Purpose
This course has two primary purposes. Across the semester, students will be introduced to the scope of current research that is prominent in educational psychology and some of the theories that drive that research. Additionally, students will delve deeply into a specific research topic by designing an independent research-focused project. To address breadth, students will be responsible for the content of the latest *Handbook of Educational Psychology* and compare the themes in that volume with their own research plans. To address depth, students will identify a research topic related to their program of study and identify the prominent theories associated with that project. Everyone should end the semester with a better understanding of how researchers connect theory to data as part of the research enterprise.

Technology and Support
Facing the interesting opportunities offered by the pandemic, we will be learning together how to conduct our work online and meet program goals related to building a sense of community. As you set up your learning environment, Technology Solutions offers helpful resources [https://it.uic.edu/](https://it.uic.edu/) I will post the recorded version of our class meetings in a shared UIC Box folder labeled “Theories of Educational Psychology”. It will be possible for everyone to edit the folder, allowing for the addition of material, but please make sure not to simply drop and drag when removing content. You are likely to fund other forms of support on the student support site at: [https://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support/](https://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support/)

Readings
Assigned handbook readings, selected for the entire class, will meet breadth requirements. Students will also explore one topic in depth by establishing a personal reading list. Because the focus of this course is on acquiring research skills and expertise, personal reading lists should focus primarily on original research although students may find theoretical papers written for non-researchers to be helpful as they name the parts of various theories.

**Breadth.** As a group, we will read and discuss the content of the latest *Handbook of Educational Psychology* to identify themes that are of interest to our class members and glean insight into how our work aligns with that of others in the field. The handbook was chosen because it represents the latest work in discipline of educational psychology. In addition to reviewing all the chapters in the handbook, each student will present one of the chapters to the class and an activity designed to help the class retain information from that chapter. As part of that presentation, presenters will be required to identify at least two additional journal articles that can be used to expand upon or challenge the claims put forth in the chapter. In this way, everyone will learn more about how to read around a topic.


**Depth.** Because strong careers emerge via sustained goal-setting, each student will also be asked to establish and complete an individualized reading plan. The reading plan should include at least 10 articles from well-regarded, peer-reviewed journals. The final project for the course will be a review or application of research, and a presentation of these findings in class. It would also be helpful to find at least one review article from journals such as Psychological Bulletin, Psychological Review, Review of Educational Research, Review of Developmental Psychology, Educational Psychology Review, or a journal designed for the publication of innovative reviews of research. Everyone is also expected to expand their understanding of the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association.*

**Professional development.** I highly recommend several fairly new books that can assist with your professional development. These books focus on psychology, but the advice is quite sound for all social science research.


**Library-related resources.** Using the library’s databases will be essential for meeting the course requirements. Annie Armstrong, Associate Professor & Liaison Librarian (Education & Psychology), Coordinator of Teaching and Learning Services, Richard J. Daley Library (rm 2-121), University of Illinois at Chicago, 312-413-3045 ([annie@uic.edu](mailto:annie@uic.edu)) is very helpful for those who need tutorials and other forms of assistance with library resources. **Some common questions that Annie can help you with include:** Do you have a RefWorks account? How do I find doi #s when I am not using RefWorks? How can I find journal rankings easily? Can I download eBooks from UIC? (Yes, but download the app first.)

**Assignments**

To join the research community, it is essential that scholars learn how to evaluate scholarship outside their specific area of interest as well as within their specialization. To assist with this process, students should organize their time so that they complete assigned readings before coming to any group discussion and are prepared to discuss the material in the readings. We will be adopting a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous instructional approaches. Synchronous time will be spent discussing applications of the material to particular fields of interest and generating new questions about the field of educational psychology. This process will be facilitated by forming “reading groups” within the class to allow students with similar interests to delve more deeply into topics of conversation. Collaborating on course readings will hold us accountable for talking both about the broader state of the field and about specific areas of interest. Breadth requirements for the course will be met if students attend all sessions and participate in thoughtful discussions of the readings. There will be no exams, but it is assumed that everyone will participate in class each week. Practicing the tenets outlined in the book *Make it Stick* can help students see why reading, speaking, writing, and listening are essential for joining any research community. In cases when it is necessary to miss a class, students may submit ideas to their group members and the instructor prior to class. Everyone is also responsible for keeping the class informed about potential absences and obtaining any missed information.

