

Educational Psychology MA Programs

School of Psychological Sciences

University of Northern Colorado

Program Handbook

Updated: 2021

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I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMS

1. Purpose of the Student Handbook

This handbook was created to provide students admitted to the Master's programs in Educational Psychology with information about the policies and procedures for the completion of their master's degree. This handbook covers policies and procedures specific to the Master's program in Educational Psychology. This handbook content may change from year to year. You should make sure that you consult the most recent version of the student handbook for accurate information. Questions about the content can be directed to the graduate coordinator of the Master's program. We have tried to compile all necessary information in this handbook. Additional information can be found at the following websites:

- Graduate Program in Educational Psychology: <https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-sciences/current-students/doctoral-students/>
- School of Psychological Sciences: <https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-sciences/>
- College of Education and Behavior Sciences: <https://www.unco.edu/education-behavioral-sciences/>
- Graduate School: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/>
 - Graduate School Master's Degree Requirements: <https://unco.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Graduate-Catalog/Program-Requirements/Masters-Degree-Requirements>

2. Types of Programs

- Accelerated (4+1) Psychology B.A. and Educational Psychology M.A.

Motivated and high-achieving undergraduate psychology majors may seek to complete the requirements for the B.A. in psychology and the M.A. in educational psychology in five years. To obtain both degrees, students must complete all the requirements for the B.A. described in the Undergraduate Catalog and all of the requirements for the M.A. described in the Graduate Catalog. See the [Catalog](#) for more information.

- On-campus Educational Psychology M.A.

This program is designed to help to develop more effective instructional methods and expertise in occupational learning that will prepare you with the skills and knowledge to be a leader in your field. This degree is open to anyone who are interested in Psychology underlying teaching and learning. The master's degree can be completed in one year or spread out over a longer time period, depending on your needs. The program is offered at our main campus in Greeley, Colorado. See the [Catalog](#) for more information.

- Online Educational Psychology M.A. with Teaching Applications Emphasis

This program is designed specifically for teachers to improve their classroom teaching and real-world learning through practical applications of research to the classroom and hands-on opportunities. You will gain tools that help you optimize teaching and learning processes in the

classroom. You will work closely with expert faculty and collaborate with a cohort of other education professionals in a fully online program. The online program begins each summer term and can be completed in 19 months. Please note that this degree does not include licensure. See the [Catalog](#) for more information.

3. Governance

a. Graduate Committee in Educational Psychology

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

b. Graduate Student Representative on Graduate Committee

To ensure student representation on the Graduate Committee, each year one graduate student may be selected by the Graduate Committee faculty to serve a one-year position as the Graduate Student Representative. The Graduate Student Representative will be responsible for attending Graduate Committee meetings (excluding meetings in which confidential information is discussed, e.g., admissions and continuation meetings), communicating Graduate Committee decisions to the student body, and communicating student concerns and issues to the Graduate Committee. Please contact the EPSY Program Coordinator for the current Representative.

4. General Program Information and Graduate School Policies

a. Graduate Student Listserv

Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to be added to the Graduate Student Listserv. Program announcements, funding opportunities, and professional development activities are announced through this listserv.

b. Graduate School and Program Deadlines

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

c. Graduate School and Program Policies

- i. Academic Policy (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/academic-policies-and-deadlines.aspx>)
- ii. Research Ethics Policy (<https://www.unco.edu/research/research-integrity-and-compliance/>)
- iii. University-wide Graduate Student Handbook (<https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/pdf/Graduate-Student-Handbook-082018.pdf>)

- iv. Syllabus statements (https://www.unco.edu/center-enhancement-teaching-learning/teaching-resources/syllabus_statements.aspx)

5. Professional Development Opportunities

- a. Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning (CETL): The University's CETL provides development opportunities that emphasize high-quality pedagogy. CETL offers many opportunities for all instructors, but they offer some specifically for graduate students. These are two new and exciting opportunities but check the [CETL Website](#) regularly for updates.
- i. Graduate Student Learning Community (GSLC): The GSLC is a graduate student-led community that emphasizes personal and professional growth, building community among UNC graduate students, and providing networking opportunities. The GSLC is a one-semester program which meets twice monthly.
 - ii. Certificate in College Teaching (CCT) program: The CCT is a free professional development program focused on increasing your knowledge, experience, and skills in college teaching. Through workshops, classes, and mentorship, you will create a teaching portfolio that evidences your learning and prepares you for applications to university positions emphasizing high-quality teaching. This is a two-year program.
- b. School of Psychological Sciences (SPS): SPS offers a variety of professional development opportunities including Teaching Circles and Antiracism Working Group and Journal Club. The facilitation, focus, and content of these opportunities rotates, but they all emphasize improving your knowledge, skills, and experiences as a teacher-scholar.

