University at Buffalo
Department of Learning and Instruction
Graduate School of Education

Prospective Non-degree Student Information Sheet

This information has been prepared for students interested in taking courses in the Learning and Instruction (LAI) Department who **have not been formally accepted** to a program.

Students interested in taking classes in LAI on a non-degree (non-matriculating) basis must complete an online application found at http://ed.buffalo.edu/academics/courses.html. In addition to the non-degree online application and **$35.00 non-refundable fee**, proof of a bachelor's degree is required. Students may take up to 12 credits as a non-degree student. Non-degree students are allowed to enroll in the courses below.

****PLEASE NOTE: Application fees are NON-REFUNDABLE. Course offerings are subject to change without notice. Please contact the department before registering for a course to be sure the course is available and will run and avoid losing application fees. LAI reserves the right to drop a non-matriculated student registered for a course if the spot is needed for a student in a LAI program. Students may choose to seek non-degree enrollment in a different course if availability exists.**

Tentative – Spring 2026 Non-degree Selected Course Options

(The selections below are some options for Spring 2026. However, please visit the Registrar's page for a fuller listing in the spring term. Any course offered online may be possible, as long as the instructor agrees to your joining the class).

Reg. No	LAI	Course Title	Room	Instructor	Day/Time
23649	508	AI + Learning: Ethics, Design, and Practice	Online	Sam Abramovich	Asynchronous/TBA
14969	517	Media, Popular Culture & ELA	Online	David Bruce	Asynchronous
18036	536	Digital Video/Literacy Learning	Online	David Bruce	Wed/4:10-6:50 PM
21922	545	Problem Posing & Solving in Education	Online	Ji-Won Son	Asynchronous
23435	547	Using Data to Improve Instruction	Online	Terry Bacon	Asynchronous/TBA
20654	582	Principles of Language Acquisition 1st and 2nd	Online	Lilliam Malave Lopez	Tues/4:10-6:50 PM
20660	588	Methods in Bilingual Education	Online	Claribel Gonzalez	TBA
15675	599	Technology and Curriculum Integration		Mitchell Kase	Asynchronous/TBA
23464	649	Learning Theories	Online	Naomi Thompson	Asynchronous/TBA
22519	677	Survey of Topics in K-12 Computer Science	Online	Christopher Proctor; Stacy Scheuneman	TBA
20517	800	Characteristics & Needs of Gifted Learners	Online	TBA	Asynchronous
23664	801	Differentiated Models and Curriculum for Gifted Learners	Online	TBA	Hybrid
23665	802	Instruction and Assessment of Gifted Learners	Online	TBA	Asynchronous/TBA

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COURSES FOR RELIGIOUS & INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Spring 2026

LAI 508 – AI + Learning: Ethics, Design, and Practice – Reg 23649 **Remote: Not real time**
his course prepares (future) educators of all kinds to thoughtfully engage with artificial intelligence (AI) in K¿12 educational contexts through ethical inquiry, hands-on design, and different forms of pedagogical practice. Grounded in human-centered perspectives, students will explore how AI is reshaping the landscape of teaching and learning¿from personalized tools and algorithmic systems to creative applications and student agency.

Participants will build foundational knowledge of AI technologies, critically analyze their implications for equity, labor, and surveillance, and experiment with real-world tools to evaluate their pedagogical promise and pitfalls. Through reflection, redesign, and teaching simulations, students will develop their own stance as educators operating in¿and helping reshape¿AI augmented schools.

Whether you see AI as opportunity, threat, or both, this course will equip you to lead with vision, ethics, and confidence. To be clear, students are not expected to have fluency with the covered technologies but will be expected to become familiar with them and develop (over the course) literacy in using generative AI.

LAI 517 – Media, Popular Culture and ELA – Reg# 14969 **Remote: Not real time**
This online course is designed to provide teachers with the opportunity to critique popular media in the classroom. Grounded in critical media literacy, socio-cultural theory, and multimodality and new literacy theories, this course takes a thematic arc to the intersection of canonical and popular media texts. We will actively engage in our own personal inquires around popular media as well viewing and responding to numerous texts. Given the modality of our online collaboration, the form of our responses will take the form of the texts we are studying.

LAI 536 – Digital Video/Literacy Learning - Reg# 18036 **Remote: Real time**
In this course we will explore the multimodal reading of and writing with visuals in the K-12 classroom. This class will consider the role visuals play in our culture as we explore composition from a broad perspective. This class will pragmatically apply many of the theory-based literacy approaches to course readings, discussions, and activities. In addition, we will explore our viewing literacy as well as how that translates to consider our students as viewers and learners. We will explore issues/responsibilities of the classroom teacher, and consider larger issues of what it means to be visually literate in our culture.

LAI 545 – Problem Posing and Solving in Education - Reg# 21922 **Remote: Not real time**
Difference between problems and exercises; generation of new problems from old; identification and creation of age-appropriate problems; role of problem solving and posing in education; logical relationships between problem posing and solving; abortive and fruitful strategies for posing and solving problems in education.

LAI 547 –Using Data to Improve Instruction - Reg# 23435 Remote: TBA
This course provides an overview of the basic principles of measurement and evaluation, focusing on the assessment of student learning for both formative and summative purposes. Participants will develop the skills to design, analyze, and critique educational assessments that are valid, reliable, and fair, with the goal of improving instructional experiences. The course emphasizes the planning and development of assessments, particularly teacher-made instruments for evaluating standards-based learning. Students will also gain a deeper understanding of the appropriate use of both teacher-made and standardized tests, interpretation of test scores and reporting systems, and key elements of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), including Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).
**Students in NYS Professional Licensure programs will apply principles of measurement and evaluation to their specific content area. For example, math teachers must utilize their knowledge of math to develop math related assessment items, and so on.