Learning to align research goals with theory takes practice. Therefore, each student will negotiate an evaluation plan with the instructor, conveying how they plan to align their research interests with questions that are being posed by others in the field. Because this core course is intended to help students learn skills for conducting original research, assignments should be completed using all the standards of professional discourse (e.g., APA format, reliance on primary sources). An especially informative site can be found at: [https://www.apa.org/ethics/code](https://www.apa.org/ethics/code)
Assigned tasks are weighted equally. At the **very minimum**, students are expected to complete the following tasks,

1. Write a goals statement for the course outlining specific, attainable goals. (0-100 points)
2. Find a data-based article on a topic of your choice and review it for quality (0-100 points)
3. Read the handbook chapters and come ready to discuss the content of weekly themes. (0-100 points)
4. Identify a week and a chapter to present to the class. As part of that presentation, find at least 2 additional readings that will strengthen the arguments being offered. Write a brief, critical review of this experience using the content of the readings. (0-100 points)
5. Identify an area of specialization and craft a literature review focused on that topic. Find at least 10 articles from different journals and incorporate a critique of those articles into a written review. (0-100 points)
6. Present the findings related to an area of specialization to the class in a manner that allows everyone to acquire a clear “take-away” message. This is easiest to do within your reading groups. (0-100 points)

Students who wish to **work toward an 'A'** in the course should integrate the concepts from the assigned and independent readings into their overall program of study. Evaluation plans should demonstrate how such integration will be achieved. If personal and assigned reading lists do not coincide, students may demonstrate breadth in their understanding by writing short reaction papers that reflect breadth of knowledge in the field, critiquing the assigned readings or offering new directions for study. Outstanding work should enhance students’ curriculum vita and writing quality should aim to align with the standards found in published journals. Templates for project options include more details on this process.

**Grades of “B”** will include oral participation in class discussions and an independent paper that does not integrate themes related to educational psychology into a final project. A **passing grade of “C”** will be possible if students turn in a final literature review, but are not always ready to participate in class discussions or turn in a literature review that does not meet basic proficiency standards. (In doctoral programs, core courses where students earn anything less than a “B” are often retaken.)

**Considerations when designing personal goals.** Students who have not read many journal articles have sometimes written short summaries of various articles and turned them in for critique during the semester. In small reading groups, everyone will be asked to talk about what they are reading, and we will compare papers written for these different purposes. Taking advantage of opportunities to receive feedback, either orally or in writing, can improve comprehension of the technical features of a paper. Presenting findings to the class is likely to enhance reading skills as well. Nevertheless, deadlines help everyone stay productive, so it is a good idea to build a schedule for turning work in and receiving feedback when you outline your course goals.

**Enhancing communication.** To enhance communication, everyone will be added to a class listserv that is reserved only for prospective researchers who are interested in some form of psychology or human development. The syllabus is also posted online: [https://thork.people.uic.edu/fair/](https://thork.people.uic.edu/fair/) and will be updated as the semester progresses. If you bookmark the syllabus, you may need to hit the refresh button periodically to update the links. Syllabi can also be found by doing a search for Terri Thorkildsen and finding the link that includes the word “people”.

As a facilitator of a graduate-level course, I will be responsible for supporting discussions and strengthening conversations as students present information about their research. I will pay particular attention to how individuals align practical, theoretical, and evidence-based qualities in their writing and speech across the semester. I will also offer timely feedback on any written communications and assignments that students turn in, conduct a midterm progress assessment for each student, offer supportive materials for the various themes raised as part of the course, and help to draw attention to commonalities and differences in students’ research projects.

As a member of a graduate program, you will be responsible for tracking your own professional growth, labeling skills you are acquiring and skills you still need to learn, and preparing yourself to use the information being shared as part of this course. Ideally, you will generate a narrative about how the information you discover across weeks aligns with this course with other courses you are taking as well as a story about how you might embrace or reject particular theories of educational psychology.
By the end of the semester, your area of specialization should be clear to the members of your reading group. Students typically communicate their interests in several ways, including use of the class listserv, contributions to class discussions, or more private conversations with the instructor and classmates. Students and faculty in the COE have learned over the years that when everyone participates, we can all learn, have fun, and avoid unnecessary resentments. As is common in academic communities, people who do not join in are typically ignored rather than punished—active learning, in other words, is an assumed requirement for all our courses.