6. Funding Opportunities

Master students do not typically receive assistantships from the university. However, you will find various funding opportunities.

- Guidelines and policies at the university level related to graduate assistantships can be accessed through the [University's Graduate School](#).
- [Graduate School scholarships](#)
- Grant funding provided by the [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#) at UNC.
- You will potentially find student [employment opportunities on campus](#).

7. Student Life

It is important to network and connect with other students in your program and across campus.

a. Educational Psychology Society

The Educational Psychology Society (EPS) is a student-led group that exists to foster the scholarly discussion, study, and application of critical issues related to educational psychology. See the details here: <https://www.unco.edu/educational-psychology-society/>. Please contact the faculty advisor (Dr. Sue Hyeon Paek) at SueHyeon.Paek@unco.edu to join. The goals of EPS are:

- To offer opportunities for professional development through a series of regular meetings

- with presentations by EPS members and invited guest speakers,
- To promote interest in and commitment to research and teaching in educational psychology,
- To provide a network by which members can be informed of funding opportunities, resources, upcoming research and teaching in educational psychology, and
- To provide community service.

b. Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) at UNC represents the interests and needs of graduate students at the University. Through grant-funding, volunteer service opportunities, and social events, the GSA supports your success and well-being. Find more information here: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-student-association/>

c. Student Senate

The UNC Student Senate is a governing body that serves the students of UNC, ensuring that student voices and interests are equitably represented. There are funded positions available through Student Senate. For more information about getting involved with Student Senate, visit <https://www.unco.edu/student-senate/?page=0&limit=3&tags=student%20senate>

d. Resources for personal care

Graduate school can be a difficult time: emotionally, financially, and physically. There are a number of resources on campus, included as part of your tuition, that you can access to help you navigate this new culture you have entered. Here are some that we think you will find most useful:

- [Counseling Center](#): The UNC Counseling Center provides a variety of mental health supports.
- [Bear Pantry](#): The Bear Pantry assists students faced with food insecurity.
- [Professional Attire Closet](#): You can rent professional attire for presentations, interviews, etc.
- [Student Health Center](#): A walk-in health clinic serving the UNC community.
- [Office of Financial Aid](#): Find the help you need regarding financial aid.
- [Writing Center](#): Provides one-one-one sessions to improve your writing (and *everyone* can benefit from an objective reader!)
- University Appeals
- If you feel like you have been unfairly graded or have any other issues surrounding your classes, you may file an academic appeal. An academic appeal can be made through the academic appeals process found in UNC's Board Policy Manual, 2-1-2 "Academic Appeal Procedure" at <https://www.unco.edu/trustees/pdf/board-policy-manual.pdf>.
- If you would like to seek resources outside of UNC, there are a number of resources [available in the Greeley community](#). In addition, here are some other Greeley and Colorado resources to help you:
 - [Weld Co Food Bank](#)

- [CO Peak](#)
 - All students are eligible for food assistance and medical benefits through CO Peak.
- [Planned Parenthood](#)
- [Weld Co Human Services](#)
 - Emergency Rent and Utility Assistance – If you have any financially impactful event or have been affected by COVID, you are eligible for rent and utilities assistance.

II. ACCELERATED (4+1) PSYCHOLOGY B.A. AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY M.A. PROGRAM

8. Application to the 4+1 Program

Students interested in transferring to the accelerated program must:

- a. Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to take graduate-level courses as a junior or senior.
- b. Meet with the program director in their junior year, apply for acceptance to the graduate program, and be accepted to the M.A. program.

