



College of Education
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Graduate Student Handbook

Learning, Design, and Technology Program

Instructional Technology (IT) Emphasis Area
Dept. of Career and Information Studies
The University of Georgia

M.Ed. & Ed.S. Degrees
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Welcome to LDTK12!

If you did not know already, LDTK12 is the short name for the Instructional Technology (IT) emphasis area of the M.Ed. and Ed.S. degrees. We also use it for students who are in the IT certification for non-degree students. These are all part of the Learning, Design, & Technology (LDT) program in the Department of Career and Information Studies (CIS), which is housed in the College of Education (COE) at the University of Georgia.



It is our goal to provide you with a unique educational experience that not only will inform your pedagogy, but also immediately impact your classroom practice. Contact me, the current program leader and student advisor for the M.Ed and Ed.S, with any questions or concerns!

Theodore J (TJ) Kopcha
Learning, Design, and Technology
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tjkopcha@uga.edu

Get Started

There is quite a bit for you to do when you are admitted to the program. A lot of this has to do with accessing UGA systems like Athena (for registration), the ELC (for courses), and sometimes MyID (for password/login).

If you have not already, please visit Dr. Kopcha's [Handy "Start-up" Guide for Instructional Technology Graduate Students](#) right away to get you started. The guide walks you through *getting started*. It probably will take about an hour before you get to a point where you will need to contact me for assistance. If there is a problem, **DO NOT PANIC** :) I'm used to getting lots of emails when new students enter our systems. There's a lot to navigate, and it's what I'm here for.

About the Program

Courses are delivered in a flexible mode that combines innovative class scheduling and online meetings that accommodate a variety of work schedules. Students work in a cohort that completes the same courses in similar sequence. Overall, degree seeking students are expected to take two classes per semester as part of a six-semester sequence (~2 calendar years).

GAPSC: Instructional Technology Certification

Our degrees fall under the purview of the Georgia Performance Standards Commission (GAPSC: <http://www.gapsc.com/>) for Instructional Technology. The Master's satisfies requirements for an S-5 certification (service field) in Instructional Technology and upgrades a T-4 certification to a S-5. Likewise, the Ed.S. satisfies requirements for an S-6 certification (service field) if you do not already hold an IT Certification; the Ed.S. also upgrades to an S-6.

Coursework completion is just one of several requirements for adding Instructional Technology to your teaching license. You must also:

- Be certified previously in a teaching field in Georgia - neither the M.Ed nor the Ed.S. in the LDTK12 area of emphasis serve as initial certification
- Pass the GACE assessment in Instructional Technology
- Check with your school/district to determine if you will receive a pay increase

Comprehensive (Portfolio) Examination

Every student (i.e., non-degree Certification, M.Ed., and Ed.S.) must complete a final comprehensive examination and successfully defend it in order to graduate from the University of Georgia. Under most circumstances, this is a portfolio that you complete in your final course, in EDIT 7650: *Applied Project in Instructional Technology (i.e., The Capstone Field Experience)*. There are two things to note about portfolios at this time:

1. Take the time, now, to see where you will end up! Read the section that appears later in this document ([Portfolio Examination: Your final semester](#)) about the portfolio as a requirement for graduation. In the section, [Course Sequence with GAPSC Alignment](#), you'll see which course projects are aligned with the portfolio requirements, which will help you maximize success throughout the program.
2. Some students take EDIT 7650: *Capstone* but still have a handful of courses to take before graduating. If this is your situation, be advised: it is ultimately *the student's responsibility* to communicate with the current LDTK12 program leader / student advisor during the semester of graduation to make sure everything is in order with the portfolio and other graduation requirements.

How is the comprehensive examination evaluated? Your portfolio will contain a series of reflections on how your coursework while at UGA shows mastery of the PSC standards for Instructional Technology (these are listed later in this document). The portfolio is evaluated by at least *two* faculty members who will score each of the reflections on a 3-point scale:

- Meets the Standard (3),
- Developing (2), and
- Does Not Meet (1).

