



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Learning Sciences

Division of Learning Sciences

Graduate Student Handbook

Master's Programs

2019–2020

*Texas A&M University
Department of Educational Psychology*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

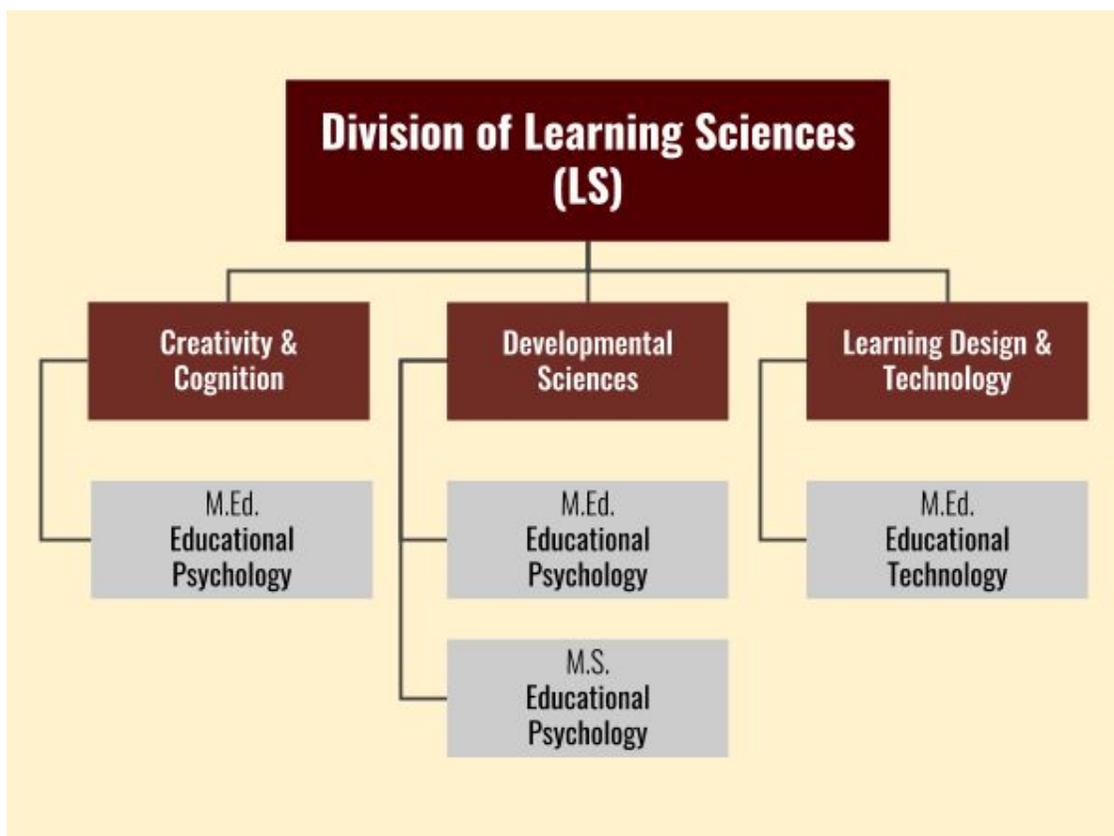
Welcome to the Division of Learning Sciences	2
The Department of Educational Psychology	3
Division of Learning Sciences: Philosophy, Mission, and Vision	4
Active Division of Learning Sciences Faculty	5
Advisors	6-8
Temporary Faculty Advisor	6
Academic Program Advisors	6
Chair and Advisory Committee	7-8
Degree Requirements	9
Degree Plans	10-13
Creativity & Cognition (M.Ed.)	10
Developmental Sciences (M.Ed.)	11
Developmental Sciences (M.S.)	12
Educational Technology (M.Ed.)	13
Additional Information	14-16
Prior Graduate Course Work and Waivers	14
Filing the Degree Plan	14
Email	14
Expectations of Students	14-15
Academic Probation	15
Student Grievance Process	15-16