9. Special Circumstances for Students in the 4+1 Program

- a. Three courses (9 credits) can count toward both the B.A. and the M.A. However, you cannot complete more than 9 graduate credits while still completing the requirements for your B.A.
- b. You will enter the program with “conditionally” admitted to the M.A. program status. Once your B.A. degree has been awarded, the University changes you from “conditionally” admitted to “regular” admission. This happens automatically.
- c. Before you can enroll in courses at the 600+ level, you must complete your B.A. degree and be changed to “regular” admission status. Courses at the 600+ level cannot count toward B.A. degree requirements.

Please, see Section III for the detail about the on-campus MA program requirements.

III. ON-CAMPUS EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY M.A. PROGRAM

10. Master's Program Philosophy and Learning Outcomes

The mission of the educational psychology Master's program is to provide students with a solid foundation in educational psychology to either: experience increased success in a career in education, assessment, and training, or to continue in doctoral training in educational psychology and related disciplines. The overall goal of the program is to produce engaged and knowledgeable scholars and practitioners who successfully apply principles and theories from our field to new settings or in new ways. *Please note: This is not a license-granting program.

The on-campus Master's program in educational psychology has six learning outcomes that address the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that graduates of our program attain by the end of their degree. These learning outcomes span coursework and other professional experiences.

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

COURSEWORK AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

11. Course Requirements

- a. Required course work
 - The EPSY MA program is a 30-credit program.

Degree Requirements — 30 Credits

Theoretical Foundations — 9 hours

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <u>PSY 530</u> | Life Span Developmental Psychology | 3 |
| <u>PSY 540</u> | Theories and Principles of Learning | 3 |
| <u>PSY 644</u> | Motivation in Education | 3 |

Research Methods — 6 hours

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <u>SRM 600</u> | Introduction to Graduate Research | 3 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|

One of the following:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>SRM 602</u> | Statistical Methods I | 3 |
| <u>SRM 680</u> | Introduction to Qualitative Research | 3 |

Professional Foundations — 9 hours

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>PSY 575</u> | Educational Assessment | 3 |
| <u>PSY 661</u> | Trends and Issues in Educational Psychology | 3 |

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <u>PSY 674</u> | Measurement I: Classical Test Theory | 3 |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|---|

Elective Credits — 6 hours

- Students choose electives in consultation with their advisor. Options include, but are not limited to courses in Education, Psychology, Educational Technology, Statistics and Research Methods, Professional or School Psychology, Special Education, or Educational Leadership. Courses numbered 508 or 513 are not acceptable for credit in graduate programs.
- Both 697 and 699 can count as elective courses.
- PSY 699 is a highly recommended elective for students intending subsequently to enter a doctoral program. Student competencies are examined by comprehensive examination during fall, spring or summer semesters.

b. Credits Hours per Semester

We want to see our students succeed, and to that end, we've set limitations on the number of credit hours you can take. While overloads may be permitted in some cases, we encourage you to stay within the normal course load for the best experience as a student – both academically and personally. To help ensure you get the most out of your educational experience, the Graduate School has put the following overload limitations in place.

- Fall and spring: 17+ credit hours
- Summer: 12+ credit hours
- Interim term: 4 credit hour max. No overloads will be permitted.
- Find more details [on graduate course loads here](#).

c. Transfer of Credits

For the master's degree, students must complete at least 24 hours out of the 30 required hours at the University of Northern Colorado. Students are highly encouraged to take all relevant core courses at UNCO and enroll in the on-campus sections for the foundational program courses. In general, students will be advised to transfer up to 6 qualifying credits (e.g., credits earned within the last five years, with a grade of "B" or better) from an accredited institution that offers graduate degrees, into a 30-credit hour degree program. Students who wish to count graduate coursework from other universities must also provide syllabi in English for those courses that they wish to transfer. The Graduate Committee will review the syllabi and render a decision about transfer courses.

12. Suggested Course Sequence

Table 1 provides the recommended sequence for full-time master's students planning on completing courses in 2 years. This sequence aligns with scheduled course offerings and is the general recommendation. However, students are free to alter this sequence to fit individual interests and needs; talk with your program advisor to help you make these decisions.

Table 1.

