ADVISING & MENTORING STATEMENT

Kristen L. McMaster, Ph.D. | 182 Education Sciences Bldg / 104 Burton Hall | mcmas004@umn.edu
612-384-8198 (call or text)

~ Creating conditions for success for diverse learners by promoting teachers' use of data-based decision-making and evidence-based instruction, and developing individualized interventions. ~

1 WELCOME!



I am excited that you have joined (or are thinking of joining) the University of Minnesota program in Special Education in the Department of Educational Psychology. The purpose of this document is to provide information about my approach to advising, my expectations of my advisees/mentees, and what you can expect from me during your experience here. My goal is to do all that I can to ensure that you have a productive, meaningful, and positive experience at UMN and that you find a good path to successfully meet your goals. I look forward to working with you!

2 ABOUT ME

BACKGROUND: I grew up in South Portland, Maine, and for as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a teacher. I earned my B.S. (1995), M.Ed. (1998), and Ph.D. (2002) in Special Education, all from Peabody College, Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. From 1995-98, I was a high school life skills teacher and elementary resource teacher in Metro Nashville Public Schools before pursuing my doctoral degree, and then joined the faculty at UMN in 2002. I served as a lecturer in special education for one year before assuming a tenure-line position. For the last 20+ years, I've been conducting research and teaching here at the U (with a 4-year stint as department chair of Ed Psych, and currently serving half-time as Assistant Dean for Research in CEHD). In addition, I provide professional development to practitioners and consult with researchers and policymakers in Minnesota as well as nationally and internationally. Outside of work, I love to read, swim, hike, and travel and explore caves with my husband Eric. (Fun fact: Eric owns and operates Crystal Cave in Spring Valley, Wisconsin!)

POSITIONALITY: I am a teacher and scholar with a naturalistic worldview: I believe in science! My empirical work aims to bridge research and practice--starting by learning from educators about "educational imperatives" or problems of practice that are central to advisees' success in school and later life--and leveraging our (researchers' and practitioners') collective expertise to address those issues. My research is guided primarily by cognitive theories and often addressed with quantitative methods, though I have a strong appreciation for sociocultural perspectives and qualitative/mixed methods, and draw on these to answer questions beyond "*what works*" such as "*for whom*" and "*in what contexts*."

I recognize that my background and experiences deeply influence the ways that I approach my work. I was born, raised, and educated in the U.S., and thus my identity is inextricably entwined with this country's history--which includes centuries of racism and oppression of Black, Brown, and Indigenous people, as well as ableism, audism, and other forms of bias and oppression, that continue to permeate many of our systems and structures--including special education. I strive to be informed about these problematic systems and structures as well as to be aware of my own biases--and to do my part in efforts to dismantle them, which requires lifelong learning, ongoing critical reflection, and continued action. I am aware that there are many gaps in my knowledge and understanding and welcome opportunities to close those gaps.

MY ADVISING/MENTORING APPROACH AND VALUES: One of the greatest joys of my job is getting to work with amazing, smart, talented advisees and postdoctoral fellows who are dedicated to improving the education and lives of individuals with learning differences and disabilities. I view my advisees/mentees as colleagues and collaborators with common or complementary research interests and expect that our work together will be mutually beneficial and productive. I believe strongly that *diverse perspectives and lived experiences contribute to the excellence and potential impact of our work*. Thus, I seek to work with individuals with diverse backgrounds and identities including (not limited to) diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, languages, gender identities, sexual orientations, and disabilities.

I strive to be an adviser with *clear and high expectations*, a *humane approach* to providing guidance and mentorship, and an *open mind* to the exploration of new ideas and questions that leverage a wide range of theoretical frameworks, research methodologies, and analytic approaches. My approach is *individualized* and *person-centered*: I strive to meet my advisees where they are on their academic journeys; to learn about their strengths, needs, and goals for their graduate school experiences and future careers; and to tailor their degree programs accordingly. In turn, I expect my advisees to be willing to work hard; be open to new perspectives, ideas, and input/feedback regarding their work; and to be candid about their interests and goals. I strongly encourage my advisees to prioritize their own *health and well-being* (and I try to model this as well), with the understanding that when we do so, we bring our best selves to our work (see section 7 on *Navigating Life in Graduate School*).