Welcome to the Division of Learning Sciences

The Learning Sciences Division (LS) operates within the Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) and the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at Texas A&M University. We are excited that you have chosen to enroll in one of our programs and look forward to seeing you grow as a student and scholar as you begin the next phase of your professional preparation! We feature specialized master's programs with emphasis areas in:

- Creativity & Cognition
- Developmental Sciences
- Educational Technology

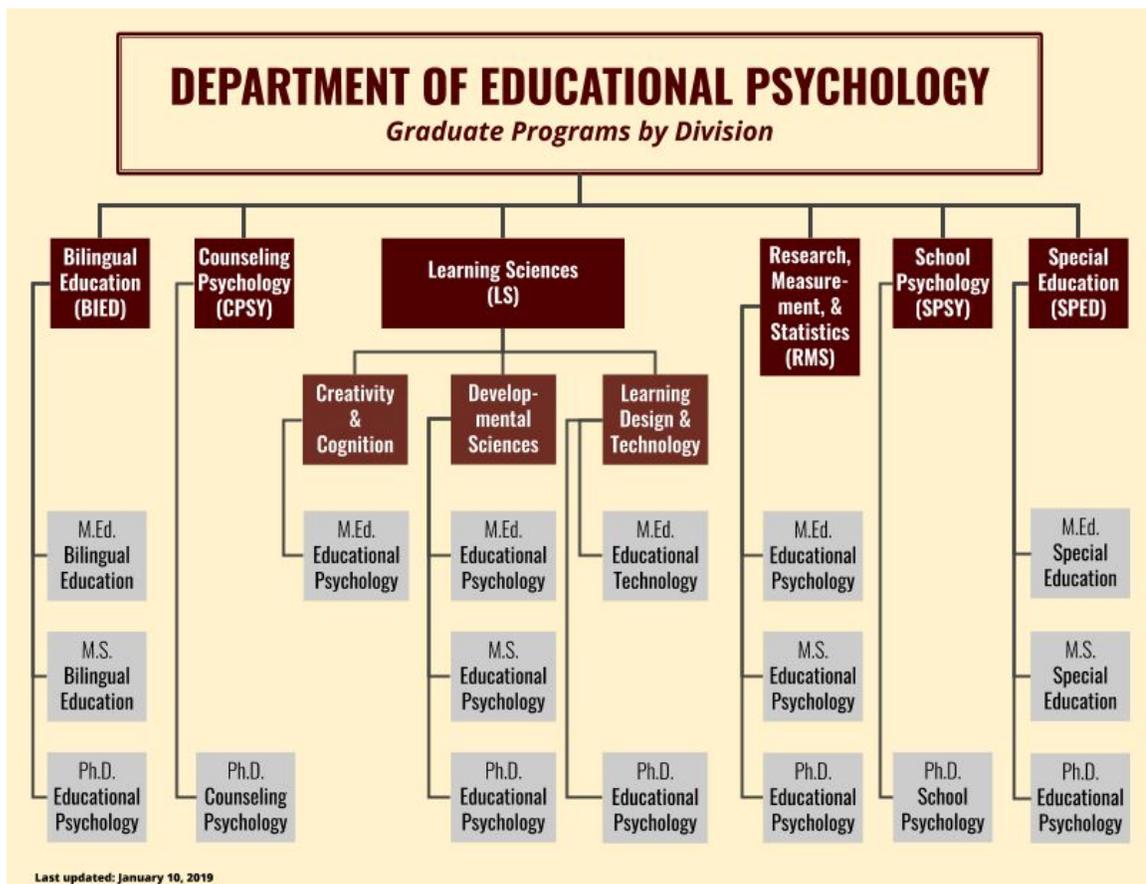
This handbook is meant to acclimate you to the policies and procedures specific to the program in which you are enrolled, and we will begin with an overview of the Department in which the Learning Sciences division is housed. This handbook contains information for newly admitted students regarding the Master's programs, as well as information required by legal statute or the policies of Texas A&M University. Graduate students in the College are subject to the administrative control of the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). More information about the OGS can be found at <http://ogs.tamu.edu/>.



