



APD 1210 RESEARCH PRACTICUM COURSE

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS 2026-27

Name and Title: Zack Hawes, Assistant Professor

NUMBER OF STUDENT PLACES AVAILABLE: 2

 x IN PERSON x REMOTE (ONLINE) HYBRID/FLEXIBLE

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY:

For example, decades of research support the benefits of spaced or distributed learning; that is, learning is typically enhanced when material is revisited across multiple sessions rather than learned all at once. While some learning principles such as spaced learning receive substantial attention in public discourse and teacher education, many others receive far less attention despite strong empirical support.

In particular, contemporary “science of learning” discussions often prioritize cognitive and achievement-oriented approaches to teaching and learning, while giving comparatively less attention to principles grounded in socio-emotional development and related areas of research. Accordingly, this project seeks to develop a more comprehensive and integrative account of evidence-based learning principles that spans multiple perspectives on learning and development.

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More broadly, the project seeks to move beyond pedagogical dichotomies (e.g., inquiry-based vs. direct instruction) by shifting the focus away from singular or politically charged approaches toward a more nuanced and evidence-informed understanding of teaching and learning practices.

Following the literature review phase, the project will involve developing a survey examining researchers' and teachers' awareness, beliefs, and use of these learning principles. For example, questions of interest include:

- Are some principles more widely adopted than others?
- Why might this be the case?
- What reasons do educators and researchers give for adopting or avoiding particular practices?

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION:

Responsibilities will include:

- Regularly attending lab meetings
- Regularly attending project-based meetings
- Collaborating with various members of the lab
- Performing a literature review on the 'science of learning'
- Using the literature review to design a survey on researchers/teachers views and use of science of learning principles

Skills that will be learned:

- Approaches to conducting a literature review
- Survey/questionnaire design
- **A comprehensive understanding of teaching and learning approaches based on the science of learning**

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED SKILLS/BACKGROUND (OPTIONAL):

- Interest and passion for evidence-based educational practices
- Some familiarity with how to read and evaluate scientific papers (particularly within the field of psychology)



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DAY AND TIMES OF LAB MEETINGS:

- Typically, lab meetings are every other week from Sept-May (usually in late afternoon between 3 and 6pm)
- Project-specific meetings are more variable but typically take place every two weeks as well