In EDIT 7650E, you will receive a rubric explaining the specific qualities needed to achieve a passing score on the examination. Faculty will use the same rubric to score your work. In the event that you receive more than one "Does Not Meet", you will have one opportunity to revise your writing and improve your score so that you may graduate as planned.

"Special Cases"

If you are an EdS student and your Masters is from the same program (i.e., UGA's SLM, IT or IDD programs), you **must** make sure that you don't repeat any of the courses that you took in your Master's program of study. If you're not sure whether or not you took a particular course in the past, *it is your responsibility* to contact the current program leader / student advisor so we can advise you accordingly.

Being an Online Student

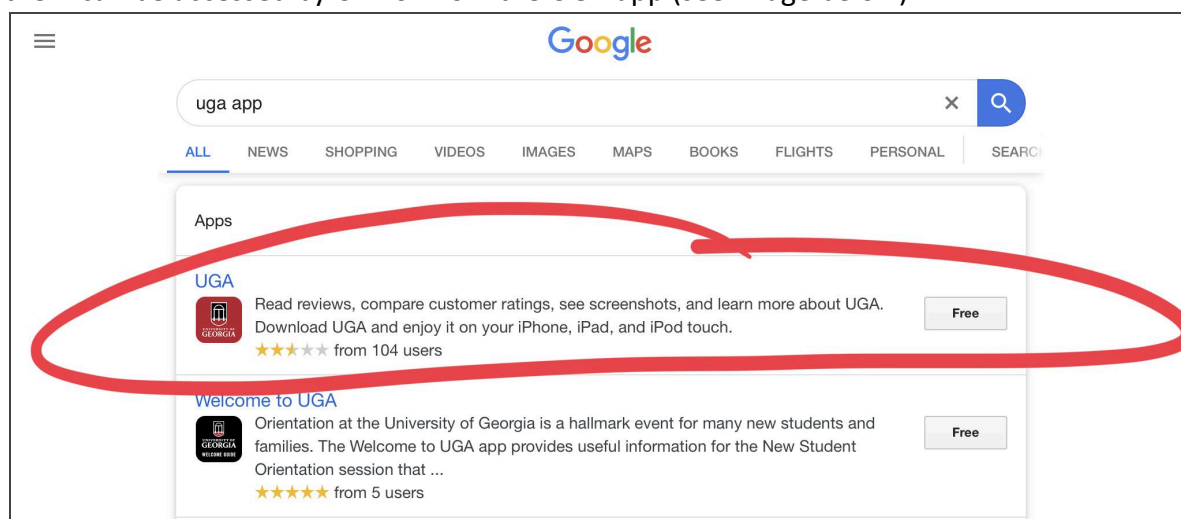
Engage

Being an online student means being self-directed; it will help you be successful. With that in mind, it's important that you engage in your coursework as fully as possible. One of the easiest ways to do this is to make sure that you have a headset with a microphone so that you can participate in group activities whenever you have class meetings. Many cohorts have set up a group in the Group Me texting app. This has been helpful for those cohorts in many ways.

Most important is to develop a routine for getting work done. In many of your classes, the instruction will happen outside of any synchronous meetings. It may be videos to watch, discussion boards to respond to, or even feedback to give to other students. Make sure you set up a weekly routine in which you review upcoming assignments and engage in the work that is due.

Stay Connected

There's a few different online tools that you'll need to have to fully access UGA resources. All of them can be accessed by URL or from the UGA app (see image below).



Among the most important tools are:

Athena. Athena is your go-to resource for registering for courses and processing paperwork such as your program of study, application for graduation, etc.
(<http://Athena.uga.edu>)

ELC. The ELC (<http://elc.uga.edu>) is your go-to for courses, coursework, grades, and, most importantly, your virtual classroom. Try logging in now. We use Collaborate Ultra as our virtual classroom. You can find this under TOOLS in any ELC course.
Be sure to have a good set of headphones and a computer that can access the ELC before you start your coursework!