Recommended Course Sequence

| Year 1 | | Year 2 | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Fall | Spring | Fall | Spring |
| PSY 530 Life Span Developmental Psychology | PSY 540 Theories & Principles of Learning | SRM602 Statistical Methods I OR SRM680 Introduction to Qualitative Research | PSY 674 Measurement I: Classical Test Theory |
| SRM600 Introduction to Graduate Research | PSY 575 Educational Assessment | Elective #2 | PSY 661 Trends and Issues* |
| Elective #1 | PSY 644 Motivation in Education | | |

*PSY661 is offered only at even years. You may adjust the course sequence depending on course offerings.

13. Suggested Research Activities (for students who plan to pursue doctoral education)

- a. If you aim to pursue a doctoral degree, you should become involved in research as soon as possible during your program. You should do this in two ways: 1) volunteer in a faculty member's research lab starting in your first semester, and 2) complete a thesis. Because a thesis has more regulation than a master's project, it takes more time to complete. You should start working on your thesis in the second semester of your program.
- b. To increase your skills and experiences and make you more competitive for doctoral education, students who elect this route will be evaluated on their progress based on a series of scaffolded research requirements. Table 2 below shows the research requirements for each year in the program.

Table 2.

Progressive Research Recommendations for Students Planning on Entering a PhD Program

| | Year 1 | Year 2 |
|--|--------|--------|
| UNCO Research Day/Research Evening/Research Night presentation | X | X |
| Coauthor on regional conference submission | X | X |
| Lead author on regional conference submission | | X |

14. Student Evaluations

Your progress in the program is evaluated by your performance in class and your successful completion of your comprehensive examination.

15. Termination Policy

- a. Program faculty and the Graduate Committee will provide you with formative and summative feedback on your progression through the program. If termination from the program is deemed necessary, the Graduate Coordinator will contact you via email to inform you of the Committee's decision. The Graduate Coordinator will also inform the Graduate School of the decision to terminate.
- b. Students may have their degree program terminated for one or more of the reasons stated in the [Graduate School Termination Policy](#).
- c. If your degree program becomes inactive due to lack of continuous registration and you want to resume your program, you may be required to re-apply to the Graduate School within the fourth semester of non-enrollment, remit the application fee, be re-accepted by their program and the Graduate Dean. Find more details on [Graduate School policies regarding registration here](#).

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

16. Comprehensive Exams Overview

a. Purpose

The purpose of comprehensive examinations for students in the educational psychology master's program is to provide evidence to the Graduate School, the faculty, and the student that they can synthesize research and theory in Educational Psychology and apply that knowledge to a topic or issue that is relevant or unique to educational contexts. In the Educational Psychology M.A. program, the comprehensive exam is a project instead of a paper and pencil exam. The project options are listed in section iv. The paper that you write for your comprehensive exam may have one of several origins:

- i. It may be related to one of the required courses in the M.A. program;
- ii. it may be the student's revision of a paper prepared for a graduate class; or
- iii. it may be a new paper prepared by the student specifically for the purposes of this comprehensive examination.

b. General Requirements

Written comprehensive examinations are required for all graduate students in the master's program in Educational Psychology. Students are advised to refer to Graduate School requirements for comprehensive examinations. See the University catalog section on [Master's Degree Requirements](#) and particularly the subsection "[Written Comprehensive Examinations](#)." Students are also advised to consult policies and requirements of the Graduate School related to graduation.

c. Permit for Exam

Master's students are eligible to take the comprehensive examination (according to Graduate School policy) when they have:

- Been granted regular admission to the program
- Completed 15 credit hours of required coursework in Educational Psychology
- Received approval from the student's advisor about the paper's topic and the student's fulfillment of the previous criteria.

In unusual cases, the advisor will endorse the student's eligibility prior to completing the full 15 hours when the student has:

- Earned a GPA of at least 3.0 in the program
- Received approval from the student's advisor about the paper's topic and the student's fulfillment of the previous criteria.