I also strive to foster an *inclusive and collaborative environment* in my lab, where all members value and respect the diverse perspectives and lived experiences that each of us brings to our work together. I expect that we will view our work together through an equity lens that promotes the meaningful inclusion and success of diverse learners. I expect my advisees to engage with me and with other members of my lab/research groups on a frequent and regular basis, to learn from each other and leverage each other's strengths to work toward common goals, and to assume more and more of a leadership/mentoring role in our collective work as they advance through their programs. My ultimate goal is for my advisees to leave their graduate programs as independent AND collaborative scholars and leaders--because success (impact) in our work is rarely achieved alone.

3 ADVISING RELATIONSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS

COMMUNICATION: Communication is key to any positive and productive relationship. I aim to provide clear, direct, and timely communication regarding your coursework, milestones, deadlines, feedback, opportunities (like conferences, internships, and job postings) and other critical information regarding your program. I frequently communicate by email and regular meetings (1:1 and group meetings on zoom or in person). Texts/calls are generally reserved for brief communications (for example, notifying of a last-minute change in plans, an emergency, or finding each other at crowded conferences!).

In turn, I expect prompt, clear, and direct communication from my advisees. I can support you best if you share your goals and expectations for your experiences here, as well as your professional/career goals--and that we have an ongoing conversation about your progress toward these goals and ways to support that progress. I also encourage you to take the initiative to ask any and all questions that you might have, seek opportunities that help you advance toward your goals, discuss progress toward your degree on a regular basis, check your university email regularly and respond in a timely fashion (within two business days), attend scheduled meetings, and communicate problems that you'd like support with, as well as accomplishments or other good news that you'd like to celebrate!

ASL INTERPRETERS: I am not fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) but have experience advising Deaf students and working with interpreters. If you need an ASL interpreter for any of our communications,

meetings, or events, please let me know if you prefer to make the request to the UMN Interpreting and Captioning Unit (ICU; icu@umn.edu) or if you would like me to. If you'd like me to make the request, please let me know if you have any preferred interpreters you would like me to request. If possible, please give at least a week's notice. Also, I encourage you to share (with me, ICU, and/or other faculty of courses you are taking) if you have any concerns or challenges with your experiences with ICU interpreters during meetings, coursework, or any other University related activities so that we can address the issue in a timely way.

MEETINGS: I meet with my advisees regularly, both 1:1 and in groups (e.g., for lab/research group meetings, writing retreats, practice sessions for presentations and defenses, etc.). For 1:1 meetings, I expect you to schedule them and be prepared with an agenda. Meetings can be scheduled through the appointments link to my calendar, OR by requesting a separate time if needed.

Meeting topics might include goal setting, course planning, discussing progress on projects and milestones, problem solving, general check-ins, job searching, and other things on your mind. We will determine the frequency of meetings based on your needs. At a minimum, we should meet before each semester to discuss goals and plan your coursework, approximately monthly to check in, plus once in the spring for your annual review. As you advance through your program, more frequent meetings (weekly or biweekly) are likely needed.

FEEDBACK. A critical aspect of our communication—and your learning throughout your program—will be giving and receiving feedback on many things, including papers and projects, posters and presentations, milestones, funding and award applications, and materials you prepare for your job search. I try to explain reasons for specific feedback--but if the feedback is unclear, please tell me. I'm open to feedback too! And I am not always right! To get the most out of feedback, I encourage you to:

- ***Request feedback in a timely fashion***. For feedback on written work, as a general rule please allow at least a 2-week turnaround time. If you have a specific time constraint, communicate deadlines clearly at the outset. I will let you know if I can accommodate them.
- ***Specify the type of feedback*** you are seeking. Are you looking for high-level feedback on the direction or focus of the work? More detailed feedback on the logic and organization of your arguments? Line editing for style and grammar? Something else?
- ***Seek to understand***. If the feedback is unclear, ask for clarification. Rather than automatically accepting (or rejecting) feedback, make sure you understand the reason for the suggestions.
- ***Look for patterns***. If you frequently receive specific kinds of feedback (e.g., to cite claims you make in your work, to check APA formatting, etc.), it might be an indicator of a skill you need to develop further.

