports attempts to provide each student with the opportunity to participate in activities as regularly as his or her time and interests permit. These activities are organized on an individual basis as well as by team, thereby enabling all to participate. Through regular participation, it is hoped that the individual will develop an appreciation of the worthy use of leisure time and a wholesome attitude toward physical activity. For schedules and other information, contact the Recreational Sports Department located in the Read Building behind G. Rollie White Coliseum.

In addition, both Bryan and College Station Parks and Recreation Offices offer year-round recreational services including swimming, baseball, tennis and soccer. For more information, contact the city offices.

Sterling C. Evans Library

Evans Library houses University's principal research collections, numbering over 1,300,000 volumes and the 3,800,000 micro-forms, and is located close to the Harrington Education Center providing. The library provides seating for 4,470 readers. In addition, there are 417 carrels for use by faculty members and doctoral

students engaged in research requiring extensive and constant use of library materials and 572 lockers available for assignment to graduate students.

The library's website (<http://library.tamu.edu/>) provides ready access to an extensive and rapidly growing collection of electronic journals provides direct access to most journal articles of interest to students and faculty. In addition to its extensive print holdings, it provides easy Internet access to a large and rapidly expanding number of professional journals and other documents. TAMU internet services are among the best in the nation. Especially noteworthy is *Get it for me*, which provides access to documents and other media available at TAMU and other universities, including pdf copies of journal articles not available from our electronic journals and book chapters.

Student Services

The university provides a wide array of services for students. A complete listing of these services can be found at:

<http://international.tamu.edu/iss/>

Selected services are listed below:

Adult, Graduate, and Off Campus Services (<http://www.tamu.edu/student-life/>), which provides programs and services to all students who live off campus and for the increasing population of adult (non-traditional) students and graduate students attending Texas A&M University. Resources are made available to assist students in locating and leasing off campus housing and connecting to the university.

Career Planning and Placement Center, which provides a comprehensive on-campus recruiting/interviewing program as well as individual and group counseling services to insure that Texas A&M University graduates are well informed, prepared for the job search and availed of every opportunity to choose from professional alternatives.

The use of the services provided by the Career Planning and Placement Center is limited to students and alumni of Texas A&M University. Seniors and graduate students who wish to use these services should file a record of their qualifications with the Center early in the year during which their university work will be completed. The Center is located on the second floor of the Koldus Building.

International Student Services (<http://international.tamu.edu/iss/>), which helps students deal with cultural adjustment, serves as a liaison between the student and U.S. and foreign government officials, and coordinates the academic and support services for international students.

Office of the Students' Attorney, which offers legal advice and counseling to all students and recognized student organizations on a variety of matters including landlord/tenant problems, consumer protection, auto accident and domestic relations law. Located in Cain Hall.

Student Counseling Service (<http://www.scs.tamu.edu/>), which provides limited duration counseling in the following areas: personal-social, crisis/emergency, marriage/couples, human sexuality, career and group counseling; a career, educational and personal growth information library; test interpretations; and referral to other services. Confidentiality, to the limits provided for by law and judicial decisions, is maintained. Located in Cain Hall.

Student Affairs (<http://studentaffairs.tamu.edu/>), which is responsible for on-campus housing, off-campus programs, withdrawals, student life, orientation, discipline, and other areas of student concern. The offices for the Division of Student Affairs is located in the the Koldus building.

Student Activities (<http://www.scs.tamu.edu/>), which assists approximately 680 student organizations with organizational development, funding and activities. This office also publishes calendars, handbooks and other publications of an informational nature for the university community. Located in the Koldus building.

Student Health Services (<http://shs.tamu.edu/>), which is an accredited ambulatory health care provider serving the Texas A&M University student body by providing primary health care services and promoting health through prevention and education. In addition to doctor's appointments and Immediate Care, Student Health Services offers a variety of specialized clinics including (e.g., Allergy Injections, Preventive Medicine, Physical Therapy, Women's Clinic) and services (e.g., Lab, Pharmacy, Radiology; Dial-a-Nurse, Emergency Medical Services, Health Education). Located in the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

Services for Students with Disabilities (<http://studentlife.tamu.edu/ssd/>), which coordinates accommodations that may be needed in academic areas or residence life to permit students with disabilities to successfully pursue a college education. The office also works closely with the Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC) to assist students with disabilities. Texas A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to its programs. Otherwise qualified disabled students are offered a variety of forms of assistance through the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities located in Koldus, 845-1637. The office, a component of the Department of Student Affairs, Koldus Building.

