University at Buffalo
Graduate School of Education

# Handbook for Graduate Study, Department of Learning and Instruction

## Education Studies EdM

**Graduate School of Education**
**University at Buffalo**
**State University of New York**

**While this handbook has been developed to assist you throughout your academic program, it does not constitute the whole of UB or GSE policies concerning students. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with all policies, procedures and deadlines.**

**Last Updated in Fall 2026**

# Table of Contents


**Introduction** ..... 3

**Overview of Graduate Programs** ..... 4

General Requirements for Admissions ..... 4

Program and Degree Policies ..... 5

Program Faculty ..... 6

Department Student Organizations ..... 7

Alumni Association ..... 7

Education Studies EdM ..... 8

General Information ..... 8

Why Education Studies ..... 8

Program and Requirements ..... 9

**International Students Information** ..... 10

**Online Education** ..... 10

**Degree Conferral** ..... 11

Application Deadlines ..... 11

**Campus Resources and Services** ..... 12

**University Policy and Procedures** ..... 13

# Introduction

GSE and this department supports and is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are recognized, respected, and seen as a source of strength. Further, we wish to affirm our commitment to creating and maintaining a positive, welcoming, and inclusive environment that embraces diversity and strives to eliminate barriers to access, advancement, and full participation on the basis of race, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or veteran status for student, faculty, and staff.

**Purpose of Handbook.** This handbook was established to provide you with important information regarding university and department policies and procedures, your responsibilities, obligations and expectations as a student at UB, and UB services and facilities available to you.

**Welcome.** The Department of Learning and Instruction (LAI) provides quality professional education for graduate students pursuing educational careers through the University's Teacher Education Program, Certificates of Advanced Study, and Certification Master's and Non-certification Master's study programs. Certification Tracks of Initial-Only, Initial/Professional, and Professional are available with specified content areas of Early Childhood and/or Childhood, English, English for speakers of other languages, Languages other than English, Literacy Specialist, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Studies with an option of in-person, online-only, or blended study. In addition, the department offers an undergraduate minor and combined programs through its UBTeach Initiative.

***Detailed information on your program of interest can be found on page 12 of this handbook.***

**Department Vision Transforming Lives Through Critical Learning**
We take education to be a vital aspect of the transmission, construction, and transformation of culture and society. As researchers, teachers, and mentors, we prepare professional educators and scholars for colleges and universities as well as K-12 schools and educational agencies. Our work is distinguished by its commitment to multiple literacies and perspectives, to sociocultural understanding, and to social justice.

**Department Mission**
Located in a major research university in an urban setting, the promise of our mission differs radically from similar programs in most departments or schools in colleges and state universities. While we, too, prepare professionals for all roles throughout the K-16 education system, our real impact comes through the research and scholarship that informs our doctoral and professional education programs and contributes to creative, thoughtful, and informed practice.

## Overview of Graduate Programs

The Department of LAI offers a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs: Master of Education degrees leading to New York State (NYS) certification, Master of Education degrees that do not lead to certification and Advanced Certificates. Within the framework approved by department faculty and registered with the New York State Education Department (NYSED), graduate programs are designed to respond to current needs in education and to students' career goals and professional preparation. The programs consist of various learning opportunities: required course work; experiential learning; and research projects.

The LAI department faculty and student body works continuously to empower and support diverse voices and cultures to challenge outdated presumptions and set a new course for education that reflects our pluralist democracy. Our immersive and engaging learning community welcomes into our academic community, faculty, staff, and students from globally represented cultural heritages and traditions.

All licensure programs offered by the Department of Learning and Instruction were accredited by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). Currently, we are pursuing accreditation through the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP).

## General Requirements for Admissions to Master's degree programs in LAI

Each applicant must submit an application to the Department of Learning and Instruction, which must include a letter stating the applicant's academic background detailing reasons their inclinations toward advanced study.

International applicants must fulfill the University's English Proficiency Requirement as described under the University's International Admissions policy. International student resources for the LAI Department , along with some frequently asked question can be found using the links provided.

***Detailed information on your program of interest can be found on page 12 of this handbook.***

*Programs may specify additional requirements for consideration for admission such as a sample of an applicant's writing or an interview.*

## Program and Degree Policies

The department abides by the established student advisement, candidacy, continuous registration, readmission, degree conferral timetable, qualifying exams, thesis dissertation and placement policies. For details regarding these policies use this link.

