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 2027 Non-degree Selected Course Options

(The selections below are some options for Spring 2027. 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21910 | 508 | AI + Learning: Ethics, Design & Practice | Online | Soumya De | Asynchronous |
| 17490 | 512 | Readings in Multicultural Literature | Online | Christina King | Asynchronous |
| 14648 | 517 | Media, Popular Culture & ELA | Online | Nichole Barrett | Asynchronous |
| 23465 | 538 | Music Education Practices | Online | Elisabeth Etopio | Asynchronous |
| 20576 | 545 | Problem Posing & Solving in Education | Online | Ji-Won Son | Asynchronous |
| 21749 | 547 | Using Data to Improve Instruction | Online | Terry Bacon | Asynchronous |
| 17077 | 560 | Language Arts Methods | Online | Blythe Anderson | Asynchronous |
| 19466 | 574 | Teaching the Exceptional Learner | Online | To be announced | Asynchronous |
| 18129 | 580 | Literature for Young Adults | Online | Christina King | Asynchronous |
| 23646 | 593 | Teaching Foreign Language 1-6 | Online | Mobina Hosseini | Asynchronous |
| 15318 | 599 | Technology and Curriculum Integration | Online | Soumya De | Asynchronous |
| 21772 | 629 | Childhood Literacy Methods | Online | Robert Savage | Asynchronous |

*Updated 10.29.26*

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| 21774 | 649 | Learning Theories | Online | Naomi Thompson | Asynchronous |
| 21775 | 665 | Middle Childhood/Adolescent Literacy Methods | Online | To be Announced | Asynchronous |
| 21014 | 677 | Survey Topics in K-12 Comp Sci | Online | Christopher Proctor and Stacy Scheuneman | Asynchronous |
| 22345 | 686 | Select Topics: Large Language Models in Education | Foster Hall | To be announced | Monday 1pm to 3:50pm |

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# Spring 2027

**LAI 508 – AI Learning: Ethics, Design & Practice**
This 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. 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 512 – Readings in Multicultural Literature**
This is a literature reading course focusing on diverse voices often excluded in the literature curriculum in U.S. schools. The class will function as a reading group discussing short texts, some of which have become multicultural classics, including literature written by African American, Asian Americans, Latino/a, Native Americans (e.g., by Cisneros, Kinkaid, Walker, Wilson, Momaday, Tan, Petry, Alexie, and others). As we respond aesthetically to literary works and share those responses in writing and discussion, we will also examine the ways that individuals and groups make sense of these texts. The course is grounded in cultural, constructivist approaches to literature and will focus, too, on how authors construct texts out of their own sets of experiences in cultural contexts. Students will have some choice in selection of texts which suit their interests and needs.

**LAI 517 – Media, Popular Culture and ELA**
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 538 – Music Education Practices**
The application of theories presented in preliminary graduate courses in music education. Practices in actual teaching experiences are examined in pre-K through 12th grade settings, usually in a workshop/practicum setting.

**LAI 545 – Problem Posing and Solving in Education**
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 546 – Problem Posing and Solving in Education**

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**
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 560 – Language Art's Methods**
This course examines theory and practice in language arts education, with emphasis on written language development and connections among reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Topics include phonics, phonological awareness, spelling, vocabulary, writing pedagogy, orthographic development, and assessment. Students will explore evidence-based practices for creating inclusive learning environments that affirm students' racial, linguistic, and cultural identities.

**LAI 574 – Teaching the Exceptional Learner**
The purpose of this course is to aid in understanding diversity by preparing teachers to offer direct and indirect services to students within the full range of disabilities and special health-care needs in inclusive environments. Students will be provided with techniques designed to enhance academic performance, classroom behavior, and social acceptance for students with disabilities and special needs. Students will learn skills enabling them to (1) differentiate and individualize instruction for students with disabilities and special needs, (2) become familiar with instructional and assistive technologies, (3) implement multiple research-validated instructional strategies, (4) formally and informally assess learning of diverse students, (5) manage classroom behavior of students with disabilities and special needs, and (6) collaborate with others and resolve conflicts to educate students with disabilities and special needs.

**LAI 580 – Literature for Young Adults**
The purpose of Literature for Young Adults is to read, study, and respond to a variety of literature for young adults in a variety of ways. Genres studied include historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, autobiography/memoir, short stories, science fiction, and fantasy. Multicultural literature is also studied to examine critical literacy, as well as sociocultural/sociohistorical, stereotypes, and gender. Censorship concerns, issues, and queries, and the influence challenged, banned, or censored books have on pedagogy and learning is examined.

**LAI 593 – Teaching Foreign Language Grades 1-6**
This course is meant to prepare teachers for language instruction in early grade levels in alignment with research and theory in the field as well as NYS and national standards for language teaching. Upon completion of the course teachers will be able to: (1) articulate various rationales for early world languages study; (2) describe current program models and processes for organizing and implementing early programs; (3) discuss current research findings regarding early language learning; (4) identify the

developmental stages of pre-school and elementary age children and create developmentally-appropriate objectives and activities for specific age groups; (5) discuss current trends in world languages methodology and apply these to planning in the early grades classroom; and (6) demonstrate advocacy skills through a simulated new program proposal.

**LAI 599 – Technology and Curriculum Integration**
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 students/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 629 – Childhood Literacy Methods**
This course focuses on research-based, culturally informed literacy instruction for diverse learners in grades 1-6. Topics addressed include motivation and engagement, culturally informed text selection, family involvement, promoting translanguaging with multilingual learners, and differentiated literacy instruction addressing phonological awareness, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing.

**LAI 649 – Learning Theories**
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.

**LAI 665 – Middle Childhood/Adolescence Literacy Methods**
This course addresses instructional theory and practices focusing on building literacy for diverse learners in grades 5-12 and supporting equitable learning from texts across content areas. Topics covered include text selection, assessment, word recognition and fluency, vocabulary and background knowledge, comprehension, discussion, text-based writing, engagement, and inquiry.

**LAI 677 – Survey of topics in K-12 Computer Science**
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.
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 686 – Select Topics in Large Language Models in Education**

Large Language Models in Education is an interdisciplinary, studio-based course focused on designing and implementing theoretically-grounded applications of AI for K12 teaching and learning. Over the semester, teams of students will articulate a learning goal and then design, build, deploy, and analyze a technology for teaching and learning in partnership with a school or community organization.

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