Students should complete the [Permission to Take Written Comprehensive Examination form](#) (or the CEBS Request & Report form—coming soon!). These should be submitted to the CEBS Graduate Student Support Specialist (Cheyenne Hassebrock) copying the program coordinator on the email. This permit verifies the students' fulfillment of requirements for taking the examination and notifies the College of students' intentions to take the examination. Students are encouraged to apply for this permit early in the term or semester for which they hope to complete the examination.

Students may begin preparation for the examination prior to filing the permit (for example, they might discuss their interests in preparing a paper on a particular topic with their advisors early in their program). However, students cannot formally begin or complete the comprehensive examination until they have an approved permit.

d. Format, Criteria, and Evaluation of Comprehensive Exams

There are three options for the project that satisfies the comprehensive exam requirement: (a) Capstone paper, (b) Master's project, and (c) Master's thesis. Find details in sections 17-19.

e. Suggested Timeline

You should make sure you are aware of the Graduate School [deadlines](#) for filling the final results. The deadlines are quite early. There is a one-year time limit between a

comprehensive examination permit being approved and the formal submission of your comprehensive exams for the evaluation. You must complete your comprehensive examination within one year of the comprehensive examination permit being approved. Because you will need to give the master's committee at least two weeks to evaluate your comprehensive examination, you should plan out the timeline retrospectively to complete your comprehensive examination on time.

f. Steps to Follow

- i. Check the Graduate School deadlines for the semester that you plan to graduate.
 - Plan ahead for completing your Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis by the designated deadlines.
- ii. Pick a topic
- iii. Get an approval on your topic from your advisor (i.e., Project Chair)
- iv. Create a two-three faculty member committee (Project Chair and Project Reader for Capstone and Project; Committee Chair and Committee Members for Thesis)
- v. Complete your Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis.
 - During this process, you are responsible to communicate closely with your advisor in the process of revising the draft to ensure the quality of your work.
- vi. Typically, students apply for graduation ([Graduation Application Form](#)) during the final semester of their Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis.
 - Talk to your advisor to get an approval to apply for graduation.
- vii. Submit the complete Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis to your faculty committee
 - You should provide your committee TWO weeks to review prior to the day that you anticipate the results.
 - You should give at least one week for the committee to file the results to the Graduate School. This means that you should plan your timeline to get the results a week prior to the Graduate School deadlines.
 - You may consider the time you may need to revise the Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis before filing the results to the Graduate School when you first submit your Capstone Paper/Master's Project/Master's Thesis.

17. Option 1: Capstone Paper

a. Overview

The comprehensive examination will follow the format of a capstone paper or literature review. The paper will focus on a topic related to Educational Psychology and will be approved as a topic by the student's advisor. The paper may be an extension of the student's work in a graduate class at UNC, but at least 75% of the content must be new and not previously submitted as a course assignment.

In addition, the student should be aware that the criteria for evaluation for the comprehensive examination will differ from criteria for evaluation used by an instructor for a particular assignment in a course (these criteria are outlined below). Students may receive feedback from the advisor prior to formal submission of the paper as the comprehensive

examination. However, the paper should be the work of the student, not the advisor, another instructor, or some other person.

Should the student wish to seek other advice (e.g., from a statistical consultant or an editor), the student needs to discuss this matter ahead of time with the advisor. The advisor will consult with the student and ensure that any such guidance is limited and does not detract from the attribution that the paper is primarily an accomplishment of the student. Students will be asked to sign an affirmation that confirms that the work is primarily their own work and does not reflect an act of plagiarism.

b. Formatting

The paper should be formatted according to the latest style manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition or later). Length should be approximately 30 pages and more specifically between 25 and 35 pages (title page, reference list and any tables or figures are beyond the 25- to 35-page range). Paper should be double spaced, with one-inch margins, and with a legible 12-point Times Roman font.

c. Review and Results

The examination paper will be read by the advisor and one other faculty member in the School of Psychological Sciences with concentrated expertise in the area. If the two faculty members disagree in their recommendations (pass or fail), a third member will read the paper. It generally takes two weeks for students to receive the results of the examination. Once you successfully complete the comprehensive exam, your results will be sent to the graduate program coordinator who will file the written comprehensive examination results to the graduate school.

