Welcome to the Educational Psychology -

Our Mission

Our work is focused on promoting human development in its diversity and complexity. We identify meaningful, relevant problems and develop solutions to address them. Our work is interdisciplinary, methodologically rigorous, and strengths-based.

Program Overview

The Educational Psychology and Applied Developmental Science (EP-ADS) program focuses on studying and improving the social and cognitive lives of children, adolescents, and adults. EP-ADS students learn theory and research on how settings in which we live (e.g., home, school, work) influence learning and development. Students have hands-on experience developing and evaluating interventions designed to support children and youth to become important, contributing members of society. Course work provides content in educational and applied developmental psychology as well as research design, methods, and statistics. EP-ADS faculty and students work together closely, fostering a productive, engaging, and exciting learning environment.

What is the Master’s degree in EP-ADS?

The Educational Psychology-Applied Developmental Science (EP-ADS) Master of Education (M.Ed.) program is designed specifically for students who are interested in learning how developmental processes influence outcomes such as learning, behavior, and resilience. The program focuses on the development of children, youth, and adults in their social contexts; takes a strengths-based approach to understanding them; explores questions about their lives using an interdisciplinary perspective; and relies on rigorous research design to examine questions relevant to practice and policy. We are housed in the Educational Leadership, Foundations and Policy Department (EDLF) in the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) at the University of Virginia.

Training & Skills

Our students develop a rich understanding of child and youth development. The EP-ADS program prepares students to be successful in a variety of settings, including non-profit organizations or foundations that focus on improving the lives of youth and children, educational research firms, applied settings such as school districts, community colleges, informal education settings, and doctoral programs. Graduates learn a variety of skills including:

- interpreting and evaluating empirical research articles
- writing literature reviews
- conducting basic data analyses and interpreting results
- using research to inform program development and implementation
Program Components

The program includes three parts:

- Coursework
- Internship experience
- Comprehensive exam

Most students complete the program full-time over three semesters, although some students may elect to complete the program part-time over 2-3 years. Each admitted student has a primary advisor who will help him or her choose courses, select or create an internship experience, and decide on a comprehensive exam topic. Students are also assigned to a secondary advisor who will provide guidance in the development of research and program development skills in your area of interest. As a result, you will design a master’s program that is uniquely tailored to your interests and strengths.

Why this program?

This program is structured to provide you with a solid conceptual understanding of child and youth development as well as methods used to study and evaluate factors that influence development. Our master’s program is designed to support you with personalized mentoring as you pursue your interests, choose a focus for your internship, and select electives. Finally, our program is fairly intensive in order to best prepare you for the next step in your career. We want to challenge our students to think broadly about development, to be able to solve real-world problems, and to make a difference in the social contexts of children, youth and/or adults.

“The EP-ADS program not only affirmed to me the direction with which I’d like to go with my career, but enabled me to do so by giving me the skills and guidance that I struggled to find in my other academic and professional contexts. The experience helped me to think critically, discuss content deeply, and vastly improve my writing abilities. I have nothing but positive things to say about the program, and am profoundly grateful to have been welcomed into the UVA community by such amazing faculty.”

Alex Allen, M.Ed., EP-ADS ’21
Ph.D. student, Boston University, Educational Studies in Special Education

“The program and classes helped me practice applying research to address issues of inequality and I’m looking forward to continuing that work in my new job. I wouldn’t be here without the strong support of the EP-ADS faculty.”

Andrew Majek, M.Ed., EP-ADS ’17
Director of Behavior Change, Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Advising

Students will have two advisors, a primary and secondary. The program coordinator is the primary advisor for all students in the program. Students will also be assigned a secondary advisor aligned with their interests. Advisors will work together throughout the year to monitor and support your progress. Roles for each advisor are described below.