The Department of Educational Psychology

The Department of Educational Psychology is one of four departments in the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD). At the graduate level, the Department of Educational Psychology offers the Master of Education, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Graduate programs are offered in Bilingual Education, Counseling Psychology, Learning Sciences, Research Measurement and Statistics, School Counseling, School Psychology, and Special Education. In addition to department and program requirements, graduate study in the CEHD is subject to the administrative control of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS).

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



Division of Learning Sciences: Philosophy, Mission, and Vision

The Division of Learning Sciences adheres to 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 and statistical methods to facilitate empirical research on these issues are thus crucial.

Our Mission. Our mission is to promote human learning and development. To do so, we develop theory, study new approaches made possible by emerging technologies, and use quantitative and qualitative methods to conduct research, all with the goal of developing innovative real-world applications.

Our Vision. The 21st century brings unique challenges and opportunities for the science of learning and human development. Advances in data analysis techniques, information technology, and biometric technology have considerable implications for the design of learning environments, the goals we set for students, and the tools we use to reach those goals. Building on a robust tradition of interweaving theory, teaching, and research methods, we are an interdisciplinary group of learning and developmental scientists who aim to train and mentor the next-generation of leaders with specializations in Developmental Sciences and in Learning Design and Technology. This specialization will link 21st century technologies with established research on human cognition, learning, and development.

Apprentice Scholar Model. Study in Learning Sciences is based on the apprentice scholar model in which students become immersed not only in knowledge which is known, but also in the process of exploring what is yet to be learned. Under the mentorship of program faculty, Learning Sciences students actively participate in research designed to advance our understanding of human learning, cognition, and development, and the environmental factors that shape them.

We offer three different master's programs:

- Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Developmental Sciences: M.Ed. or M.S.
- Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Creativity and Cognition: M.Ed. (online)
- Educational Technology: M.Ed. (online)

Active Division of Learning Sciences Faculty

Idean Ettekal, PhD | Arizona State University (2016)

Child and Adolescent Development, Social and Emotional Development, Peer Relationships, Bullying and Peer Victimization, Interpersonal Relationships, Developmental Psychopathology

Jeffrey Gagne, PhD | Boston University (2007)

Temperament Development, Self-control and Executive Functioning, Multi-method Assessment, Bio-behavioral Approaches

Joyce Juntune, PhD | Texas A&M University (1997)

Intelligence and Creativity, Gifted and Talented Education, Classroom Instruction

Jeffrey Liew, PhD | Arizona State University (2005)

Child and Adolescent Development, Emotion and Self-Regulation, Motivation and Learning

Susan Pedersen, PhD | University of Texas-Austin (2000)

Educational Games, Immersive Learning Environments

Hector Ramos , PhD | Texas A&M University (2015)

Intelligence and Creativity, Cognitive Fixation, Gifted and Talented Education

Suzanna J. Ramos, PhD | Texas A&M University (2015)

Intelligence and Creativity, Gifted and Talented Education, Classroom Instruction, Qualitative Methodologies

Laura Stough, PhD | The University of Texas at Austin (1993)

Disasters and Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities, Qualitative Methodologies

Noelle Wall Sweany, PhD | The University of Texas at Austin (1999)

Online Teaching & Learning, Emerging Technologies, Mobile Learning, Instructional Design

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

Creativity, Gifted and Talented Education, Positive Youth Development Outcomes, Global Education

Steven Woltering, PhD | University of Toronto (2012)

Self-regulation, Psychopathology, Neuroscience, Development

Advisors

Advisors exist to assist students with a multitude of academic aspects associated with their degree program. The differentiation of advisors along with their respective roles is listed below:

Temporary Faculty Advisor

Upon acceptance to the program, you will be assigned a Temporary Faculty Advisor. This advisor is a member of the Educational Psychology faculty who can initially assist you with:

- Selection of courses for your first year. (Please consult with your Faculty Advisor prior to registering for the first semester of classes.)
- Availability of research programs or specialized opportunities in the department

After beginning your first semester, it is your responsibility to discuss your course choices each semester with your Faculty Advisor each semester prior to registration for Spring (typically around the second week of October) and Fall classes (typically around the second week of March).