UGA Mail. UGA Mail is your official channel for communication and it is expected that you check it regularly. You can always set up mail forwarding to another account if preferred.

Seek Help When Needed

It is your responsibility to clear up issues, confusion, and stay on top of other tasks (e.g., submit paperwork) that may arise during the course of study. Below is a list of resources for getting help with various tasks:

Source	Needs Addressed	Contact
Program Leader/ Student Advisor**	Approve program of study, advise, make changes in course sequence	TJ Kopcha (See above)
Student Affairs Professional	Clear account holds / immunization, work with Graduate School	Melanie Pieper mpeiper@uga.edu
EITS	All things technical - email, support, FREE software, ELC problems	https://eits.uga.edu/ or 706-542-3106
Grad School	Submit paperwork, clear up issues with courses, info about reqs.	http://grad.uga.edu/
Bursar	Exact costs for coursework, which change each semester	https://busfin.uga.edu/bursar/
Athena	Register for courses, submit program of study, clear account holds.	https://athena.uga.edu
UGA Registrar	For due dates of important forms / documents	https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/calendars/registration-dates/

PRO TIP: Do not hesitate to ‘pester’ the program leader/student advisor with questions! We’d rather get too many emails than have to address problems after the fact!

Handling Academic Issues

It is my sincere hope that you never need to file an academic appeal or make a report about receiving treatment you feel is grievable. However, it is important for you to know that, if you do have an issue, you have several ways to move forward in the College of Education. I suggest trying these in this order:

1. **Contact the professor and try to work it out.** This is always a good first step and can save a lot of headache in the long run if things resolve. However, there are occasions where this step is not viable or does not result in resolution. In those cases, you likely will need a different option.

***PRO TIP:** Being humble and/or apologetic can go a long way to soften a tense situation, particularly if an issue with grading is due to your tardiness or lack of attention to details in the syllabus or assignment description.*

2. **Understand the nature of the issue.** It helps to know if your issue is with a faculty member's behavior, a grade you've received, or both. There's information about this on the [Academic Appeals and Student Complaint](#) website.
3. **Contact your advisor (i.e., TJ Kopcha).** Unless your advisor is the person you are having issues with, communicate with your advisor *to the extent you are comfortable*. Of course, this is not required - there may be circumstances where the nature of the issue is private or embarrassing and you'd prefer not to. In such cases, you are within your rights to speak with a person above your advisor (e.g., department head is next in line).
4. **Follow the processes outlined by the COE.** Once you know what you need to do, follow the steps on the [Academic Appeals and Student Complaint](#) website.

Coursework in the Instructional Technology Emphasis Areas

M.Ed. program consists of a minimum of 33 hours; the Ed.S. program consists of a minimum of 30 hours. Both conclude with *EDIT 7650E: Capstone* in which you apply your knowledge directly to your own work environment and context. Courses cover competency guidelines provided by the Professional Standards Commission for the State of Georgia and addressed by the Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE).

GAPSC Standards

The program is designed to meet the standards associated with Instructional Technology as described by the Georgia Performance Standards Committee (GAPSC) (see <https://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/EducatorPreparation/505-3-.64.pdf>).

1. **Learner.** Educators continually improve their practice by learning from and with others and exploring proven and promising practices that leverage technology to improve student learning.
2. **Leader.** Educators seek opportunities for leadership to support student empowerment and success and to improve teaching and learning.
3. **Citizen.** Educators inspire students to positively contribute and responsibly participate in the digital world.
4. **Collaborator.** Educators dedicate time to collaborate with both colleagues and students to improve practice, discover and share resources and ideas, and solve problems as indicated in the following.

5. **Designer.** Educators design authentic, learner-driven activities and environments that recognize and accommodate learner variability environments.
6. **Facilitator.** Educators facilitate learning with technology to support student achievement of the ISTE Standards for Students.
7. **Analyst.** Educators understand and use data to drive their instruction and support students in achieving their learning goals.
8. **Coach.** Educators plan, provide, and evaluate the impact of professional learning for educators and leaders to advance teaching and learning with technology.