According to UNC Graduate School policy, a student who fails the comprehensive examination is permitted one retake of the examination that must be scheduled in a subsequent semester from the original examination. The student will submit a rewrite/revision of the paper to be submitted the following semester and to be reevaluated according to the criteria described above. Per the Graduate School policy, failure of a retake of an examination will result in the student's termination from the master's program.

d. Resources for Completion of Examination

Students may use resources (e.g., dictionary, journal articles, books, internet) as they compose the paper. Citations of the work of theorists and researchers need to be included using the most current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

e. Rubric

Your faculty readers will evaluate your capstone paper according to this [rubric](#).

18. Option 2: Master's Project

a. Overview

This option for the comprehensive examination will be based on the student's involvement in a research project or other application activity (e.g., curriculum development, measurement, assessment, or evaluation project, etc.). The culmination of this involvement will be reflected in a written product (i.e., the comprehensive examination). Empirical projects will require submission of an IRB proposal and approval from the IRB.

b. Formatting

The nature and form of this written product will be agreed upon through discussion between the faculty mentor and student; however, it is anticipated that it will take the form of an APA-style report of approximately 25 pages. The comprehensive examination will follow the format of a capstone paper or literature review. The paper will focus on a topic related to Educational Psychology and will be approved as a topic by the student's advisor. The paper may be an extension of the student's work in a graduate class at UNC, but at least 75% of the content must be new and not previously submitted as a course assignment.

c. Review and Results

A two-faculty member committee (Project Chair and Project Reader) should agree upon all evaluation standards for a project that is not a literature review or empirical paper. These comprehensive project options must be approved by the two-faculty member committee. Students may register for a maximum of 12 credits of PSY 697 Master's Project in Psychology to complete this comprehensive exam option (which can fulfill your required electives). Once you successfully complete the comprehensive exam, your results will be sent to the graduate program coordinator who will file the written comprehensive examination results to the graduate school.

d. Rubric

The two faculty readers will evaluate your master's project using the appropriate rubric for your project type:

- The [rubric](#) for the empirical paper.
- We're working on rubric for a project that is not a research study.

19. Option 3: Master's Thesis

a. Overview

The master's thesis option for comprehensive examination may be selected with the approval of the student's advisor and the Graduate Coordinator. This option would require that a student become involved in research early in the program. With the supervision of the advisor, the student would develop and execute an original empirical research project (quantitative or qualitative). The paper may be an extension of the student's work in a graduate class at UNC, but at least 75% of the content must be new and not previously submitted as a course assignment. Students may register for a maximum of 6 credits of PSY 699 Thesis to complete the master's thesis comprehensive exam option (which can count toward your required electives).

You must create a Thesis Committee comprised of at least three members: the committee chair and two committee members, at least one of whom must be from the School of Psychological Sciences. You need to get approval of the committee members from your advisor, but no official form is required.

Work with your Thesis chair to develop your project. You must propose your thesis project to your Thesis Committee prior to beginning the project in both written and oral formats. The written thesis proposal should be 5-10 pages and include the following: (a) statement of problem/significance, (b) brief literature review, (c) research questions and hypotheses (if appropriate), (d) methods to be used, and (e) analyses to be conducted. After successfully completing the oral proposal of your thesis, you will submit an IRB proposal. Once you receive approval from the IRB you can conduct your thesis. When your Chair approves, you can schedule the defense of your thesis. You will provide your committee with a written copy of your thesis at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense; your committee will evaluate your thesis according to this [rubric](#). If your project receives a “pass,” your committee will sign the official signature page in your thesis, and your Chair informs the Graduate School of the result. You submit the signature page to the Graduate School when you submit your final thesis.

- i. Procedure, Requirement, Review and Results
 - More [details about the thesis steps](#) can be found at the Graduate School.
 - Find the [master’s thesis format manual](#) at the Graduate School.

III. ONLINE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY M.A. WITH TEACHING APPLICATIONS EMPHASIS

20. Master's Program Philosophy and Learning Outcomes

- a. The mission of the online educational psychology Master's program with an emphasis in teaching applications is to help educators further increase the effectiveness of their pedagogy by successfully applying principles and theories from educational psychology to their learning environments.

*Please note: This is not a license-granting program.