Mentoring and advising relationships do evolve over time and research interests of students and faculty may change. Therefore, students are always welcome to change their Faculty Advisor.

Academic Program Advisors

Vincent Maldonado
 Master's Students
 Office: 704 Harrington Tower
 Email: vmaldonado@tamu.edu
 Phone: (979) 845-2337

Additional EPSY Graduate Advisor

Sally Kallina
 Email: skallina@tamu.edu

Academic Advisors can provide you 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.
 - Final examinations
 - 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 tracking of courses, enrollment, and student status.
- PhD qualifying exam information.
- Record of addresses and phone numbers of current graduate students.
- Applications for professional organizations.
- Campus maps and community information.
- Information about regulations and services for international students.

Chair and Advisory Committee

The Chair and advisory committee for students in the Creativity & Cognition Program and the Educational Technology program are pre-selected and remain stable throughout the program. **The following information is for students in the Developmental Sciences M.Ed and M.S. only.**

The Chair or one of the Co-Chairs of your graduate Advisory Committee must be a member of the EPSY department faculty. Advisory Committee Chairs, or at least one of their Co-Chairs, typically work in the student's area of specialization (either Developmental Sciences or Learning Design and Technology). Once the Chair or Co-Chair has been selected, the Student and the Chair or Co-Chairs determine together which faculty should be asked to serve as the other members of the Advisory Committee. 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 and respectful 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 to members 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 academic program of the student. The Advisory Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs) provides primary supervision of the student's preliminary examination and dissertation and determines when it is appropriate to call meetings of the Advisory Committee.

The duties of the Advisory Committee include responsibility for the degree program, thesis proposal, preliminary examinations (written and oral, M.S. students only), 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. Additional information about the role and responsibilities of the Advisor/Chair can be found in the Expectations for Graduate Studies at TAMU: <http://ogaps.tamu.edu/>

Degree Requirements

Required Course Credit Hours

The Division of Learning Sciences offers three specialization areas:

- a) Creativity & Cognition (M.Ed.)
- b) Developmental Sciences (M. Ed. & M.S.)
- c) Educational Technology (M.Ed.)

Though each of these specializations feature common “Foundation” courses, many of the specialization courses differ. In addition, students may choose to accentuate their degree plan with a variety of electives. *All Master’s programs require 36 credit hours to graduate. The Developmental Sciences M.S. program requires 28 credit hours of coursework and a thesis (8 credit hours) for the required 36 hours.*

M.Ed. specific information

All three specializations offer a M. Ed degree. The Creativity & Cognition specialization and the Educational Technology specialization are both offered totally online. The Developmental Sciences specialization is only offered in the traditional on-campus format. All three M.Ed programs require 36 credit hours of coursework. A thesis is not required.

M.S. specific information

The M.S. degree is only offered in the Developmental Sciences specialization and in the traditional on-campus format. The M.S. degree program requires 28 credit hours of coursework with 8 additional credit hours allotted for the completion of a thesis.

**Educational Psychology M.Ed.
 Course Requirements for
 Creativity & Cognition Specialization**

FOUNDATION COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 602	Educational Psychology (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 673	Learning Theories (3 credit hrs.)

SPECIALIZED COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 624	Creative Thinking (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 645	Creative Genius (3 credit hrs.)

RESEARCH COURSES (3-6 credit hours)

At least *one* of the following courses:

EPSY 622	Measurement and Evaluation (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 689	Educational Practices in the Social Sciences (3 credit hrs.)