4 SUPPORTING YOUR PROFESSIONAL GOALS

CAREER PATHS: A core value in the Department of Educational Psychology is that we ***prepare leaders and innovators in the field***. We have a strong focus on research, with an emphasis on making a difference in the education and lives of individuals across the lifespan. This means there is a broad array of career paths you might choose to take. My graduates have pursued careers in higher education (e.g., University faculty or fellows in research- and/or teaching-focused positions), policy (e.g., state and U.S. Departments of Education), PK12 education settings (e.g., teaching and leadership roles in schools or districts), nonprofit organizations (e.g., American Institutes for Research, WestEd) both in the U.S. and abroad (Iceland, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan). It can often be very beneficial to seek postdoctoral fellowship opportunities (such as the Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship Program), particularly if you plan to pursue a research-focused career. It is helpful to have an ongoing conversation about your career goals, as these might evolve over time. I will do my best to connect you with people, postings, and

venues that can lead to job opportunities, and the more I understand your career goals, the better I can help guide you in a fruitful direction. It's also helpful to make connections with people in organizations that might be of interest to you, to get to know them and their work as well as to give them a chance to get to know *you.*

I strongly encourage you to ***be proactive in exploring job possibilities***. It's never too early to start looking at what kinds of positions are available and what their minimum and preferred qualifications are, which can help you determine what kinds of experiences you should gain while in graduate school. Positions in higher education are routinely posted in the Chronicle of Higher Education and Academic Keys. Professional organizations often post positions in their newsletters or on their listservs, so it is a good idea to subscribe to these (for example, I often see postings in the newsletter of CEC's Division for Research and non-conference emailings from the Pacific Coast Research Conference). Postings for jobs inside and outside of higher education (e.g., state departments of education, school districts, industry or nonprofit organizations) can be found on organizations' human resources websites. It is also helpful to have a presence on social media (e.g., LinkedIN, X [formerly known as Twitter]) which can both broaden your network and provide another source for job postings.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: I encourage you to create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and keep it updated. Doing so will help you think through all of the things you'd like to accomplish in graduate school (including professional AND personal goals and plans) and what support and resources you'll need to achieve them, as well as to track (and celebrate!) your accomplishments along the way. It can also help communicate your goals, plans, and needs to others who are here to support your progress and well-being. You are welcome (not required) to share your IDP with me.

CO-ADVISING, MULTIPLE MENTORS, AND CHANGING ADVISERS: Because some of my advisees pursue questions that are relevant but somewhat adjacent to my own expertise and interests, require specific methodological support that I cannot provide alone, or have other specific needs that would benefit from additional mentorship, at times I encourage co-advising or other mentoring relationships with faculty who can support the advisee's development of knowledge and skills needed to meet their goals. In such cases, we will work together to coordinate efforts to support the advisee in a way that works well for all involved.

In general, I encourage you to develop a network of mentors who can support you in different ways at different times throughout your graduate program and beyond. This mentor map can help you start to think about areas where you might need support and identify individuals who can provide such support.

Also, if for any reason my advising approach, knowledge/expertise, or any other aspect of our advising relationship is not supporting your progress, you may seek a different advisor in our program (provided one is available and willing) without any negative consequences to you. Either I or another faculty mentor, the Special Education program coordinator, the Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the Department Chair can help you with this process. Note that you do NOT need to consult with me if you decide to seek a different adviser, though you are welcome to. I do encourage you to plan in advance regarding any consequences an adviser change might have for your progress (for example, a manuscript, pre-dissertation topic, or dissertation topic under development may need to shift or change under the guidance of the new adviser).

5 YOUR EXPERIENCE AT UMN

FUNDING AND APPOINTMENTS: I do my best to ensure that my primary PhD advisees have continuous funding for four years as needed (which typically covers partial or full tuition, a stipend, and health benefits), pending satisfactory performance and progress toward their degrees. Funding may be

available beyond four years but is not guaranteed. Funding often includes research and/or teaching assistantships (RA or TA) that can add up to 50% FTE (20 hours of work per week). When this is the case, either I or another faculty or staff member will serve as your supervisor and will share specific expectations regarding your appointment(s).

