

## Educational Psychology Program Handbook

### PhD and Certificate Programs

#### Welcome

Welcome to the Educational Psychology PhD programs at UNLV! In our programs, we offer three doctoral degree options: 1) Educational Psychology, 2) Learning Sciences, and 3) Educational Psychology and Law. Our PhD programs prepare students to become independent scholars who are able to make significant contributions to knowledge in their specialized areas. We also offer advanced graduate certificates in qualitative and mixed methods research. We are very excited you have chosen to help shape the future of education through your study at UNLV. This handbook is intended to serve as a guide on your journey.

- 1) The Foundations strand within the EPY Ph.D. provides opportunity for specialization in assessment, learning and cognition, program evaluation, research, and learning in school domains. It is designed to enable students to become independent scholars, who are able to make significant contributions to knowledge in the discipline of educational psychology. The focus of the program is on the assessment and understanding of learning outcomes and processes in a variety of learning environments and in modifying those environments in ways that promote more effective learning.
- 2) The Ph.D. program in the Learning Sciences is designed to enable students to conduct research and evaluation of learning environments, including but not limited to technology-based environments. The focus of the program is on the design, assessment and understanding of learning environments and of the organizational and educational systems in which they are embedded. Data analytics and psychological process are also addressed in the program.
- 3) The dual Doctor of Philosophy - Educational Psychology and Juris Doctor (Ph.D. and J.D.) program prepares participants to meaningfully combine legal and psychological approaches to education and advocacy. Prospective students must apply for and be accepted to each program individually.

#### Mission Statement(s)

The Educational Psychology PhD programs provide instruction in, and the delivery of, innovative research to inform the educational process from early childhood through higher education. Our mission is accomplished through:

- Preparing graduates for leadership positions in diverse settings and roles, including faculty in colleges and universities, measurement and evaluation specialists in public and private settings, and research specialists in PK-12 schools.
- Providing foundational support for programs across the university including core content in the psychology of learning, motivation, cognition, problem solving, instruction, human development, and psychological and educational measurement, statistics, evaluation, and research methodology.
- Investigating research that informs practice in PK-12 and higher education institutions.

## Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program-specific information that is not found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#). Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#), as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: [valarie.burke@unlv.edu](mailto:valarie.burke@unlv.edu) or [gradassociatedean@unlv.edu](mailto:gradassociatedean@unlv.edu).

## Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#). Faculty must hold graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

## Program Information

Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology  
Doctor of Philosophy – Learning Sciences  
Dual Degree: Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology & Juris Doctor  
Advanced Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research  
Advanced Graduate Certificate in Mixed Methods Research  
Advanced Graduate Certificate in Assessment and Quantitative Analysis

## Contact Information

Educational Psychology, Leadership, and Higher Education

*Department Chair*

Dr. Steven Nelson, Carlson Education Building Rm. 320-B, [steven.nelson@unlv.edu](mailto:steven.nelson@unlv.edu)

*Graduate Coordinator*

Dr. Sean Mulvenon, Carlson Education Building, [sean.mulvenon@unlv.edu](mailto:sean.mulvenon@unlv.edu)

*Department Main Office*

Carlson Education Building Rm. 320, [Laura.Canon@unlv.edu](mailto:Laura.Canon@unlv.edu), (702) 895-5355

## Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience](#) are found in the [graduate catalog](#).

Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology  
Doctor of Philosophy – Learning Sciences  
Dual Degree: Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology & Juris Doctor

## Advisory Committee Guidelines

PhD programs require that all students form a graduate advisory committee compliant with the Degree Progression Policies and Procedures provided in the [graduate catalog](#).

## Degree Program Benchmarks

Information on Timeline, Comprehensive Exams, Thesis (when applicable) and Culminating Experiences are provided in the links below for the PhD degrees and certificates.

## Program Timeline

The credit hours and additional requirements for each degree and certificate are provided in the links below. The timeline to completion is dependent upon the number of credits pursued each semester, including summer. Time to degree often varies significantly depending upon each student's obligations and commitments in addition to chosen credit hour load. Official program requirements are found in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology  
Doctor of Philosophy – Learning Sciences  
Dual Degree: Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Psychology & Juris Doctor

Advanced [Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research](#)  
Advanced Graduate Certificate in Mixed Methods Research  
Advanced Graduate Certificate in Assessment and Quantitative Research

### Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the [graduate catalog](#).

## Annual Mandatory Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form [formerly known as the Student Annual Review]. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead.

Faculty Advisors/Graduate Coordinators have the option to provide feedback to each student's submitted IDP and provide acknowledgement that they have reviewed the IDP.

Reported student data are shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner.

Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track UNLV metrics related to the annual productivity of all students.

## Discipline Resources

[APA style](#) is required for EPY programs.  
[APA Manual](#)

Professional Organizations & Conferences in which to be involved include:

[American Psychological Association](#)  
[American Educational Research Association](#)  
[International Society of the Learning Sciences](#)

Important Journals

[Journal of Educational Psychology](#)  
[Educational Psychologist](#)  
[Journal of the Learning Sciences](#)

## University Resources

### The Graduate Academy: Innovative Leadership, Professional, and Career Development

The goal of the Graduate Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

### Alumni Engagement

With an alumni base 150,000+ strong, the UNLV Alumni Engagement offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

### Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the [commencement office](#) is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other

information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for **graduation on time** and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College **Student Services Team** and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College **RPC Team**.

### **Office of Diversity Initiatives**

The vision of the **Office of Diversity Initiatives** is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

### **Disability Resource Center (DRC)**

The **DRC** is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

### **Office of International Student and Scholars Services**

**International Students and Scholars (ISSS)** ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

### **The Care Center**

The **Care Center** is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

### **The Intersection**

**The Intersection** is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

### **UNLV Libraries**

**UNLV Libraries** has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

### **Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)**

The **Graduate & Professional Student Association** serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

### **Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The **Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities** is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;

- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

### **Military and Veteran Services Center**

The **Military and Veteran Service Center** is staffed with veterans and veteran education benefits-experienced staff to assist more than 1,800 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists attending UNLV. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

### **The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office**

The **Financial Aid & Scholarships Office** supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

### **Writing Center**

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) page.

## **University Policies and Procedures**

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.

The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the [online reporting form](#), by email at [titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu), by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

*Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.*

## Handbook Information

Please include the faculty vote of approval in the table below.

Last revised	Revised by	Department Vote Tally: Yes/No/Abs. (date of vote)	Changes summary
3-29-23	Lisa Bendixen & Michael Nussbaum	12/0/3 (3/31/23)	Included only EPY, LS & EPY/JD degree information
Spring 2025	Michael Nussbaum	20/0/0 (3/13/25)	Updated name of Graduate Coordinator. Added the Journal of the Learning Sciences to Important Journals. Added AQUA certificate.