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK (12-15 credit hours)

Choose from the following:

- EPSY 431: Personal Creativity and Giftedness
- EPSY 432: Creative Problem Solving
- EPSY 433: Lateral Thinking
- EPSY 485: Directed Studies – Understanding Individual and Cultural Differences
- EPSY 489: Special Topics in Educational Psychology: Design Thinking
- EPSY 631: Program Evaluation
- EPSY 659: Field Practicum in Educating the Gifted, Talented, and Highly Creative
- EPSY 689: Survey Research
- EDCT 613: Integrating Technology onto Learning Environments
- EDCT 645: Emerging Technologies for Learning

CAPSTONE COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 683	Capstone I – Field Practicum in Applied Creativity (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 685	Capstone II – Directed Studies: Research Paper (3 credit hrs.)

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- *The Creativity & Cognition Specialization requires a minimum of 36 credits to earn a M.Ed.*
 - *Core course requirements may be waived for students who have successfully completed comparable graduate coursework and/or demonstrate requisite knowledge and skills.*
 - *Additional courses both within and outside of EPSY (including additional courses in learning sciences or research, measurement, and statistics) may count toward elective coursework.*
 - *Students should consult with their advisor or program committee to identify appropriate electives.*

**Educational Psychology M.Ed.
Course Requirements for**

Developmental Sciences Specialization

FOUNDATION COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 602	Educational Psychology (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 673	Learning Theories (3 credit hrs.)

SPECIALIZED COURSES (6-12 credit hours)

At least one of the following courses:

EPSY 606	Motivation and Emotion (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 634	Educational Neuroscience (3 credit hrs.)

At least one of the following courses:

EPSY 646	Issues in Child and Adolescent Development (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 647	Life Span Development (3 credit hrs.)

RESEARCH COURSES (3-6 credit hours)

At least one of the following courses:

EPSY 622	Measurement and Evaluation (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 689	Educational Practices in the Social Sciences

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK (12-21 credit hours)

Choose from the following:

- EPSY 485: Directed Studies – Understanding Individual and Cultural Differences
- EPSY 622: Measurement and Evaluation
- EPSY 631: Program Evaluation
- EPSY 636: Techniques of Research
- EPSY 659: Field Practicum in Educating Gifted, Talented, and Highly Creative
- EPSY 689: Developmental Neurobiology of Learning
- EPSY 689: Social and Emotional Development and Interventions
- EPSY 689: Interpersonal Relationships
- EPSY 689: Temperament, Behavior Problems, and Psychopathology

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- *The Developmental Sciences Specialization requires a minimum of 36 credits to earn a M.Ed.*
 - *Core course requirements may be waived for students who have successfully completed comparable graduate coursework and/or demonstrate requisite knowledge and skills.*
 - *Additional courses both within and outside of EPSY (including additional courses in learning sciences or research, measurement, and statistics) may count toward elective coursework.*
 - *Students should consult with their advisor or program committee to identify appropriate electives.*

**Educational Psychology M.S.
Course Requirements for
Developmental Sciences Specialization**

FOUNDATION COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 602	Educational Psychology (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 673	Learning Theories (3 credit hrs.)

SPECIALIZED COURSES (6-12 credit hours)

At least one of the following courses:

EPSY 606	Motivation and Emotion (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 634	Educational Neuroscience (3 credit hrs.)

At least one of the following courses:

EPSY 646	Issues in Child and Adolescent Development (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 647	Life Span Development (3 credit hrs.)

RESEARCH COURSES (9 credit hours)

EPSY 622	Measurement and Evaluation (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 635	Educational Statistics (3 credit hrs.)
EPSY 636	Techniques of Research (3 credit hrs.)