Course Sequence

The course sequence aligns with the GAPSC standards for Instructional Technology. The sequence below is for Master's and Specialist (Ed.S.) students *who begin in the Summer or Fall semester*. Non-degree certification students who seek IT certification with the GAPSC take the six (6) courses marked **in BOLD**. If you are starting in the Spring semester, contact the Major Advisor to find out your sequence of coursework.

YEAR 1		
Summer 1	EDIT 6150E	Intro to Digital Learning
	EDIT 7520E	Online Learning
Fall 1*	EDIT 6170E	Instructional Design
	EDIT 6900E	Research in IT
Spring 1**	EDIT 7350E	Program Evaluation
	EDIT 6320E (MED) EDIT 8320E (EDS)	Technology Planning Adv. Technology Planning
YEAR 2		
Summer 2	EDIT 7200E (MED) EDIT 9200E (EDS)	Prof. Learning through Tech. Designing Prof. Development through Tech.
	EDIT 6600E	Diversity, Technology, and Learning
Fall 2	EDIT 7500E	Project, Problem, & Place-Based Learning
	EDIT 7650E	Capstone
Spring 2	EDIT 6400E	Emerging Perspectives (MED & Cert only)

***FALL START:** Students who begin in Fall will take courses from Summer 1 **during and/or after** Spring 2.

NOTE: The 6 courses **in BOLD** comprise the Instructional Technology Certification that is recognized by the Georgia PSC. Those who seek the graduate certificate but *not* PSC certification will take 5 of these courses; they do not take EDIT 7650: Capstone.

Save All Your Work!

This program aligns with the Georgia PSC Standards for Instructional Technology (<https://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/EducatorPreparation/505-3-.64.pdf>). There are eight (8) standards in total, and certain courses are specifically designed to meet those standards. Be sure to pay special attention to these course projects as you complete your coursework and save them for your final course, EDIT 7650e: Capstone, where you will organize them for faculty review. You can see the alignment below:

Standard	Course(s)
1: Learner	EDIT 7200/9200e: Professional Learning through Technology
2: Leader	EDIT 6320/8320e: Technology Planning
3: Citizen	EDIT 6600e: Diversity, Technology, and Learning
4: Collaborator	Any course in which you create an <i>authentic/real-world</i> learning experience with another teacher that is student-driven.
5: Designer	EDIT 6170e: Instructional Design or EDIT 7500e: PBL
6: Facilitator	Any course in which you develop learning that is independent, student-driven, and fosters creativity; also entails design thinking or computational thinking.
7: Analyst	EDIT 7350e: Evaluation
8: Coaching	EDIT 7200/9200e: Professional Learning through Technology and/or the Professional Development requirement in EDIT 7650e: Capstone

PRO TIP: Save all your work!! You will be asked to go back to it and reflect on it later in your coursework, as part of the comprehensive (portfolio) examination.

Delays in Your Progress

Delays to your graduation are possible (and likely) should circumstances arise where you find that you are unable to complete the prescribed courses in a particular semester. While we understand that “life happens,” and we will work with you as much as possible, it is important to understand that we are unable to offer all courses in all semesters and some courses are offered only once per calendar year. The cohort model of the program, coupled with the fact that some courses are prerequisite to other courses, means that your completion of the

program could be delayed a year or more if you are unable to complete the program in the prescribed sequence.

How to Successfully Graduate

Do these things the SEMESTER you graduate!

Submit A Program of Study

Note: Certificate students DO NOT need to submit a program of study, but you DO need to register for courses and notify your program advisor that you intend to graduate.

