

erikson

Ph.D. in child development

Erikson Institute offers a Ph.D. in child development in conjunction with the Graduate School of Loyola University Chicago, which awards the degree. The Erikson-Loyola doctoral program focuses on applied child development research and examines the dynamics of and sociocultural influences on human development from infancy through early and middle childhood.

The program emphasizes the impact of culture, social class, and social relationships on young children's learning and development. Applied research includes studying the effects of educational institutions, intervention programs, policies, and other contextual factors (such as poverty and language differences) on children's development, achievement, and well-being. Internships supported by a student-mentor relationship provide opportunities for students to learn the crafts of research and college teaching.

The Erikson-Loyola program prepares academics, applied researchers, and program developers to assume intellectual leadership in a variety of professional settings that study and/or serve young children. Graduates pursue careers in college teaching and research, program design and evaluation, program administration, and policy analysis. Completion of the program does not result in any type of licensure.

The doctoral program has close ties to Loyola's graduate programs in psychology, particularly developmental psychology. Students in the program are enrolled in the Graduate School of Loyola University and must conform to all graduate school policies. Students are advised to consult the current edition of the *Loyola Graduate School Catalog*.

Degree requirements

Doctoral students must generally complete 42 semester hours beyond the master's degree. Students take courses at both Erikson and the Loyola Graduate School.

Child development core

Required: 18 semester hours

Students are required to take the following seven courses at Erikson.

E460 Proseminar in Applied Child Development

(0 semester hours)

This proseminar introduces new doctoral students to current issues, theoretical developments, and major research questions in the field of applied child development. The doctoral faculty will participate by leading discussions in their respective areas of expertise. The proseminar is required for all new doctoral students.

E477 Seminar on Children at Risk

(3 semester hours)

This course examines the concept of risk and how it impacts child development. We will use multiple frameworks to examine risk, including public health, developmental psychopathology, and education. Attention will be focused on biological/genetic (such as prematurity and temperament), family (such as parent mental health and child maltreatment), and environmental (such as poverty and neighborhood violence) factors. The consequences of growing up in the context of chronic adversity will be explored, as well as the factors that lead some children to cope with and show resilience in these circumstances. The challenges of understanding risk in current research, as well as the implications of this research for programs and policy will be discussed.

E479 Seminar on Learning and Teaching: Linking Theory and Research to Practice

(3 semester hours)

An understanding of the two domains of learning and teaching is fundamental to the field of child development and education. This course examines these issues through investigating and analyzing exemplary models of recent and influential theory and research. A dialogue-based approach to learning will be used throughout the course to encourage personal involvement in exploring and explaining the science of learning and teaching. Students will also engage in fieldwork, such as on-site observations, conversations with practitioners, and a research project, to gain first-hand experience of these issues.

E481 Seminar on Social and Cultural Contexts

(3 semester hours)

Through an examination of current theory and multidisciplinary social science research, this course explores the influence of contextual factors on the development of children. Socially and culturally constructed factors (such as gender, race, ethnicity, and social class) and institutions (such as family, schools, and organized child care) will be discussed in terms of their influence on child rearing and child development. Through course lectures, discussion, and assignments, students will gain an understanding of the variability of child rearing strategies and outcomes across cultural communities; the role of historical and ecological factors in child rearing and family functioning; identity development in complex societies; and sources of possible tensions between different cultural communities and societal institutions (such as schools, social service providers, and child care programs).

**E482 Designing, Developing, and Evaluating
Early Childhood Intervention Programs**

(3 semester hours)

This course examines the variety of early childhood supports and interventions that have evolved to serve low-income children and their families. These include: parenting and family support interventions, preschool, child care, and kindergarten (and other supports around the transition to school), and more broadly, public aid (welfare), parental leave, and maternal and child health.

**E421 Human Development I: Psychosocial
Development in Infancy and Childhood**

(3 semester hours)

This course focuses on the study of social and emotional development from birth through the school years, presenting and critiquing a Western social science point of view. It primarily considers how children experience themselves and others; how the contexts of relationships and culture impact the young child's social and emotional development; and the interaction of biological, psychological, and social forces. Students are expected to acquire a working knowledge of the emotional and social domains of development through the integration of natural observation of infants, preschoolers, and school-aged children with relevant theory and research. (Doctoral students who have already taken C421 at Erikson as master's students are not required to take this course.)

E489 Special Topics

(3 semester hours)

This course focuses on selected topics in infancy or early childhood.

Research design and statistics

Required: 9 semester hours

Students are required to take three courses in research design and statistics at Loyola for a total of nine semester hours. At least one course must be in research design, e.g., PSYCH 514 Research Methods in Developmental Psychology, and one must be in statistics, e.g., PSYCH 480 Advanced Statistics I. The third course may be in either area.

Additional Loyola courses

Required: 9 semester hours

Doctoral students are required to take three additional doctoral-level courses at Loyola University, one of which must be a course in cognitive development. (Doctoral students who have already taken C426 Development of Cognition, Language and Play I at Erikson as master's students are not required to take an additional course on cognitive development.) See the *Loyola Graduate School Catalog* for a listing of Loyola courses and faculty.