- b. The online Master's program in teaching applications has six learning outcomes that address the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that graduates of our program attain by the end of their degree. These learning outcomes span coursework and other professional experiences.
 - i. SLO 1: Practitioners will exhibit the necessary foundation of theoretical knowledge within the field of educational psychology. This theoretical foundation includes learning, cognition, motivation, human development, and culture and diversity.
 - ii. SLO 2: Practitioners will demonstrate understanding of how this foundational knowledge informs pedagogy.
 - iii. SLO 3: Practitioners will show mastery of the applicability of educational psychology content to their current teaching environment.
 - iv. SLO 4: Practitioners will demonstrate understanding of action research and assessment as applied to teaching and learning.
 - v. SLO 5: Practitioners will comprehend and exemplify the ethical issues surrounding educational psychology, including diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - vi. SLO 6: Practitioners will evidence the ability to complete applied projects with an educational context and develop these into a reflective portfolio.
- c. While not a learning outcome, we also expect our students to develop successful professional skills (e.g., collaboration, engagement, responsiveness, goal-setting, communication, boundary-setting, time management) that are at the level of a professional academic by the time they end their program. Students should seek feedback from your advisor(s) and instructors and attend to provided constructive feedback.

21. Extended Campus Program

This is an Extended Campus Program. Please see the [Extended Campus site](#) for eligibility requirements, relevant policies, and financial aid information,

22. Course Requirements

- a. Required course work

The EPSY MA-teaching applications program is a 30-credit program designed to be completed online in five consecutive academic semesters.

- b. Required course sequence

- i. This program is designed as a cohort model. All students will take the same two courses each term and progress through the program together. You will be sent a link to a cohort website, which will display course information for your cohort each semester.
- ii. In the Fall and Spring semesters, the two courses are taken back-to-back in two 8-week sessions. In the summer term the two courses are taken concurrently in a single 8-week session that runs from early June through July.

Table 3. Course Sequence for Online MA Program

| Year 1 | | | Year 2 | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Summer | Fall | Spring | Summer | Fall |
| PSY 500 Educational Psychology for Teachers | PSY 530 Lifespan Developmental Psychology | PSY 644 Motivation in Education | PSY 561 Hot Topics in Education | PSY 581 Brain and Education |
| PSY 600 Graduate Research Methodology | PSY 640 Cultural Issues in Educational Psychology | PSY 681 Learning and Instruction | PSY 575 Educational Assessment | PSY 697 Master's Project in Psychology |

23. Transfer of Credits

- a. Applicable graduate credit with a grade of A or B from a regionally accredited university may be able to be applied towards this academic program. Master's degree students must complete a minimum of 24 credits at the University of Northern Colorado. All work counted in a master's degree program must be completed within five years. The time limit is calculated from the beginning of the first class transferred in and counted in the degree program. See the full [Graduate Transfer Credit Policy](#).
- b. Students must submit an original transcript to their advisor for review. Student and advisor then complete a [Transfer of Credit form](#) to submit along with the original transcript to the Grad School for review and final approval.

24. Student Evaluations

Students must earn a C or better for a course to count toward the program degree.

25. Termination Policy

A student's degree program may be terminated for one or more of the reasons stated in the [Graduate School Termination Policy](#).

26. Comprehensive Exam: Masters Project

The Graduate School requires that graduate programs include a comprehensive exam as a culmination of the student's knowledge during their training. In the educational psychology MA-teaching applications program, your comprehensive exam is completed through a master's project. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is for students in the educational

psychology master's program to provide evidence to the Graduate School, the faculty, and the student that they can synthesize research and theory in Educational Psychology and apply that knowledge to a topic or issue that is relevant to their practice as teachers.

You will begin developing your masters project early in your program as you complete applied projects in various courses. In your final semester, when you are enrolled in PSY 697: Master's Project in Psychology, you will complete the masters project by choosing three of these applied projects and then expanding and reflecting on these projects and your growth in knowledge. The PSY 697 instructor will inform the Graduate Program Director of the results who informs the Graduate School of the "pass" or "fail" decision.

27. Application for Graduation

Prior to your final semester, you will be sent an application for graduation form. You will be asked to sign the form and return it. The program director will review the form, sign it, and submit it to the graduate school.