1. Submit using Grad Status (<http://Gradstatus.uga.edu>). Complete your personal information, including:

Major Professor: Theodore J. Kopcha (me)

Department: Career and Information Studies

Degree Objective: Non-doctoral professional

Major: Learning, Design, and Technology

-- MED Students: Master's of Education

-- EDS Students: Educational Specialist

-- Certificate Students: If you missed it above, you do not need to submit this 😊

Course Information: You enter all the courses you have taken AND will take to complete your degree. You can find these in Athena.

--MED Students: You should have a total of 33 credits. If you do not, email me.

--EDS Students: You should have a total of 30 credits. If you do not, email me.

Once entered into Grad Status it gets submitted to our graduate coordinator's office automatically.

****You must complete this THE SEMESTER YOU GRADUATE, usually in the first week.****

NOTE: Those of you who are a 'special case' will need to track the courses you take (you probably deviated from the sequence outlined on our website) and put those in your Program of Study form.

2. After approval of the Program of Study form, any program changes must be approved by your advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, and The Graduate School. This "Recommended Change in the Program of Study" form is not electronic, which can be found here:

http://grad.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/body_recochgprog.pdf

Apply for Graduation

You **must** complete an online Application for Graduation form on Athena (athena.uga.edu). It is typically due the first week or so of your graduating semester. If you are late or do not complete this, you may not graduate and/or incur fines.

Note: To check the status of your Program of Study form and Application for Graduation, email the graduate school at gradinfo@uga.edu. (This is the official channel for communication between the Graduate School and students on such matters, so the response time is usually fairly short.)

Your Final Semester

Portfolio Examination

1. During the Capstone you will make final preparations to your portfolio in accordance with the Portfolio Examination Guidelines which will be available online. You will be asked to pay a one-time subscription fee for the tool that the College of Education uses for Portfolio management, which is called Foliotek.
2. You must be registered **for at least 3 semester** hours during the semester in which you submit your portfolio for examination. You must also be registered for at least 3 semester hours during the semester in which you plan to graduate. Typically these two events will occur in the same semester; in the event they will not, you must communicate with your advisor ahead of time.
3. A committee of *at least two* departmental faculty members, including your advisor, reviews each candidate's portfolio.
4. You must submit your completed portfolio for departmental review by the date announced through the cohort listserv. This date generally occurs around the "3/4" mark of the semester. EDIT 7650E: *Capstone* is designed to assist you in completing this requirement in a timely fashion.

After Graduation: Certification Application Guidance

You must successfully complete all the coursework needed according to your Program of Study, as determined in collaboration with your advisor. For most, this means you must wait until Graduation to be eligible for certification. Once completed, follow these steps:

Step One: Complete Milestones

- Pass the GACE Content Assessment.
- Download the application forms from the [Georgia Professional Standards Commission](https://www.gpea.org/). If you are already employed by a school system, it is best that you work through the certification official employed by your system (although not

necessary). Your system HR person may originate the **Program Recommendation Form**. (If not, Kate Character, The Certification Official for the COE, will do so - see Step Two.)

- Send official, electronic transcripts from all institutions attended (other than UGA) directly to the GaPSC at mail@gapsc.com.

Step Two: Start your certification paperwork with Mrs. Character

- Contact Mrs. Kate Character (ellakate@uga.edu; 706-542-4218) to begin the processing of your certification paperwork.

Step Three: Complete ALL paperwork sent to you by the College of Education

- The College will be sending you all sorts of end-of-program items to complete. You need to do them all or they will not report your completion of the program to the PSC.
- One big one is an exit survey, that you **MUST** complete!

Step Four: Send Official UGA Transcript to the PSC

- Your degree must be posted (awarded) before you request a transcript. This normally takes *6-8 weeks* after graduation.
- You can check Athena (<http://athena.uga.edu>) to make sure the status of your degree says, "Awarded" before you request an electronic transcript.
- Go to www.reg.uga.edu to request an electronic transcript (there is a fee) to be emailed to the GaPSC at mail@gapsc.com

You can track your case with the PSC by logging onto the GaPSC website and accessing your record.