C. Financial Assistance

The Department of Educational Psychology annually provides assistance for approximately 20 PhD students through appointments to graduate assistant teaching, graduate assistant non-teaching and lecturer positions. Externally funded research and service grants support an even larger number of students. Additionally, a number of students are able to locate assistantships in other departments and agencies on campus. Other financial assistance is available through the Department of Student Financial Aid, located on the second floor of the Pavilion.

Financial aid programs for graduate students include the Robert T. Stafford Loan (formerly the Guaranteed Student Loan), the Perkins Loan (similar to the GSL), the Hinson-Hazelwood Loan, College Work Study, the Texas Public Education Grant and the State Student Incentive Grant. To be considered for all forms of aid available to graduate students, a student must file either the Financial Aid Form (FAF) or the Family Financial Statement (FFS). Additional information about loans can be found at the following web site:

<http://finance.tamu.edu/sfs/>

The Office of Graduate Studies offers a number of grants to support student research: <http://ogs.tamu.edu/prospective-students/funding-information/grants/>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LS Core Curricula

LS Masters Core Curriculum

<i>Course</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
EPSY 602	Educational Psychology	3
EPSY 622	Measurement and Evaluation in Education	3
EPSY 635	Educational Statistics	3
EPSY 636	Techniques of Research	3
Human Development	One of the following:	3
EPSY 646	Issues in Child and Adolescent Development	
EPSY 647	Development and Aging	
EPSY 673	Learning Theories	3
Total*		18

*University Minimum Credit Hour Requirement = 36 for MEd, 32 for MS

LS Doctoral Core Curriculum

<i>Course</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
EPSY 602	Educational Psychology	3
EPSY 622	Measurement and Evaluation in Education	3
EPSY 625	Advanced Behavioral Measurement	3
EPSY 635	Educational Statistics	3
EPSY 636	Techniques of Research	3
EPSY 640	Experimental Design in Education I	3
EPSY 641	Experimental Design in Education II	3
Human Development	One of the following:	
EPSY 646	Issues in Child and Adolescent Development	3
EPSY 647	Development and Aging	3
EPSY 648	Intelligence and Creativity	3
EPSY 673	Learning Theories	3
Qualitative Research 1	One of the following overview courses:	3
EDAD 690	Research Field Methods	
EHRD 651	Models of Epistemology and Inquiry	
SOCI 624	Qualitative Methodology	
Qualitative Research 2	One of the following advanced methods:	3
EDAD 623	Advanced Fieldwork Methods	
EHRD 655	Qualitative Research Methods	
EPSY 637	Qualitative Methods and Analyses	
EPSY 689	Special Topics in Qualitative Research	
Total*		39

*University Minimum Credit Hour Requirement = 64 with Masters Degree, 96 with Baccalaureate

**APPENDIX B: GRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE EXPECTATIONS
FOR PHD STUDENTS**

Department of Educational Psychology Graduate Research Experience Expectations for PhD Students

Values

Within Educational Psychology and its allied professional fields (e.g., Counseling Psychology, School Psychology, Special Education, Career Development Education, Gifted and Talented Education, School Counseling), scientific inquiry (i.e., research) is the most powerful and prominent method for creating new knowledge and testing extant theories. The skills and attitudes of scientific inquiry are also essential to the development and delivery of sound professional services, and directly benefit the clients and constituencies served. Some PhD students will go on to become researchers and teachers, others will go on to become clinicians, administrators, program evaluators, or to fill other professional roles, but all will need the skills and attitudes of scientific inquiry.

Doctoral students must therefore develop the ability to use the methods of scientific inquiry to evaluate information in their field. They must become informed consumers, able to critically evaluate theoretical models and insights, research evidence, and the assumptions, arguments, and interpretations of scholarly discourse.

We also value research as a tool for identifying and solving problems encountered in professional practice. The scientist-practitioner is able to apply the scientific method to recognize and understand problems, formulate plans and strategies for addressing them, and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken.

We also believe that the PhD degree in School Psychology should indicate the student's ability to generate and disseminate (e.g., through professional conferences and journals) new knowledge that contributes to our understanding of important theoretical and/or practical issues and questions in the area of inquiry. This implies both that students are well versed in the knowledge base in their specialty area, and that they have developed facility with all aspects of the research process. It implies that our graduates should be able to function as researchers both independently and collaboratively.

These values guide the following expectations.