Internships

Required: 6 semester hours

The internship consists of two semesters of supervised fieldwork and is supervised by the student's Erikson adviser. One semester must be a research internship and the other is planned to meet the professional needs of each student.

E485 Research Internship

(3 semester hours)

The student will work either with an Erikson faculty member, research scientist, or research associate or on a research project at another institution.

E486 Teaching Internship

(3 semester hours)

The student will teach or assist in teaching a college course in child development or a related topic.

Doctoral candidacy

The status of doctoral candidacy indicates that the student is ready to conduct dissertation research and write the dissertation. The student becomes a doctoral candidate after successfully completing the steps listed below. A more complete description of the steps leading to candidacy can be found at www.luc.edu/gradschool.

Steps toward candidacy

1. Completion of all required courses
2. Completion of qualifying paper or pilot study
3. Establishment of an approved dissertation committee
4. Approval of the dissertation proposal by the dissertation committee, Loyola's Institutional Review Board, and the Graduate School

Qualifying paper or pilot study

Doctoral students submit a qualifying paper, preferably in an area or on a topic close to that of the student's likely dissertation. This paper can take the form of either:

1. An analytical/critical review of the literature on some important problem, question, or issue in child development, a review that must draw on at least two of the Erikson doctoral seminars; or
2. A pilot research study, with a research question or questions, a problem statement, literature review, methods chapter, and brief results chapter.

Students decide which option to pursue in consultation with their adviser.

The qualifying paper is designed to test the student's scholarly ability to gather and sort data, to analyze relevant literature critically and succinctly, and to work independently and thus, ultimately, to undertake a dissertation.

The qualifying paper will be read and evaluated by the student's adviser plus one other member of Erikson's doctoral faculty, selected by the adviser in consultation with the student. The qualifying paper is usually completed at end of the student's third year.

Dissertation

The dissertation is a substantial original piece of research undertaken by the student with the guidance of his/her committee with the prime objective being the advancement of knowledge in the field of child development.

Dissertation committee

The dissertation committee is usually formed after completing the Erikson qualifying paper/pilot study. A committee consists of at least three faculty members; two must be from Erikson, including the chairperson, and one must be a Loyola faculty member.

Dissertation proposal

The proposal contains a statement of the problem being investigated, an overview of the relevant research literature, a statement of hypotheses and/or research questions, and a description of the methodology, including subjects, sampling procedures, intervention or data collection process, and a description of the proposed data analysis.

The faculty chairperson of the dissertation committee will decide with the student when it is appropriate to call a dissertation committee meeting to discuss the proposal.

Erikson holds an oral hearing on the dissertation proposal as part of the process for admission to candidacy.

Human subjects review procedures

Before collecting data for the dissertation, the student must receive approval from the Loyola Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

On completion of the candidacy requirements and acceptance of the dissertation proposal, a student is admitted to candidacy and is considered a doctoral candidate.

Completion of dissertation

Students follow a set protocol in the final stages of completing a dissertation, including scheduling the final defense hearing and having the final copies of the dissertation approved. Students are responsible for meeting the deadlines set by the Loyola Graduate School. All dissertations require a public oral defense.

Time frame

Students must finish all requirements for the doctorate within six years of admission to the program. Students register each semester (excluding summer sessions) until they complete all program requirements. Course work is typically completed over three years.

After completing the program course work and while preparing for admission to candidacy, students register for Doctoral Study (E497) for a maximum of two semesters. After registering for two semesters of Doctoral Study or after being admitted to candidacy, students register for a minimum of two semesters of Dissertation Supervision (E499) and continue to register until the oral defense is successfully completed.

Recent dissertations

Name in parenthesis indicates dissertation committee director.

“Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Early Childhood: A Study of Teachers’ Knowledge”

(Gillian Dowley McNamee, Ph.D.)

Luisiana Meléndez, 2007

“Transition to Motherhood: Low Income Adolescent Black Mothers’ Perspectives”

(Aisha Ray, Ph.D.)

Cynthia Lashley, 2007

“Influences of Parental Perceptions on the Quality of Life of Families of Children with Autism”

(Robert Halpern, Ph.D.)

Mojdeh Bayat, 2005

“Sensory Processing and the Child with Cri du Chat Syndrome: Caregiver Interpretations”

(Gillian Dowley McNamee, Ph.D.)

Jennifer M. Rosinia, 2005

“Working Approach: A New Look at the Process of Learning”

(Gillian Dowley McNamee, Ph.D.)

Ann L. Masur, 2004

“Mediated Activity of Schizophrenic Mothers and Their preschool Children During a Problem-Solving Task”

(Joan Brooks McLane, Ph.D.)

James M. Geidner, 2003

“Peace Boys in a War Zone: Identity and Coping Among Adolescent Men in a Favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil”

(Robert Halpern, Ph.D.)