Role of Primary Advisor

- Support you in your successful completion of the program and make program adjustments to accommodate individual needs
- Meet at least once per semester including during the summer, more frequently as needed
- Provide guidance on course work
- Discuss challenges you face in the program and brainstorm solutions
- Help ensure that all completed requirements are met for graduation
- Provide advice and networking for internships, jobs, and graduate schools
- Assist with successful completion of and reflection on internship
- Read and provide feedback on comprehensive exams
- Potentially serve as a job and/or grad school reference

Role of Secondary Advisor

- Meet with all advisees to discuss research or other internship opportunities
- Provide advice and networking for internships, jobs and graduate schools
- Share expertise in area of specialization
- Read and provide feedback on comprehensive exam
- Potentially serve as a job and/or grad school reference (depending on the extent to which the student engages in advisor’s research)

Program Options

Students may choose an **Applied Research** or an **Applied Professional** track while in the program, allowing them to tailor their program experience to best fit their goals. Many students are unsure about their career goals and may not yet know which track would be the best fit for them. These students can begin on a general track and later decide with their advisor which track to follow as they complete their degree. More details on course choices related to each program track are provided within the Coursework section. (Note that designating a program track is useful for guiding students’ decisions during the program, but ultimately both tracks result in the same degree, therefore switching tracks or using a hybrid model is not a problem as long as all program requirements are met.)
Applied Research Track

Students in this track express a desire to contribute to conducting research and advancing knowledge in the field of applied developmental science in their career. They are interested in participating in systematic data collection and study that contributes to describing, explaining and/or optimizing developmental trajectories.

Job options for students who graduate from this track include work as research analysts (at organizations such as WestEd, American Institute of Research, and Child Trends), research assistants at universities, or data analysts for school systems. Students who plan to apply to doctoral programs that emphasize research should also select this track. Many students from our program are admitted into highly competitive doctoral programs in related fields, such as educational psychology, clinical psychology, cognitive science, and school psychology.

Applied Professional Track

Students in this track want to deepen their knowledge and skills, and reflect on their own practices promoting the well-being of, or working directly with, children and youth. Knowledge and skills gained in the program will be applied to optimizing positive development for individuals and groups across cognitive, social-emotional, and physical domains. Students may select courses that allow them to focus on a specific population or developmental range (e.g. early childhood or adolescents).

Job options for students who graduate from this track may include: leaders of youth programs (e.g. academic, mentoring and/or recreational programs), educators (licensed teachers may return classrooms with specialized skills; others may choose to work in alternative schools such as Montessori or charter school settings), or social entrepreneurs who develop new programs designed to foster healthy development.

Coursework

The program requires completion of a minimum of 32 credit hours (including internship). (Note that a grade of B- or above is required for a course to count toward a graduate degree program.) Required coursework includes:

- 6 credits in educational psychology and foundations
- 9 credits in developmental science
- 6 credits in research methods
- 6 credit internship (3 credits in fall and 3 in spring)
Required Courses

Required program courses fit into three categories: 1) educational psychology and foundations, 2) developmental science and 3) research methods. Courses in educational psychology and foundations provide a basis for understanding the field of educational psychology, how science intersects with applied work, and how fundamental principles of development apply to pressing “real-world” problems. Students will examine important cultural contexts in which development unfolds, and the importance of equity in serving diverse populations. Developmental science courses offer students a broad understanding of child, adolescent, and lifespan development. And finally, research methods courses provide instruction on qualitative and quantitative methods researchers use to answer questions in developmental science. Students should discuss course selection with their program adviser, considering prior course work. Where applicable, we encourage students to seek alternatives for courses they have already taken to avoid duplication of content. Discuss any such circumstances with your primary advisor when planning your coursework.

Course Requirement Details

Educational Psychology & Foundations (12 credits)

- EDLF 7150 - Educational Psychology (3 credits)
- EDLF 7290 - Seminar in Educational Psychology (1 credit each semester, 3 credits total)
- EDLF 7601 – Social Foundations of Education (3 credits)
- EDLF 5711 - Globalization, Childhood and Culture (3 credits)

Developmental Science (9 credits)

Required:

- EDLF 5020 - Introduction to Applied Developmental Science (3 credits)
- EDLF 5700 - Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity in Youth Development (3 credits)

Select one of the following:

- EDLF 5040 - Education and Neuroscience (3 credits)
- EDLF 5260 - Cognitive Psychology and Education (3 credits)
- EDLF 5470 - Motivation in Achievement Contexts (3 credits)
- EDLF 5010 - Child Learning and Development (3 credits)
- EDLF 5011 - Adolescent Learning and Development (3 credits)
- EDLF 5160 - Life Span Development (3 credits)
- EDLF 5260 - Cognitive Psychology and Education (3 credits)
- EDLF 5270 - Adult Development and Aging (3 credits)
• EDLF 5470 - Motivation in Achievement Contexts (3 credits)
• EDLF 5711 - Globalization, Childhood, and Culture (3 credits)
• EDLF 7200 - Child Development (3 credits) (for those with previous experience with child development and research; instructor permission required; offered even years)
• EDLF 7210 - Adolescent Development (3 credits) (for those with previous experience with adolescent development and research; instructor permission required; offered odd years)

Research Methods (6 credits)

Required:
• EDLF 7300 - Foundations of Educational Research (3 credits)

Select one from the following:
• EDLF 5310 Data Management for Social Sciences Research (Research track; 3 credits)
• EDLF 5330 Quantitative Methods I (3 credits)
• EDLF 5500 Field Experiments (3 credits)
• EDIS 7330 Single Subject Research (Professional track; 3 credits)
• EDLF 7402 Introduction to Program Evaluation (Professional track; 3 credits)
• EDLF 7403 Survey Design & Instrument Construction (3 credits)
• EDLF 7404 Qualitative Methods (3 credits)
• EDLF 7410 Mixed Methods Research Design (3 credits)
• EDLF 7420 Quantitative Methods II: General Linear Models (3 credits)

More advanced methods courses are available and may be taken by students with significant prior stats experience, with advisor and instructor permission.

Internship (6 credits)

• EDLF 8998 Master’s Research Internship (3 credits each semester, 6 credits total)

Students will spend the year gaining hands-on experience under the supervision of an internship mentor. They will complete a 6-credit internship (3 credits in fall and 3 in the spring). Students in the Research Track will be encouraged to submit a research proposal to the School of Education and Human Development’s Hunter Research Conference. Students may also have opportunities to contribute to work that leads to proposals at regional, national or international conference (e.g. SRCD, AERA, etc.)

Internship

Students must complete a six-credit internship to gain new skills in a setting related to their goals after graduation. This requirement may be met by conducting research or data analysis as part of a research lab, collaborating on an evaluation project, or applying knowledge and skills
about development in an applied setting. The goal of the internship is to give students an in-depth experience with some aspect of developmental science.

Students work under the direction of a work supervisor for a total of 200 hours over 2 semesters (100 hours x 2 semesters). The internship supervisor, program faculty, and student will collaboratively work to develop an internship plan. Both the supervisor and student will complete job performance evaluations at the end of each semester.

Students have engaged in a variety of internship experiences tailored to their career goals and interests. Below are a few settings in which past students completed internships.

**Applied Professional Internships**
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Computers4Kids
- Community Schoolyard Gardens
- Young Women Leaders Program
- READY kids
- Virginia Institute of Autism

**Applied Research Internships**

Most research internships entail working with SEHD faculty on ongoing research projects or labs at UVA. Some of those have included:
- Social Development Lab
- Motivate Lab
- Youth-Nex
- Supporting Transformative Autism Research (STAR) initiative

Students occasionally produce research products from their internship experiences that result in conference proposals for the Hunter Research Conference, regional or national conferences, or publications in peer-reviewed journals.

**Internship contract:** All students should begin work in their internship by attending regularly scheduled meetings and assisting with active projects. After students are oriented to the research team or organization (within 10-20 hours of beginning work), they should work together with the immediate supervisor of the internship and/or advisor to develop an internship contract (see Appendix B for more detail). The contract should 1) describe the educational goals for the student; 2) outline the time and work involved (e.g., observational coding, literature search and organization, working with students); 3) designate specific products likely to emanate from the internship experience (e.g., poster or conference presentation, curriculum module, etc.), if applicable. The student, program coordinator, and the immediate
supervisor of the student’s internship experience should review and agree on the contract. Students should carefully record the hours worked each day in a log that will be turned in for credit (see Appendix B for a template).