In general, if you have a graduate assistantship, you are expected to work your designated hours (and set a regular schedule to do so), and to be available to work when the University is open (note that the U is open during spring and winter breaks except for designated University holidays). Some remote work may be possible, though much of our work is conducted in schools and so in-person work is often expected. Vacation time is not typically built into RA/TA appointments because they are usually 9-month appointments. If you do plan to be away during the regular work week, please get approval from your supervisor well ahead of time and plan to complete your work in a mutually agreed-upon way.

Some advisees are funded by special scholarships or fellowships through the University or federal agencies. In these cases, advisees are typically not required to work, though there may be expectations for you to gain research, teaching, or other experiences. Opportunities for such funding can be found on the Department of Educational Psychology grad student website.

COURSEWORK: The U, CEHD, and our department have a rich array of courses and programs (e.g., minors) available for you to take. I expect that you will complete program and department coursework in a timely fashion (typically within 2.5-3 years); I will provide guidance and support to do so. Depending on your professional goals and interests, you might also want to explore courses or a minor area of emphasis beyond our requirements. I appreciate clear communication about these interests early on so that we can plan to fit relevant coursework in a manageable way.

Prior to your first semester, I will provide a worksheet to track your progress toward required coursework/credits in your degree program. Thereafter, I expect that you will check in with me before registering for courses each semester to ensure that you are on track to meet program course requirements. Our Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC; currently Lori Boucher), along with the Graduate Student Handbook and Special Education Handbook, will also be essential resources for planning and tracking your progress.

PHD MILESTONES: Coursework is important, but it's just one part of the journey! You will also complete several milestones along the way that are intended to help you define and develop your independent line of research (and typically lead to the dissertation). **See the Road Map to the PhD!** The GPC is a great resource for ensuring you are meeting deadlines and completing the relevant paperwork toward completion of these milestones (see Degree Completion Steps and Graduate advisee Handbook/Special Education Handbook). We will discuss plans and progress for these milestones during our 1:1 meetings.

Some advisees find that, once they complete their coursework, it is challenging to figure out how to use their time (since the natural structure of taking classes and doing assignments with deadlines largely goes away). I'm happy to talk about ways to come up with your own structure--and it is valuable to seek advice from other advisees who've recently had that experience, as well.

In general, the milestones are as follows, with a recommended timeline (***though the timeline varies for individual advisees***):

Milestone	**What is it?**	**Typically completed/committee:**
Pre Dissertation (MA thesis can also be used if it is an empirical	A small study that you conceptualize, conduct, and write	By the end of Year 2

study and approved by adviser and another faculty member; *must be completed to advance to oral prelim*)	up as a journal article.	Advisor + one other faculty (SpEd or EPSY) reads
Written Preliminary Exam (two opportunities to pass; *all questions must be passed to advance to oral prelim*)	A take-home exam consisting of three "general" questions that all advisees answer and one "specialty" question that you and I will develop.	Summer after Year 2, with one re-take opportunity between fall and spring semesters of Year 3 Scored by SpEd faculty
Oral Preliminary Exam (must pass to become a Ph.D. candidate and advance to dissertation)	An oral examination with a committee of faculty, based on literature review that you write, as well as on essential knowledge gained in the program thus far.	Ideally, by February of Year 3 (or the year before you plan to conduct your dissertation) to be eligible to apply for Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (but typically completed by the end of Year 3) Committee = advisor(s), 2 EPSY faculty, 1 external faculty (from within or outside UMN)
Dissertation Prospectus (must be completed to advance to dissertation)	A written proposal and meeting with your committee to describe, discuss, and approve your dissertation plans.	After oral prelim Committee = advisor(s), 2 EPSY faculty, 1 external faculty (from within or outside UMN)
Dissertation and final oral exam	A written document, public presentation, and closed oral examination to defend your dissertation. More details below!	Year 4 (although it is not unusual for the dissertation to extend into a 5th year) Committee is the same as prospectus

DISSERTATION: advisees often start their programs with a general idea of their dissertation topic (but don't be surprised if that changes!). They then revise and refine this topic as they progress through their graduate coursework and milestones, often starting with the literature synthesis that you'll start writing in your first year as part of the doctoral seminar series. The idea is usually generated by the advisee with input from me (and any co-advisors) as well as faculty who serve as instructors and/or mentors along the way. The topic may be--but is not required to be--related to research we are conducting together in the lab or as part of a grant project. Ultimately, the topic should reflect the interests, line of scholarly inquiry, and methodological skills that the advisee is working to develop. The topic should be reasonably constrained so as to be feasible to conduct and write up the study (or studies) within approximately one year (it does not need to be your life's work!) and should be related broadly to educational psychology, special education, and/or related fields.