## Academic Standards Review

In order to sustain academic standards and eligibility for continued enrollment, financial aid, and participation in university activities, the faculty of the department of Learning and Instruction regularly reviews academic records of all graduate students. Essentially, this review addresses the quality of students' studies as measured by the student course grades.

Every student's academic progress is reviewed at the end of each semester.

## Academic Good Standing

A student is in good academic standing if the student's cumulative UB graduate grade point average (GPA) is a 3.0 or greater.

## Academic Warning

Students receive an academic warning if their cumulative UB GPA is less than a 3.0. An academic warning is not be noted on the student's official transcript, however it will be disclosed on the student's departmental record.

## Academic Probation

When students are on academic probation, their UB GPA is less than 3.0 and they are considered to not be in good academic standing. A student is on academic probation, but not in academic good standing if his/her cumulative UB GPA is less than 3.0. Students can request to have UB summer or winter session grades evaluated as part of reconsideration of their probationary or dismissal status.

If a student is on academic probation (s)he cannot participate in university activities. In addition, students on academic probation will have to complete, with an academic advisor, a realistic academic strategy to complete further registration activity.

**Academic probation is not noted on a student's official transcript however it will be disclosed on the student's record.**

## Academic Dismissal

Students at UB who have been enrolled for two or more semesters and have earned a cumulative UB GPA of less than 2.0 will be dismissed from their program and the university regardless of their most recent semester GPA.

All dismissed students will receive official notification via U.S. mail as well as through their UB email account. All further fall or spring semester registration access will be unavailable, however, dismissed students may register for or may keep their enrollment appointments for summer or winter sessions (e.g., students dismissed in December 2018 are able to enroll in winter 2019 courses).

Dismissed students may register as a non-degree students for enrollment in winter or summer sessions upon approval of their academic advisor. Students can apply for readmission one academic year after their dismissal (e.g., students dismissed after spring 2018 can apply for re-admittance for fall 2019).

Students may appeal their dismissal to the Dean of Graduate School of Education during a time specified in the dismissal letter. A consultation with an advisor is a requirement of the appeal process. If an appeal is granted, an outline of the terms and conditions of continued study will accompany the letter informing the student their appeal was successful.

Academic dismissal is noted on a student's official transcript, and will be disclosed on the student's record.

## The Role of the Academic Advisor

Students are assigned an academic advisor once they have been admitted to the program. Students will consult with their academic advisors for guidance related to their program of study, course selection, and all other academic matters. Academic Advisors are also expected to review and sign documents, for example, the application to candidacy.

## Education Studies Faculty

**David Bruce,** Program Director

## Department Student Organizations

Use this link for information on Student Organizations within the Department of Learning and Instruction. Graduate Student Association (LAI-GSA)

## Alumni Association

Use this link for information on the GSE Alumni Association. While general gifts may be given to the school, it also is possible to restrict your donations to support specific programs or projects within GSE.

## Teacher Education Information

The Teacher Education Institute (TEI) administers the clinical components for all initial and initial/professional certification programs. For further detail on expectations for field experience and student teaching, please refer to the Guide to Field Experience and Student Teaching.

TEI also provides institutional recommendations for students who have completed a licensure program (i.e. initial, initial/professional, professional, Gifted, and Literacy). For further information on applying for your teacher certification please review the relevant links on the TEI certification page:
http://ed.buffalo.edu/tei/certification/apply.html

For further information regarding teacher education certification requirements, please contact the Teacher Education Institute at (716) 645-2461 or ubtei@buffalo.edu

# Educational Studies
# Master's Degree

## General Introduction and Information
**(Learning and Instruction)**

Our master's program in education studies can be taken as is or designed and tailored to meet your interests, as well as your professional and academic needs. This program of study is targeted for those whose goals are broad, interdisciplinary and flexible. You can pursue a focus area that allows you to take maximum advantage of courses and resources in the Graduate School of Education. You have the option to create your own multidisciplinary focus area from within our school and across our department

### Education Informatics Focus Area

The education informatics focus area is for you if you are interested in studying how information can be used to inform our knowledge of learning and education. You will develop the understanding and skills necessary to become leaders in applying information to address the needs of formal and informal learners. Our program prepares you to organize, analyze and disseminate information to facilitate educational and organizational objectives, as well as how to improve people's use of information.

### Why the Education Informatics Focus Area?

This focus area is unique because it integrates expertise from our Learning and Instruction department, as well as our Library and Information Studies department.

As a student in this focus area, you will:

- Learn how to organize, analyze, and disseminate information to facilitate educational and organizational objectives
- Study the pedagogy of information use
- Discover how to improve the ways that people use information

In addition, you can work with your academic advisors to create an individualized program of study within this focus area, based on your specific interests and needs.