Students will be evaluated on professional behavior, knowledge, and skills twice during their internships. Halfway through their internships (typically the conclusion of their first internship semester), students will complete a self-evaluation of their performance. Internship supervisors will also complete an interim evaluation (see Appendix B) and send students feedback for review. The supervisor and student will then meet to reflect on the evaluation and develop plans (in a renewed contract) for the remainder of the internship. At the conclusion of the internship, supervisors will re-evaluate students on professional behaviors, knowledge, and skills.

Students may not be paid for any work that counts toward their internship credit hours, however they may receive payment (if available) for hours worked above and beyond those required to fulfill internship credits. For instance, a student may work 12 hours per week, with 7 of those hours being designated as internship time and 5 hours being designated as paid time. Students and their supervisors should discuss options for splitting hours into for-credit versus paid and the arrangement should be documented to very clearly define the agreement.

Professionalism

Students in the program will be interacting with UVA faculty and members of the community in a variety of ways, through internships, coursework, and volunteer experiences. When corresponding by email, use professional language at all times; avoid informal words and expressions (e.g. hey, LOL, etc.). During research and internship experiences, students may visit schools, after-school sites, or family residences to collect data through observations, interviews, or surveys. The School of Education and Human Development enjoys positive partnerships with local organizations, families, and school divisions. We expect that you will conduct yourself professionally at all times while interacting with people at UVA and within the local community. Students should adhere to federal and state laws, school and division policies, and ethical guidelines; set goals for improving knowledge and skills and seek out resources to achieve those goals; work in a collegial and collaborative manner with administrators, school and university personnel, and the community.

Comprehensive Exam

The goals of the master’s comprehensive exam are for students to: 1) demonstrate academic writing skills; 2) read, synthesize and evaluate a body of empirical literature on a selected topic; and 3) make connections between theory, research, and practice in a specific content area pertaining to applied developmental science. Students will work over the course of a semester
to write a 10-page paper demonstrating their understanding of relevant theories and empirical research related to a topic of interest.

Students must pass the comprehensive exam prior to receiving a master’s degree. The examination must be taken during the last term of academic study and at least one month prior to the date when all materials must be approved to enable graduation.

Procedures for the comprehensive exams follow:

- **Developing a question:** Students will indicate an area of interest around which the program coordinator and student’s secondary advisor will create a question to be addressed.

- **Taking the exam:** The exam will result in a **10-page double-spaced paper**. Typically, students cite no more than 15 empirical articles (and several theoretical articles or chapters that provide context for the research). References should be cited using APA style, 6th Edition. In accordance with the University of Virginia Honor Code, we encourage students to cite their work carefully and use quotations where necessary. Students should make all exam submissions to their advisors electronically.

- **Assessing the exam:** Advisors and readers will evaluate the completed exam submissions using a rubric that will be provided to you. Advisors and readers assess each student’s performance, and assign one of the following scores based on the rubric:
  - Exemplary/pass,
  - Proficient/pass
  - Developing, anticipated pass after revisions
  - Unacceptable

Students who receive a score of “developing” in any area of the rubric will receive feedback on suggested changes and must make revisions and resubmit within one week of receiving feedback for re-grading. If the second submission is not acceptable, the student may submit one additional revision. If a student receives an unacceptable rating, the advisor and reader will determine whether the student will retake that portion of the exam or be given a new question. Students who receive two unacceptable ratings will have a meeting with their advisor and will discuss a plan for remediation that may require additional course work prior to initiating a new round of comprehensive exams in the future.
Fulfillment of Requirements for Graduation

Students who complete the degree requirements in three semesters will graduate and receive their diplomas in May. The EHD registrar will send an email to students at the end of the fall, or beginning of the spring semester about paperwork that needs to be completed for graduation. Part-time students should notify the program coordinator when they have completed course requirements and submit paperwork for graduation at that time. To assure completion of a degree program, the student must comply with all rules and regulations contained in the UVa graduate record: (http://records.ureg.virginia.edu/index.php).
Appendix A: Program Tracking Document

Course Requirements

Educational psychology courses (12 credits total)
- EDLF 7290: Seminar in Educational Psychology (summer) – 1 credit
- EDLF 7290: Seminar in Educational Psychology (fall, or semester before final semester) – 1 credit
- EDLF 7290: Seminar in Educational Psychology (spring, or final semester) – 1 credit
- EDLF 7150: Educational Psychology (fall) – 3 credits
- EDLF 7601 – Social Foundations of Education (3 credits)
- EDLF 5711 - Globalization, Childhood and Culture (3 credits)

