

# EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY: RESEARCH, MS

This is a named option within the Educational Psychology MS (<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/educational-psychology/educational-psychology-ms/>).

The Department of Educational Psychology offers the master of science and doctor of philosophy degrees in educational psychology. The programs for the MS and PhD in educational psychology provide comprehensive knowledge of the field and intensive specialization in one of three areas of study and research: human development, learning sciences, and quantitative methods. The department also offers MS, EdS, and PhD degrees in School Psychology.

The department provides training in research. Many faculty members in the department conduct controlled research studies with human participants; schools and other agencies in the Madison area cooperate in facilitating such research projects. Principal research facilities include the School of Education's Wisconsin Center for Education Research and the multidisciplinary Waisman Center.

## AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Professors: Bellmore, Enright, Hubbard, Matthews, Short, Starr, Vlach

This Human Development program focuses on individual development, with an emphasis on the beginning of the lifespan and formal schooling years (infancy through young adulthood). The Human Development area's research seeks to make conceptual/theoretical contributions to the understanding of human behavior that can address practical concerns of educators, parents, and others. Special emphasis is placed on considering how diversity in personal backgrounds, contexts, and experiences contribute to the developing person. The graduate program provides a breadth and depth of knowledge about human development and educational psychology and encourages more detailed study in specific interest areas. Early in the program, students learn about general theories and issues in human development, specific developmental processes in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood; as well as associated statistical methods and research practices. In the latter part of the program, students exercise individual choice in selecting courses in subject matter that will broaden or deepen an understanding of developmental processes. Such coursework may also extend to other programs of the university in which there is a research focus in human development.

### LEARNING SCIENCES

Professors: Bell, Karumbaiah, Nathan, Puntambekar, Shaffer, Zhang (Fall 2024)

This program area bridges learning sciences and educational practice. Scholarship encompasses the coordinated design and study of learning environments ranging from preschool to university education, and reaches outside of school to informal contexts for learning, like museums and after-school programs. Faculty interests include the design of technologies as tools for learning, prolonged longitudinal study of relations between teaching and learning, the nature of knowledge in substantive domains of inquiry, like mathematics, science, and composition, and

the analysis of learning using moment-by-moment data about learning processes. The program of study emphasizes an apprenticeship model of scholarship with early engagement in substantive problems of learning and teaching. Students work in concert with faculty to develop research studies in each of the first two years of study. Courses are coordinated to promote the development of research and communication skills so that students can become involved with important problems in educational research. As students progress in the program, they continue to work with faculty, both within and outside of the department, to craft systematic investigations of learning environments.

## QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Professors: Bolt, Kaplan, Kim, Pustejovsky, Wollack

Educational research has a strong tradition of employing state-of-the-art statistical and psychometric (psychological measurement) techniques. Researchers in all areas of education develop measuring instruments, design and conduct experiments and surveys, and analyze data resulting from these activities. Because of this tradition, quantitative methods has long been an area of specialization within educational psychology. Graduates in this area teach, serve as consultants to educational researchers, and conduct research on statistics and psychometrics in education-related fields. Within the program, the quantitative methods area offers the two major specializations of statistics and measurement.

The study of quantitative methods takes advantage of the range of resources at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and includes coursework in statistics, mathematics, and computer sciences, and in other units of the School of Education.

## MS DEGREE PROGRAMS IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY WITH SPECIAL EMPHASES

The special-emphasis master's degree program is designed for individuals who want to improve their knowledge base and skills for functioning in educational settings. The program is built around educator needs and offers a flexible blend of coursework, independent study, and practicum experiences. It is designed to provide the student with an individualized program of theoretical and applied training, tailored to his or her interests, needs, and professional goals.