**Academic Integrity**

UIC’s *Honor Code* as well as the ethical standards of the *American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, Association for Psychological Science, Sigma Xi: The Scientific Research Honors Society, and Society for Research in Child Development* govern all work in this, and all other courses offered in the College of Education. An especially informative site can be found at: [https://www.apa.org/ethics/code](https://www.apa.org/ethics/code) Everyone is responsible for becoming familiar with these codes and standards which are available online. Especially important when conducting research, pay attention to the proper use and citations of others’ work, and avoid plagiarism. UIC’s Disciplinary Policies can be found at: [https://dos.uic.edu/community-standards/](https://dos.uic.edu/community-standards/)

Two issues are especially important to discuss as part of our course activities: plagiarism and the use of assignments for more than one course. First, a review of research represents the author’s version of the main information obtained from the readings. Ideally, try to avoid quoting directly from articles; instead highlight the qualities of the data offered in the research. Occasional quotations are acceptable if the quote is accurately cited, following requirements found in the APA style manual. More importantly, **try to support all your ideas with empirical evidence** instead of relying on "appeals to authority". There is a wide variety of information that would qualify as evidence and a set of formal rules for citing these sources properly. Failure to cite sources for borrowed ideas is an act of plagiarism. (See [https://researchguides.uic.edu/etds/plagiarism](https://researchguides.uic.edu/etds/plagiarism))

Second, in this course, you are **encouraged** to use information from other courses. That sort of sharing is very helpful among professionals. Many students will be using this course as one of several lenses through which they explore their area of research. When crafting all assignments, be sure to consider the evaluation rubrics that are used to evaluate the assignment, but it is perfectly acceptable to invite more than one professor or peer to read a literature review. The posted grading rubrics offer an outline of how to meet course requirements, and these will differ across courses. Adapting material for each course, but considering the grading rubric, is accepted professional practice as students become more established as a scholar in their field. *Formal funding and journal submissions similarly require compliance with rubrics.*

**Accessibility**

UIC strives to ensure the accessibility of programs, classes, and services to students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations can be arranged for students with various types of disabilities, such as documented learning disabilities, vision or hearing impairments, and emotional or physical disabilities. All students should know that the University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that individuals with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for full access and participation in UIC Programs must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Please contact DRC at (312) 413-2183 (voice) or (312) 413-0123 (TDD).

UIC also offers a wide range of resources for students who need extra help. Prospective researchers may want to pay particular attention to the resources available at the UIC Writing Center. It is essential that students get in the habit of writing at least something as often as possible, preferably *every day*. More details on support services can be found at: [http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support](http://www.uic.edu/academics/student-support)
## Schedule for Breadth
*(Will change with student involvement)*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tentative Agenda</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Chapters</th>
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| Aug. 25<sup>th</sup> | Choosing a disciplinary stance—T2  
  *Welcome tasks*  
  *Article review guideline*  
  *Goals statement guideline* | Textbook forward  
  Afterword I & II  
  *Chapter presentation guide*  
  *True colors* |
| Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> | Philosophical and epistemological foundations—T2  
  *Where do theories come from?*  
  *Logical fallacies* | Chapter 1  
  *What is a theory?*  
  *Invent a theory* |
| Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> | Learning sciences or educational psychology—T2  
  *Purposes and journals*  
  *Design Guides for Diagramming Articles* | Article review due  
  *Goals statement due*  
  Chapters 2 & 3  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *Checking your own work* |
| Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> | Cognition and learning—T2  
  *Defending a disciplinary stance* | Chapters 5, 9, & 10  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
| Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> | Assessment and learning—Maureen  
  *Technology & learning—T2*  
  *Theory validation* | Chapters 25 & 29  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
| Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> | Motivational interventions—Jessica  
  *Literacy for schooling—T2* | Chapters 12, 14, & 17  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
| Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> | Civic education—T2  
  *Scientific literacy—T2*  
  "New Civics" | Chapters 20 & 22  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
| Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> | Cultural differences in educational contexts—Rabia  
  *Language development & culture—T2*  
  *Theories, purposes, & hypotheses* | Chapters 15, 23, & 27  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
| Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> | Historical understanding—Cheryl  
  Mathematics education (read independently)  
  *Priority setting* | Chapters 19 & 21  
  *Guiding questions*  
  *KWL reminder* |
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| Oct. 27th        | **Collaborative learning**—Erin  
**Dialogic instruction & technology**—T2 | Chapters 26 & 28  
Guiding questions  
KWL reminder |
| Nov. 3rd         | **Emotional regulation and teaching**—Callie  
**Online lecture and activities** | Chapters 6 & 30  
Guiding questions  
KWL reminder |
| Nov. 10th        | **Motivation**—Cory  
**Motivational interventions**—Garrett | Chapters 7, 11, & 24  
Guiding questions  
KWL reminder |
| Nov. 17th        | **Motivation & emotion**—Ruiping | Chapters 13 & 18  
Guiding questions  
KWL reminder |
| Nov. 24th        | **Thanksgiving Week** | **No class** |
| Dec. 1st         | Temperament, intentions, and self-awareness—T2 | Chapter 16  
Afterword I & II  
Guiding questions  
KWL reminder |
| Dec. 10th        | **Final Papers Due**  
*(Grading rubric and writing tips)* | **Practitioner option**  
**Critical review option**  
**Problem statement option**  
**Research proposal option** |