For a successful dissertation, it is important that:

1. You are committed and motivated to pursue the topic deeply, as you will be spending a lot of

time with it!
2. We mutually agree upon the topic.
3. You have or are willing to acquire the content knowledge and methodological skills to conduct the research (including assembling a committee with relevant expertise).
4. I have sufficient knowledge to support you AND/OR we identify another faculty member with the necessary expertise to serve as a mentor, co-adviser, or to take on the primary advising role if needed.

I strongly encourage original data collection if that is feasible and makes sense in the context of the specific research, though it is sometimes the case that the advisee uses extant data or adds questions that can be answered with data that are being collected for a larger ongoing project. In that case, the student is required to gain approval from the Principal Investigator/s (PIs) as well as any IRB approval needed to use that data for their research.

Ph.D. students in our department have the option to write a "traditional" monograph-style dissertation or a multi-paper dissertation--which consists of 2 or more related studies that are written as article-style manuscripts. The multi-paper option is great for advisees who have a collection of studies/papers on a related topic that they have taken the lead on and would like to prepare for publication. We should discuss this option early in your program (e.g., at the time you start thinking about your pre-dissertation and/or oral prelim topic).

READING (and reviewing/writing about) THE LITERATURE: You will read a *lot* of theoretical, empirical, and conceptual literature throughout your program! In addition to reading for classes, it will be important to identify the literature specific to your own scholarly interests and become familiar with the foundational work in this area, the various theories and conceptual frameworks that guide that work, and the most current research pertaining to the work. You will have multiple opportunities to synthesize this literature throughout your program (e.g., in classes, for preliminary exams), and I strongly recommend independent reading above and beyond what is needed for those assignments and milestones. I also strongly recommend getting to know the University library system and taking advantage of their many resources, including exploring the library databases and setting up a citation manager to organize and manage your literature sources.

As students advance through their programs and gain familiarity both with relevant literature and with research methods, I often invite them to co-review journal articles for peer review with me. This can be a great opportunity to read the most recent research and to think (and write) critically about others' research, which can help hone your own research and writing skills as well.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES: If you are considering a career in higher education, it will be critical to get experience teaching at the college level. This experience can include guest lecturing, serving as a teaching assistant (TA), and/or serving as the instructor of a course. TA and instructor positions may be available depending on course enrollments, your knowledge and experience, and other factors. Some of our teacher licensure courses require the instructor to have specific credentials (including coursework, licensure, and/or relevant classroom experience). We will discuss teaching opportunities that align with your goals and qualifications during our 1:1 advising meetings.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS: Participating in professional organizations is an important (and often fun) way of connecting with the broader field, sharing your work, and engaging in professional networking--which will become increasingly important as you get closer to entering the job market. Professional organizations offer many opportunities to get involved in research, practice, and policy and get to know other scholars across the U.S. and world. Many have advisee membership rates and advisee groups, along with grant opportunities, travel awards, and other benefits. Most also have one or more journals that are often appropriate outlets for our work (and are important to read to stay on top of current research). Several are listed in the table below (but this

list is by no means exhaustive). I am happy to chat about which organization(s) on this list and beyond might be a good match for your interests.