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK (3 credit hours)

Choose from the following:

- EPSY 485: Directed Studies – Understanding Individual and Cultural Differences
- EPSY 633: Qualitative Research Design
- EPSY 637: Qualitative Grounded Theory
- EPSY 689: Developmental Neurobiology of Learning
- EPSY 689: Social and Emotional Development and Interventions
- EPSY 689: Interpersonal Relationships
- EPSY 689: Temperament, Behavior Problems, and Psychopathology
- EPSY 689: Educational Practices in the Social Sciences

THESIS (8 credit hours)

EPSY 691	Research
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- *The Developmental Sciences Specialization requires a minimum of 32 credits and the completion of a thesis to earn a M.S.*
 - *Core course requirements may be waived for students who have successfully comparable graduate coursework and/or demonstrate requisite knowledge and skills.*
 - *Additional courses both within and outside of EPSY (including additional courses in learning sciences or research, measurement, and statistics) may count toward elective coursework.*
 - *Students have the option to take one graduate-level course outside of the department, with approval.*
 - *Students should consult with their advisor or program committee to identify appropriate electives.*

**Educational Psychology M.Ed.
Course Requirements for
Educational Technology**

FOUNDATION COURSES (6 credit hours)

EPSY 602	Educational Psychology
EPSY 673	Learning Theories

SPECIALIZED COURSES (15 credit hours)

EDTC 602	Educational Technology Field, Theory, and Profession
EDTC 645	Emerging Tech. for Learning I
EDTC 651	E-Learning Design and Development
EDTC 654	Instructional Design
EPSY 689	Educational Practices in the Social Sciences

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK (15 credit hours)

Choose from the following:

- EDTC 608: Online Course Design
- EDTC 613: Integrating Technology in Learning Environments
- EDTC 621: Graphic Communication and Interface Design
- EDTC 631: Educational Video
- EDTC 641: Educational Game Design
- EDTC 642: Designing for Mobile Learning
- EDTC 646: Emerging Technologies for Learning II
- EDTC 655: Instructional Design II
- EDTC 684: Internship
- EPSY 624: Creative Thinking
- EPSY 631: Program Evaluation

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- *The Educational Technology degree requires a minimum of 36 credits to earn a M.Ed.*
 - *Core course requirements may be waived for students who have successfully completed comparable graduate coursework and/or demonstrate requisite knowledge and skills.*
 - *Additional courses both within and outside of EDTC (including additional courses in learning sciences or research, measurement, and statistics) may count toward elective coursework.*
 - *Students have the option to take one graduate-level course outside of the department, with approval.*
 - *Students should consult with their advisor or program committee to identify appropriate electives.*

Additional Information

Prior Graduate Course Work and Waivers

Waiving a course requires the consent of the faculty advisor. Transfer credits are limited to no more than 6 semester hours.

Online Course Restrictions for Developmental Sciences (4 course max)

For students currently enrolled in either the M.Ed. or M.S. Developmental Sciences masters programs, **no more than four courses may be taken by distance education** (online, electronic to group, or off-campus face-to-face) without prior approval of the Department and OGAPS, including non-research credit hours required for the program. Students in the Creativity & Cognition and Educational Technology M.Ed. programs have a waiver exempting them from these restrictions.

Filing the Degree Plan

Please file your program of studies with the OGAPS during the semester you complete 18 hours of coursework by logging on to the OGAPS webpage.

- M.S. students will identify the chair of their committee using either the assigned temporary advisor or any of the faculty teaching in the master's program, after consulting with the chosen faculty member.
- M.Ed. students typically use their Faculty Advisor as their chair. You should discuss your degree plan with your advisor before submitting it to OGAPS.

Email

Upon admission into the University, students will receive a Texas A&M official email address in the format of **NetID@email.tamu.edu**; official correspondence from the University and the Department will be sent to this email addresses. Failure to monitor the official Texas A&M email is not an acceptable excuse for missed deadlines or requirements, and resulting holds or fees will not be lifted for this reason alone.

Expectations of Students

Students are held to the standards of the Student Rules at TAMU (available at student-rules.tamu.edu) and the standards of the Office of Graduate Studies at TAMU. The TAMU Graduate Student Handbook is available at the following website: http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/graduate_student_handbook.