Expectations

Doctoral programs should be designed to foster, and advisors should ensure, that students have continuous involvement in research from the beginning of the doctoral program. Involvement in ongoing research projects should present the student with a variety of research roles representing increasing levels of expertise and responsibility as the student progresses. Student research involvement should promote the development and integration of the full spectrum of research skills, including: identifying research needs; formulating research questions; developing a sound design; choosing or creating appropriate procedures and measurement instruments; carrying out procedures, treatments, and interventions with fidelity; collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; and presenting findings and conclusions cogently in both oral and print forums.

Emphasis should be placed on the development of research skills that have applied relevance for the student's probable professional activities. That is, students should be provided with opportunities to develop research skills that can be applied to their role as an expert clinician, program administrator, or other practitioner.

Research mentoring should be provided over the length of the program of study, engaging the student in critical dialogues and providing the guidance needed to move from apprentice to expert researcher. It is fair to view the dissertation as evidence of competence as an independent research only if it is preceded by extended and multiple opportunities for guided instruction and practice with feedback.

The Department expects graduate faculty to provide meaningful, guided opportunities for students to experience all phases of the research enterprise, from problem conceptualization to dissemination. Faculty performance in teaching is evaluated, in part, on the basis of faculty performance in fostering graduate students' development as researchers.

Students' research involvement and evolution should be reviewed annually by the student's doctoral committee and/or program committee, which should provide the student written feedback about his/her progress toward meeting the research expectation. Prior to submitting a dissertation proposal, the student must provide evidence of accomplishment as a researcher in all phases of research, from conceptualization to dissemination. Such evidence will usually include presentations at meetings of professional associations and authorship-level involvement in scholarly publications.

Dissertation proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their potential to advance knowledge and understanding by addressing issues and questions of theoretical and/or practical significance to the student's field. Both the proposal and the dissertation itself must provide evidence that the student has successfully completed the research apprenticeship and acquired the knowledge and skills needed to function as an independent scholar or scientist-practitioner.

APPENDIX C: TYPICAL PROCEDURES FOR PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS AND PROPOSAL MEETINGS

To promote uniformity and rigor of preliminary examinations and improve the quality of dissertation research, Learning Sciences preliminary exams and proposal meetings typically follow the following procedures:

1. The preliminary written examination will consist of a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to the student's intended dissertation topic, culminating with ideas regarding two to three areas where additional research is needed. The review will provide a critical examination of previous research, examining relevant methodological and theoretical issues.
2. Six to 12 months prior to the intended oral preliminary examination date, the student develops a 1-2 page prospectus outlining the focus of and rationale for the literature review for the written preliminary examination.
3. At least four weeks prior to the tentative date of the preliminary oral examination, all Advisory Committee members will receive (a) the literature review and (b) an annotated list of at least 10-20 key sources cited with links to copies of the documents. A copy of answers to additional written examination questions (if any) will be provided to any Advisory Committee member requesting them.
4. Assuming that the student's performance on the written examination is satisfactory, the preliminary oral examination will be announced at least two weeks in advance.
5. The first portion of the meeting, in which the student presents the literature review, will be open to graduate students and faculty who may participate in the questioning and discussion. Following the open portion of the meeting, the Advisory Committee will complete their questioning and deliberations in closed session.

Although the preliminary examination typically will precede the development of a proposal and the proposal meeting, at the discretion of the student's Advisory Committee and with the consent of the student, the two documents and meetings may be combined.

APPENDIX D: POLICIES REGARDING DISSERTATIONS

**Department of Educational Psychology
Policies Regarding Dissertations**

SUBJECT: Policies Regarding Dissertation

1. The dissertation proposal must be presented by the student to his or her Advisory Committee in an open meeting announced two weeks ahead of time with an invitation to attend for other students and faculty.
2. The student, with supervision by the major advisor, must produce an early “polished” draft of the dissertation and present it to the Advisory Committee at least four weeks prior to the planned dissertation defense. Assistance from individual committee members for this early draft may be solicited. The committee should return the draft with corrections within two weeks and recommend whether the defense should be held.
3. The student should tentatively schedule his or her defense with the committee at the time of presenting the early draft, i.e., four weeks ahead of time. If the defense is held, the major advisor must announce it with a letter to the Office of Graduate Studies and copies to the committee members at least two weeks ahead of the date of the defense.
4. The student must present a final draft of the dissertation to his or her Advisory Committee and to the department head at least one week prior to the scheduled dissertation defense.
5. Any additional changes in the dissertation that may result from the defense will be made by the student and approved by the major advisor before it is turned in to the thesis clerk at the library.