Organization | Focus	**Annual meeting**	**Primary Journal(s)**
American Educational Research Association (AERA) | Broad educational research	Proposal call midsummer Meeting in April Various U.S. locations	*American Educational Research Journal* + others
Association of College Educators-Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACEDHH)	Meeting late Jan/early Feb Various U.S. locations	na
Badar-Kauffman Conference (BKC) |Special education research intensive; inclusive and advisee/early career scholar friendly!	Proposal call in summer with an early Oct deadline Meeting in April Kent State University, OH	na
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) | Special education research & practice	Proposal call in May Meeting in March Various U.S. locations	*Exceptional Children* *TEACHING Exceptional Children* + subdivision journals
Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) | Learning disabilities research & practice	Proposal call in February Meeting in mid-October Various U.S. locations	*Learning Disabilities Quarterly* *Intervention in School & Clinic*
International Dyslexia Association (IDA) | Dyslexia research & practice	Proposal call in spring Meeting in October/November Various U.S. locations	*Reading and Writing* + others
Pacific Coast Research Conference (PCRC) | High-incidence disabilities research	Proposal call late summer Meeting in early February San Diego	na
Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE) Educational research focusing on "what works"	Proposal call in spring Meeting in September	*Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*
Society of the Scientific Study of Reading (SSSR) | Reading (and writing) research	Proposal call in fall Meeting in July Alternates between U.S. & international locations	*Scientific Studies of Reading*

I strongly encourage my advisees to attend at least one professional meeting per year (I regularly attend CEC and PCRC, occasionally AERA and SSSR, and currently IDA since I serve on their Scientific Advisory Board). Ideally, you will present your independent and/or collaborative work (e.g., via posters, demonstrations, or spoken presentations), and/or engage in other professional development activities (e.g., early career seminar, service or advocacy activity) while attending the meeting. It will be important to plan ahead and ensure that professional meeting attendance doesn't unduly conflict with coursework,

assistantship obligations, or other commitments. In other words, limited absences are usually OK if they are communicated ahead of time with faculty and supervisors but should not be excessive--for example, they should not exceed limits for non-health-related absences conveyed by the instructor or syllabus. When in doubt, please ask!

It is natural to feel anxious about attending and presenting at conferences, including how to navigate both the professional and social aspects and the unspoken rules and norms. I encourage you to seek advice and ask questions (of me, other faculty, and other advisees) to address any concerns or wonderings you might have. Each conference has a different "vibe" (in terms of focus, who attends, expectations for participation, etc.) so it's helpful to talk to others who have attended to get a sense of the overall experience you can anticipate.

PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL AND RESEARCH FUNDING: Funding sources for travel to conferences or other professional events, as well as for research, are available through our department, college, and University. Many opportunities are listed on the Ed Psych grad student website--and I will point you to funding sources as needed, too. Also, grants and fellowships are often available through professional organizations.

I expect advisees to seek funding as needed through appropriate venues, which may vary depending on research focus, travel plans, and needs. Each year, I also designate travel funds for advisees through my sponsored and non-sponsored University accounts; available funding varies year-by-year, so I will communicate availability and how to request these funds on an annual basis.

6 WRITING

GENERAL WRITING THINGS: Writing gets its own section, because you will write a LOT during your graduate program, and probably beyond! We do a lot of technical writing in our field (writing grant proposals, journal articles, book chapters, reports, reviews of research, and more), which is an important skill that takes time to develop. I do not expect your writing to be perfect by any means! I am confident that, with practice, your writing will get better and better, no matter where you start. I will give you lots of feedback and support (see *Feedback* under section 3, Advising Relationships and Expectations), as will other faculty (and your peers!) throughout your program. Keep in mind that a huge part of writing is revising--it is not unusual to go back and forth with multiple drafts as we work to refine the work. As needed, I will direct you to campus and other resources (for example, the Center for Writing Support: https://success.umn.edu/writing/sws. Please don't hesitate to let me know of specific areas in which you would like support for your writing, including opportunities to practice various aspects of writing, or ways that my feedback could be more useful and effective.

I expect that you will take writing seriously, that you will take the time needed to develop your writing skills (I strongly recommend scheduling daily writing time or other regular writing blocks that work for you), and that you will work to produce high-quality writing products. You should also be familiar--and comply--with APA style. Please make sure you have a copy of APA's most current publication manual:

> American Psychological Association (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Seventh Edition*.

PUBLICATIONS: Publications (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters) are one important way that we share the results of our work with research, policy, and practice communities. I do not endorse a "publish or perish" mentality--rather, I believe it's important to be intentional about making sure our work can make a difference by reaching the audiences it was intended for in a timely way. If you are pursuing a career that includes a research component, building a publication record will be important to your future success, including as you enter the job market. You'll have numerous opportunities to turn

your work into publications, including course assignments (often requires additional work beyond the class), Ph.D. milestones (pre-dissertation, oral preliminary exam paper) and other independent projects, collaborative work in the lab/research projects, and of course your dissertation. I often invite advisees to co-author articles and book chapters based on our collaborative work. advisees are also strongly encouraged to initiate independent projects that can lead to publication. As with dissertation data, if publication ideas involve extant data, approval is needed to access and use that data.