LAI 582 – Principles of Language Acquisition 1st and 2nd - Reg# 20654 Remote: Real time
This course will examine first and second language acquisition in order to understand the linguistic, psychological and social processes that underlie their learning and use. Goals include introducing major second language research techniques, comparing significant theories of language acquisition, understanding the development of and analyzing learner language, linking research to classroom practice, and reflecting on the effectiveness of classroom practice in the light of current research.

LAI 588 – Methods in Bilingual Education - Reg# 20660 Remote: Not real time
This course focuses on theoretical frameworks and hands-on experiences for teaching subject areas to students in programs which use two languages for instruction. Conceptual frameworks, techniques and processes for teaching second language learners at the elementary school level are discussed. It examines the relationship between language acquisition and learning content areas. Students will complete a school based project to integrate teaching science or mathematics and language acquisition to bilingual and limited English proficient students. The central point of the course is the use of the native language for instructional purposes.

LAI 599 – Technology and Curriculum Integration - Reg# 15675 Remote: Not real time
This class is designed to answer the following questions:
* How can technology be used in the classroom environment? How does the incorporation of technology impact classroom management practices, instructional strategies, student motivation, and assessment strategies?
* Will using technology enable students/teachers to do something that they could not do before?
* Will the use of technology enable student/teachers to do something that they could do before but can do better (differently) now?
* How do we answer educators' concerns about its use?
* When is the use of technology an appropriate and effective use of tools?

LAI 649 – Technology and Curriculum Integration - Reg# 23464 Remote: Not real time
This doctoral seminar is a survey of contemporary learning theories that are broadly relevant to education.
How do people think? How do people learn? and What are the good ways to facilitate their learning? These are the questions that learning theories grapple with and answers to these questions inform and guide our instruction and research. Learning theories can be difficult, confusing, contradictory, or appear to be far removed from our daily work. But we all subscribe to certain learning theory(ies) explicitly or implicitly. The goals of this course are to help develop or deepen your knowledge of learning theories and research, and construct a personal "creative synthesis" integrating this broad base of knowledge.

To help develop your knowledge in this area, the class will read and discuss seminal works of well-established (e.g., Behaviorism, Constructivism, Sociocultural theories, etc.) as well as emerging learning theories (e.g., Kahneman's Two-System theory, Constructionism, Design-Based Research, Embodied and Multimodal Learning etc.). As a group, we will explore how these perspectives allow us to see and understand specific learning/education phenomena (and obscures others). At the same time, you will have the opportunity to explore theories of personal interest--including the perspectives focused on in the course and perhaps others. The class is intended to support theory-focused dimensions of research activities (during planning, data collection, analysis & reporting)--so you are strongly encouraged to focus the activities of the course on their personal research goals.

In this class, participants will: (a) collectively explore a variety of leading theoretical perspectives used in the learning sciences field, (b) develop expertise in a theoretical perspective (or two) of personal interest, and (c) leverage that expertise to develop a theory-related product (e.g., a conceptual framework for a study, an analytical/coding scheme for an empirical study).

LAI 677 – Survey of topics in K-12 Computer Science - Reg# 22519 Remote: Not real time
This course provides an overview of the content knowledge topics taught in K12 computer science. Classrooms are considered as nodes within broader learning ecologies, and emphasis is placed on the relevance of topics to interdisciplinary and connected K12 CS pedagogy. This course will be of primary interest to students enrolled in the CS advanced certificate who do not have a formal background in CS, as well as future teachers interested in interdisciplinary CS.

LAI 800 – Characteristics and Needs of Gifted Learners – Reg# 20517 Remote: Not real time
This course is an overview of the characteristics and needs of gifted learners including: the intersections of giftedness with cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic factors and individual differences; the domains of intellectual, academic, creative, leadership and artistic giftedness; and the social and emotional development of gifted children and teens. Teachers will learn to implement evidence-based strategies, such as developing thinking dispositions and integrating approaches for twice-exceptional students, in order to help unlock potential in gifted students and to support students in learning content, adapting to different environments, developing self-efficacy, and becoming ethical leaders. Prospective teachers will develop culturally responsive collaboration strategies for working with school staff and families.

LAI 801 – Differentiated Models and Curriculum for Gifted Learners – Reg# 23664 Hybrid
This course will examine conceptual foundations and practical applications of service models for gifted learners, including supports needed for integration into various program placements. Teachers will analyze case studies, practice lesson and unit design that reaches each student's instructional level, learn how to become talent scouts in their schools, and explore ways to connect gifted learners to community assets. Attention will be given to analysis of different forms of research-supported curriculum modifications such as curriculum compacting, school-wide enrichment, and metacognitive models.

LAI 802 – Instruction and Assessment of Gifted Learners – Reg# 23665 Remote: Not real time
This course introduces students to methods for the assessment, evaluation and instruction of gifted learners with special attention to minimizing bias in identification and placement. Teachers will learn to use multiple assessment methods in order to understand student readiness, interest, strengths and learning profile when creating goals for learners. Teachers will learn strategies for selecting, adapting, and creating materials in order to enhance creativity, acceleration, and complexity while meeting standards, and creating safe, inclusive and culturally responsive environments in the general education classroom.