## Program and Requirements
Program requirements, academic credentials granted, credits required for completion, time to completion, experiential contact hours, career opportunities, and application deadlines are available at this link.

## Capstone Requirement

The Education Studies capstone provides students with an opportunity to apply knowledge and scholarly perspectives developed through their program of study to a project relevant to an educational or professional setting. Capstone projects may take a variety of forms, including professional development workshops, training materials, websites, handbooks, research papers, or other products appropriate to the student's interests and professional goals.

The capstone includes a project proposal and timeline, a midterm progress report, and a final submission consisting of the completed project and an accompanying reflective report. The reflective report should explain the scholarly principles that informed the development and implementation of the project.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Education Studies Capstone

The Education Studies program recognizes that responsible AI literacy is an important professional competency for educators and educational leaders. When appropriate to the goals of the capstone, AI may be used to support aspects of the research, planning, and development process, provided that its use is critically evaluated, transparently disclosed, and does not replace students' independent analysis, scholarly contributions, or professional judgment.

Students who use AI in developing their capstone project or accompanying reflective report must disclose how AI was used and for what purposes. AI should support, rather than replace, students' own intellectual contributions, critical thinking, and professional judgment.

Regardless of whether AI tools are used, students remain fully responsible for the originality, accuracy, integrity, and quality of their capstone work, including any content generated or informed by AI.

## International Students Information

Questions and concerns related to International Student Services can be obtained through the International Student Services Office. The link for this resource is http://www.buffalo.edu/international-student-services.html

## Online Education

There are both on online and face-to-face courses offered in this program.

# Degree Conferral

## Candidacy

Apply for Graduation via the HUB Student Center.

Notify the University of your expected Conferral (graduation) date via the HUB Student Center. The “apply for graduation” link is on the “My Academics” tab.

Note: Should you miss the deadline, you will need to apply for the next conferral (graduation) date AND register for at least one credit hour in the semester you will graduate (maintain continuous registration policy).

UB confers degrees three times a year:

## Application Deadlines

| Graduation Term | Application Deadline | Conferral Date |
|---|---|---|
| Fall | October 15 | February 1 |
| Spring | February 22 | June 1 |
| Summer | July 15 | September 1 |

Use this link for more information about degree conferral.
Commencement information can be found at this link.

## Details regarding various tasks that relate to graduation can be found at the following links:

- Apply for Graduation: A Must Do, and Degree Checkout Status
- Double Degree Candidates (i.e. BS and BA, two degrees awarded at one time)
- Follow Up With Advisement
- Review Your Transcript(s)
- Confirm Your Grades
- Pay Outstanding Bills
- Verify Your Name and Address
- Sign Up For Your Commencement Ceremony
- Check-in with Career Services & Take the Undergraduate Senior Exit Survey

# Campus Resources and Services

## a. Student Advisement

Upon acceptance into a program, you will be assigned an adviser who will develop a tentative plan of study based on your career goals, experiences and needs. A student has the right to change advisers for any number of reasons including interest in another faculty member's research

## b. Office locations

The LAI Main Office is on the 5th Floor of Baldy Hall; the Teacher Education Institute is on the 3rd floor of Baldy Hall in room 375.

## c. UB Libraries

There are multiple libraries available on campus for a complete listing please see the following link: https://library.buffalo.edu/.

However, two libraries will be of interest to music education students: The graduate library known as Lockwood Memorial Library and the Music Library in Baird Hall.

## d. UB Information Technology

UB offers students a wide range of IT services. Complete information, including free software available to UB students, is found at the following link: http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit.html.

## e. UB Student Services

For information regarding available student services, use the following link: **https://1capen.buffalo.edu/**.

# University Policy and Procedures

**For a complete list of University Policies and Procedures please see the following websites:**

**Student Code of Conduct:**
http://www.buffalo.edu/content/dam/www/studentlife/units/uls/student-conduct/ub-student-code-of-conduct.pdf

**Information Technology Polices:**

https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/information_technology%20policies.html

**Academic Integrity:**

https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html

All policy and procedures for graduate study at UB can be found in the Graduate School Policy Library. By using this link, you will be sure to find the most up to date information.

The LAI Department reserves the right to amend, alter, and update the policies, procedures, or other information provided in this handbook as needed. Changes, revisions, and amendments to the material in this handbook will be published on the LAI Department website and in future editions of the handbook.