Because APA provides the publication standards for our field (generally speaking), I strongly recommend that you become familiar with APA's Journal Article Reporting Standards (JARS; https://apastyle.apa.org/jars). JARS provides helpful guidance on what information should be included in all manuscript sections for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research, including how to best discuss race, ethnicity, and culture and how to cite any AI tools you might have used in your work (e.g., ChatGPT).

AUTHORSHIP: Although there are general guidelines in our field for determining authorship, specific procedures may vary across advisers, Principal Investigators, and research labs. I encourage you to review the APA 7th edition authorship guidelines, including the tips for student authors at this website: https://www.apa.org/science/leadership/students/authorship-paper.

It is critical to have clear communication and understanding regarding authorship on collaborative papers, including order of authorship. This communication should begin at the outset of any writing project and be revisited as needed during the writing process. Generally, the first author is the leader of the paper, both in conceptualizing the work and coordinating it through completion. The remaining authors appear in order according to their contributions, unless contributions are equal (in which case, alphabetical order with a note about contributions is often the solution). "Senior" authors (such as the PI of the research project on which the paper is based) are sometimes listed last.

Note that being a research assistant on a project does not necessarily constitute authorship on related papers, as activities such as development of study materials and data collection/analysis as part of the assistantship are considered work for hire. That said, I strive to be inclusive in authorship, such that members of our lab or research team who have contributed to a specific project have opportunities to participate in related publications. Ultimately, paper authorship should be determined in mutual agreement about individuals' contributions to the substantive work.

For student-initiated papers, I expect to be included as an author *only* if I contribute substantively (i.e., provide meaningful input into conceptualizing the study, identifying/synthesizing relevant literature, crafting research questions, designing the study, analyzing/reporting/interpreting data [and sometimes providing the data set to be used], and/or the actual writing of the paper). Sometimes I provide general feedback or editing of papers for which I was NOT involved in the substantive work. In those cases, I do NOT expect to be an author.

GRANT PROPOSAL WRITING: A major component of my work as a professor is securing external funding to support research as well as training doctoral students. Thus, I am typically involved in grant writing at some point during the year (often in the summer depending on grant cycles). If the work aligns with a student's research assistantship, I might ask them to contribute to proposal writing as part of that work. If you would like to be involved in grant writing but do not have an aligned assistantship, you will be welcome to contribute--we can explore options for "credit" if needed (e.g., independent study credits). You will have opportunities to learn about grant proposal writing in your coursework and are also encouraged to seek funding to support your own research (e.g., department mini-grants, grants through professional organizations).

7 NAVIGATING LIFE IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

BALANCE AND WELL-BEING: Your life beyond graduate school is an important aspect of who you are and what you do. In the UMN Special Education program, we value and respect students', staff members', and faculty members' lives from a holistic perspective, and emphasize the importance of cultivating a healthy balance between work and the rest of life, with the belief that *if we take care of our minds, bodies, and souls, we are much better positioned to do good work with and for others*.

I encourage you to be intentional in taking regular time to attend to personal/family/care-giving commitments, needs, and your own well-being as well as to the people and activities that bring you satisfaction and joy beyond work. This includes engaging in routine (e.g., daily) practices that support your well-being. Personally, I try to meditate, exercise, eat well, and spend time with Eric every day. I also create boundaries in terms of time and space--I only work in certain spaces if I'm at home, and turn off my computer most evenings. I typically take off at least one full day per week (usually Saturday) and periodically disconnect completely (e.g., during University holidays).

Taking time for life beyond work also includes engaging in any cultural, religious/spiritual traditions, observances, and holidays that are important to you. I try to be aware and mindful of holidays and religious observances, and please do feel free to share about important events that are coming up. At the U, we acknowledge and respect that there are observances and celebrations when individuals will refrain from work and other activities.