Developmental science courses (9 credits total)
- ELDF 5020: Intro to Applied Developmental Science (summer) – 3 credits
- EDLF 5700 - Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity in Youth Development (3 credits)
- One additional developmental course – 3 credits (see options in student handbook)

Research methods courses (6 credits total)
- EDLF 7300 - Foundations of Educational Research (3 credits)
- One additional methods course – 3 credits (see options in student handbook)

Internship (3 credits total)
- ELDF 8998: Master’s Research Internship (fall) – 3 credits
- ELDF 8998: Master’s Research Internship (spring) – 3 credits

TOTAL CREDITS (minimum 32)

Additional Requirements

- Application for graduation submitted (final semester)
- Comprehensive exam passed (final semester)

Research Methods (6 credits)

Required:
- EDLF 7300 - Foundations of Educational Research (3 credits)

Select one from the following:
- EDLF 5310 Data Management for Social Sciences Research (Research track; 3 credits)
- EDLF 5330 Quantitative Methods I (3 credits)
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More advanced methods courses are available and may be taken by students with significant prior stats experience, with advisor and instructor permission.

Internship (6 credits)
- EDLF 8998 Master’s Research Internship (3 credits each semester, 6 credits total)

In order to reach the 32 credit hours necessary for graduation, full-time students will enroll in 4 credits in the summer, 13-16 credits in fall, and 13-16 credits in spring. Students will need to take 16 credits at least one semester.
Appendix B: Internship Paperwork

Internship Contract - EDLF 8998 Masters Internship

Educational Psychology: Applied Developmental Science Program

Intern Placement and Supervisor:

Intern Name:

Internship Learning and Professional Development Outcomes:
What learning outcomes do you hope to fulfill during this experience? Please list at least 3 major outcomes (e.g., professional competency, new knowledge related to an area of interest, research and assessment proficiencies, etc.).

Examples of Outcomes for Various Internships:

**Know and Understand**... *(Facts/ information and/or big ideas about education, development or research)* (e.g. know key domains of teacher-child interaction, and specific indicators that demonstrate teacher quality; understand key components of effective service-learning programs; understand complexities of developing effective teacher PD that can improve classroom processes)

**Be Able to Do**... *(Skills and behaviors related to working in educational settings or on educational research projects)* (e.g. synthesize relevant research related to childhood obesity and create and enact a program in the community that addresses obesity; use an observation protocol for measuring effective mentoring programs to code mentoring sessions at a local school; develop a reliable tool for measuring teacher skills in detecting teacher-child interactions)

By the end of the internship experience, the student will:
**Internship Tasks and Responsibilities**

What tasks and responsibilities will be assigned to the intern to complete? Please include approximate deadlines and dates of completion for each task.

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Intern: ___________________________________________ Date: ____________

Supervisor: _________________________________________ Date: ____________
# Internship Weekly Log

(This is an example – feel free to use your own template)

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End of Semester Student Evaluation
EP-ADS M.Ed. Student Internship

Semester and year (e.g., Fall 2019):

Your Name:

Organization or Research Project:

Intern’s Name:

Please rate your intern’s performance on each of the following factors:
(1= Poor, 3 = Average, 5 = Excellent)

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Please describe particular areas of strength for the student intern (i.e., What are they doing well?).

Please provide constructive feedback about any areas that need improvement in future work (i.e., What could they do better?).

What skill(s) or competency(ies) would support this student’s continued professional improvement? (i.e., How can they improve?)
End of Semester Self-Evaluation  
EP-ADS M.Ed. Student Internship

Semester and year (e.g., Fall 2019):

Supervisor’s Name:

Your Name:

Organization or Research Project:

Please rate your performance on each of the following factors: (1= Poor, 3 = Average, 5 = Excellent)

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Please describe particular areas of strength for you (i.e., What are you doing well?).

Please describe any areas or skills you feel need improvement in future work (i.e., What could you do better?).

Please describe any specific skill or competency development that you feel would support your continued professional improvement.