

TO: Policy Council
 FROM: Learning Sciences Faculty
 RE: Learning Sciences Master's Program Revision
 DATE: March 23, 2016

The Learning Sciences faculty have voted to change the requirements for the MS in Learning and Developmental Sciences in the Learning Sciences track.

Current Learning Sciences MS Program of Studies (36 credits)

Learning Sciences Core Requirements (15 credits)

P572 Introduction to the Learning Sciences	3	
P631 Theorizing Learning in Context		3
P632 Designing for Learning Context		3
P633 Capturing Learning in Context	3	
P671 Advanced Proseminar in Learning Sciences	1	

Inquiry Requirements (9 credits)

Choose from the approved inquiry core classes

Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, History (3 credits)

Choose among any education course with an H-prefix

Curriculum and Instructions (3 credits)

Choose among any Curriculum and Instruction course with advisor's consent. (6-12 credits)

Electives may be taken in fields inside or outside the School of Education that are outside the Learning and Developmental Sciences. Students may take electives in any area of interest to complement their program of study. Electives taken must bring the total to 36 credit hours and must contribute to the integrity of the student's program.

Problems with the Current POS

This POS was developed by faculty who are no longer with the program and does not reflect current course offerings or student needs. One consequence of the current POS is that all of the MS student POS documents require extensive amendments. Another consequence is that it is difficult to market the MS program, because it does not appear to offer courses on topics that students are interested in. Additionally the lack of flexibility combined with limited course offerings is making it hard for students to complete in a timely fashion--a big issue for MS

students. The proposed changes will still allow a coherent focus on Learning Sciences while minimizing the need for amendments to programs of studies. Specific concerns with the current POS are:

- Include a course that is no longer taught (P671) because it was removed from the PhD POS.
- Does not currently allow for enough 500 level courses that could be taught on a more regular schedule, which would appeal to non-LS students and could be included as electives in other programs.
- Consistency with practices of students who have amended the POS because they want to take some of their electives from with the LS program. The proposed changes would give them this flexibility.
- Does not support the need to have a coherent introductory series of two courses for both the MS and the PhD program. The P572 Intro to LS has not drawn enough students from outside the LS program to allow us to teach it each year. Instead, we have been using P544, Applied Cognition and Learning Strategies course as the first required course.
- Does not take advantage of the existing P640 course (Thinking and Learning in Social Contexts). After some deliberation we have concluded that P640 will be an ideal second required introductory course. In doing so we split the intro series across a more cognitive first course and a more cultural/social second course. This will be an ideal intro series for LS students while also providing two courses that will appeal to students outside of LS (and which can be included on their POSs as possible electives).
- This simply does not make sense given that the 15 are credits already required from outside the major. Plus the distinction between “Learning Sciences” and the larger set of CEP courses is unclear. Currently students only are able to choose three LS courses and that is not enough to give them a focus needed to prepare for entry level work and be competitive for a PhD program.

Proposed Revised POS

As such we have voted to propose the 36-credit MS POS be changed as follows:

Learning Sciences Core Requirements: (15 credits)

Required Courses

1. P544 Applied Cognition and Learning Strategies (3 credits)
2. P640 Thinking and Learning in Social Contexts (3 credits)

Electives in Major

Students select 3 additional courses in the major with at least 1 at the 600 level. Courses are typically selected from the following list, with substitutions relevant to the major at the discretion of the advisor and department chair:

- :P507 Assessment in Education (3 credits)
- P540 Learning and Cognition in Education (3 credits)
- P545 Educational Motivation (3 credits)
- P573 Learning Sciences Apprenticeship (1-3 credits, max of 3 credits)
- P574 Topical Seminar in Learning Sciences (3-6 credits)
- P600 Topical Seminar in Learning, Cognition, and Instruction (3-6 credits)
- P631 Studying Learning in Context (3-6 credits)
- P632 Designing for Learning in Context (3-6 credits)
- P633 Theorizing Learning in Context (3-6 credits)
- P650 Topical Seminar in Educational Psychology (3-6 credits)
- P674 Advanced Topical Seminar in Learning Sciences (3-6 credits)

Inquiry Requirements (9 credits)

Choose from the approved inquiry core classes

Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, History (3 credits)

Choose among any education course, typically with an H-prefix or an alternative agreed to by the advisor

Curriculum and Instructions (3 credits)

Choose among any Curriculum and Instruction course, or an alternative agreed to by the advisor

Elective Requirements (6-12 credits)

Electives may be taken in fields inside or outside the School of Education. Students may take electives in any area of interest to complement their program of study. Electives taken must bring the total to 36 credit hours and must contribute to the integrity of the student's program.