Further, students in EPSY programs are expected to maintain high levels of performance in the following areas:

- **Autonomy.** Graduate students are expected to complete tasks with minimal assistance or support although faculty members are available for mentoring and guidance. The University procedures will be followed in cases where students are placed on probation due to GPRs below 3.0. (Student Rules 12.3 and 12.5)

- **Academic performance.** The expectation for academic performance is that the student maintain a grade point average and continuous enrollment to meet the requirements set for good academic standing (3.0; Student Rules 10.4.3 and as stated in the Graduate Catalog). Although not required in all courses to the same extent, it is expected that students will demonstrate the ability to communicate their knowledge through papers, articles, reports, and other forms of written expression.
- **Ethical behavior.** Students will behave in accordance with professional ethical standards. They are also expected to adhere to the Aggie Honor Code, as promulgated by Texas A&M University. Students are required to be familiar with the TAMU Honor Code policies, which are found at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Academic Probation

Students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA will be placed on academic probation. The student will be notified of the program's concerns in writing. A plan for remediation of the problem that is agreed to by the student and the faculty may be implemented.

Student Grievance Process

In addition to the grievance procedures established by the University, the Department of Educational Psychology has developed, a process known as the Student Advocate. This process (described below) is available for students who disagree with and wish to challenge a faculty member's actions related to the student's participation in EPSY programs.

An EPSY faculty member selected by the Department Head assumes the Student Advocate position. Contact the EPSY office, or the graduate advisor (epsyadvisor@tamu.edu) for the name of the current Student Advocate/Ombudsperson. In the event of a conflict of interest between a student and the current Ombudsperson, an alternate faculty member may fill this role. There is also an Ombudsperson at the College level, as well as one at the Office of Graduate Studies. The following policies were derived by the Student Advocate in consultation with EPSY faculty, students and the department head.

A Graduate Grievance Advisory Committee has been established. The committee is made up of one faculty member and two students. The purpose of this committee is threefold:

1. To advise the Student Advocate concerning policy and issues related to faculty/student relations in EPSY,
2. To forward possible student concerns to the Student Advocate, and
3. To aid in the resolution of student concerns when requested by the Student Advocate.

Pre-condition to Student's Initiation of the Grievance Process:

- Students are encouraged to meet with and attempt to resolve problems with the faculty member. If students have met with the faculty member and the problem has not been resolved, they should contact the Student Advocate or a member of the Grievance Advisory Committee; **or**,
- If students do not choose to meet with the faculty due to the nature of the problem or the faculty member, they also may directly contact the Student Advocate or a member of the Grievance Advisory Committee and initiate the grievance process.

Overview of Grievance Process:

A student who has a faculty-student concern and who has addressed the preconditions for initiation of the grievance process is encouraged to meet with the Student Advocate or Department Ombudsperson. However, a student may choose to meet first with other EPSY faculty member(s). The name and contact information for the current Student Advocate and Department Ombudsperson may be obtained via the Graduate Advisor or by calling the EPSY office at 979-845-1831.

Depending upon the nature of the student's concern, the Student Advocate or Ombudsperson may consult with the identified faculty member, the program coordinator or the department head. At the discretion of the department head, the student's concern may be communicated to the CEHD Dean's office. When there is a discussion of a particular faculty-student concern, maintaining anonymity of the student may not be possible.

Resolution of a student's concern may occur as a result of the following:

1. Student's dialogue with the faculty member, a Grievance Advisory Committee member, the Department Ombudsperson, or the Student Advocate.
2. Student Advocate or Ombudsperson's consultation with the Grievance Advisory Committee and/or discussions with the faculty member.
3. Student Advocate or Ombudsperson's discussion of the student's concern with the program coordinator or the department head. As a result of these discussions, the Student Advocate and/or the department head may confer with the faculty member.
4. Pending the outcome of the above-mentioned #3, or the nature of the student's concern, the department head and/or student may enter into discussion with the CEHD Dean's office and appropriate University committees and administrators.