Gary T. Barker, 2001

“The Relationship between Prosocial Behaviors and Academic Achievement in the Primary Multiage Classroom”

(Gillian Dowley McNamee, Ph.D.)

Susan J. Kinsey, 2000



Jennifer McCray

Ph.D. student

Degrees: B.A., English, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; M.S., Child Development, Erikson

On Erikson: “At Erikson, no professor hands you work and says, ‘This is what you’re going to do.’ Instead, you work alongside faculty. You bring your perspective and discuss ideas and research. It’s been a great experience.”

What should math look like in the play of preschoolers? How do you develop a math-rich environment in the preschool classroom?

While completing her course work in the Erikson-Loyola University Ph.D. program, Jennifer McCray became fascinated by preschool mathematics, and in particular, by the need to improve the teaching of math concepts in the preschool curriculum. Recent research has shown that the more teachers speak about math, the better their young students perform on math achievement testing. McCray designed an ambitious research project studying preschool mathematics, conducted during the 2006–07 school year.

The study assessed preschool teachers’ knowledge of mathematics and identified effective strategies for teaching math to preschoolers. A two-year, \$50,000 Head Start grant from the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families—which funds doctoral students doing research in partnership with Head Start programs—enabled her to collect and analyze her data and write her dissertation.

McCray hoped her research would provide the theoretical basis for designing a model for teaching math in Head Start and other preschool environments, and she’s begun to see that happen. Erikson was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant to provide Chicago Public School teachers with early mathematics education, and McCray heads the project.

Erikson Institute faculty

As a pioneer in the field of child development, Erikson has attracted a faculty of nationally recognized experts in their fields, committed to expanding students' understanding of child development and generating research that improves the way children and their families are served.

Faculty conduct research in such areas as early literacy development; parenting and family support programs; assessment strategies in early childhood; infant regulatory disorders; after-school and youth programming; the development of children in multigenerational families in urban communities; the social and educational implications of immigration and the new American family; training early childhood professionals to work effectively in multicultural settings; educational equity for low-income and minority children; social-emotional development of young children, and others.

In addition to participating in professional and academic societies, faculty members serve in a variety of important national leadership positions for such bodies as the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, Zero to Three, National Black Child Development Institute, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). They are sought after as speakers and consultants to child care organizations, community programs, policymakers, and the media.

For more information about our faculty, visit our web site, www.erikson.edu.

Samuel J. Meisels, President and Professor

A.B., University of Rochester; Ed.M. in education, Harvard University; Ed.D. in education, Harvard University

Robert Halpern, Program Director and Professor

B.A., Trinity College (Hartford, CT); M.S. in early childhood education, Florida State University; Ph.D. in international development education, Florida State University

Jie-Qi Chen, Professor

B.A., Beijing Normal University; M.S. in early childhood education, University of Northern Iowa; Ph.D. in applied child development, Tufts University

Molly Fuller Collins, Assistant Professor

B.S., Vanderbilt University; M.Ed. in early childhood education, Boston University; M.S. in applied linguistics, Kansas University; Ed.D. in curriculum and teaching (early childhood education), Boston University

Linda Gilkerson, Professor

B.S., University of Kansas; M.Ed. in special education, University of Missouri; Ph.D. in early childhood special education, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana

Admissions

Jon Korfmacher, Associate Professor

B.A., Stanford University; Ph.D. in clinical psychology and child development, University of Minnesota

Gillian Dowley McNamee, Professor

B.A., Hampshire College; M.S.T., University of Chicago; Ph.D. in reading and language, Northwestern University

Aisha Ray, Associate Professor

B.A., Grinnell College; M.Ed. in early childhood education, Erikson Institute-Loyola University Chicago; Ph.D. in developmental psychology, University of Michigan

Frances O'Connell Rust, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty

B.A., Manhattanville College; M.A.T. in psychology and sociology, Manhattanville College; M.Ed., Teacher's College, Columbia University; Ed.D. in curriculum and teaching, Teacher's College, Columbia University

Frances Stott, Professor

B.A., University of Chicago; M.A. in educational psychology, University of Chicago; Ph.D. in educational psychology/child development, Northwestern University

All applicants must have a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education in a field related to child development, for example, education, social work, or psychology, with a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4-point scale. Applicants will be interviewed and selected on the basis of their prior academic performance, acceptable performance on the Graduate Record Examination, and evidence of intellectual curiosity. Candidates are required to submit separate applications to both Erikson and the Loyola Graduate School. Information on applying is found on each school's web site. The application deadline is February 1.

Financial aid

Erikson is committed to helping students finance their graduate education. Doctoral fellowships and assistantships are available on a competitive basis. For more information regarding the availability of other types of financial aid, for example, low-interest federal student loans, see Loyola's web site at www.luc.edu/gradschool.

It is the policy of Erikson Institute not to discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or veteran status in matters of admissions, employment, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates, in accordance with civil rights legislation and institutional commitment. Any alleged violations of this policy should be directed to the Vice President/Dean of Academic Affairs.

Erikson Institute reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

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