Graduate work can often be very time-consuming, and it can be challenging to balance that work with other aspects of your life. I find it helpful to be explicit with myself about my priorities and intentional about putting the most important ones first (personal AND professional). Sometimes, putting priorities first means saying NO to other things, which can be very challenging. Giving yourself some time to think about it (e.g., 24 hours) and/or talking with others can be very helpful in determining when to say YES or NO to opportunities that arise. I am always happy to listen, to share about my own experiences, and to answer questions you might have about balancing all the things. I don't claim to have any right answers but am glad to share lessons learned if that's helpful.

I also understand that life can be unpredictable! Communication is important when personal commitments, health or other physical/mental wellbeing challenges impact professional commitments. Whenever needed or appropriate, I will direct you to resources that might be helpful, and can help think through accommodations or extensions you might need to complete your work. In some circumstances, it might make sense to consider taking a leave of absence (which is an option that I and others in the department can help guide you through). Also, while I am open to discussing challenges to the extent you are comfortable doing so, and it's important that I am at least aware of barriers to your graduate work, I do not expect advisees to share personal details they do not want to share.

ETHICS: I have high expectations for my own, my colleagues', and my advisees' ethical behavior. These expectations include adhering to the UMN Board of Regents Code of Conduct and advisee Conduct Code. Our field also has helpful ethical guidance; see the American Psychological Association's (APA's) Ethics Code and the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC's) Ethical Principles and Practice Standards. You may be familiar with other ethical guidance that is helpful, as well (please feel free to share!).

Graduate school can be a stressful time, and in challenging or ambiguous circumstances, the best course of action is not always clear. What's most important is to be aware, to acknowledge missteps that might occur, to ask questions when you are unsure how to handle a situation, and to learn from experiences where "the right thing to do" is in question. I hope you find that you can trust me to help work through such situations if and when they arise.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS: You might experience conflict while in graduate school (as in most aspects of life!)—for example, with other students, staff, or faculty you work with. While conflict can be uncomfortable, addressing and resolving it can be a very healthy thing. At the same time, navigating conflict can be challenging especially when there are real or perceived power differentials (e.g., the advisee-faculty relationships or "junior-senior" advisee relationships might feel especially tricky to navigate when there is conflict).

When possible, I believe conflict is best addressed directly and immediately (before the conflict escalates, if possible)--with open and respectful conversation between the individuals experiencing it. However, if you are uncomfortable with this approach or even just want a sounding board, you could also reach out to someone you trust for advice. Several individuals within our department might be helpful (e.g., me, a co-advisor, or another faculty mentor; the Special Education program coordinator; the Director of Graduate Studies; the Department Chair), or you can reach out to the CEHD Associate Dean for Graduate Education if department support is not helpful. The U also has a student Ombuds Services Center for advisee-related concerns on campus and an Office for Conflict Resolution if the conflict relates to your employment on campus. For more details about available support, you can also visit the Ed Psych Department's web page on complaints and grievances. ***You do not need to endure conflict alone in order to complete your program. Please seek support if needed.***

8 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

HOUSING: Students moving to Minneapolis to pursue their graduate degree, including international students, might find this graduate student housing information helpful: https://housing.umn.edu/other/grad-advisees. Note that the Como advisee Cooperative (CSCC), https://cscc.umn.edu/ and Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative (CTC), https://www.umnctc.org/ require applications in advance (often more than 6 months ahead of time).

U.S. INCOME TAX: International students and scholars (and their dependents) who are physically within the United States on an F or J visa during 2023 must file taxes, regardless of whether they earned any income. See https://isss.umn.edu/advisees/support-services/taxes for more information.

PERSONAL TRAVEL: If you'd like to travel or be away for an extended period (e.g., during University breaks), please check in with me (and any other graduate assistantship supervisor if applicable) well in advance to confirm dates and avoid conflicts. Especially for international students, it's a good idea to make plans early to avoid high airfare prices, as those tend to go up closer to the travel time.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Thank you for joining our graduate program! I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to work with you, excited for the things you will accomplish, and glad to be a part of your journey as you learn and grow as a leader and innovator in the field. Please don't hesitate to ask any and all questions and share your thoughts with me along the way. Most of all, ***I hope you find joy*** in this time of learning, collaboration, and discovery as you find new ways to make a difference in the education and lives of others!