



# Graduate Student Handbook



Learning, Design, and Technology Program

*Graduate Certificate in eLearning Design*

Updated Summer 2025

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WITH IDD PROGRAM!

**#5** in the nation by U.S. News & World Report (2019)

**#6** online Master's in EdTech by BestColleges (2019)





# Welcome

Welcome to the University of Georgia and the Learning, Design, and Technology Program!

We are delighted to have you join our learning community in Instructional Design & Development within the LDT program. We look forward to helping you achieve your professional goals and expectations. This is a very exciting time to be in our profession. People working in the field of Learning, Design, and Technology have many exciting opportunities afforded by new media and advances in learning theory. We are also serving a crucial role in meeting society's increasing expectations of our schools and other education and training organizations.

This Graduate Student Handbook for the graduate certificate in eLearning Design is intended to assist you in planning your program of study and monitoring progress toward your certificate. Because no single document can cover all individual situations and needs, your advisor and our faculty stand ready to assist you in other ways to assure the timely completion of your degree. I also encourage you to periodically check our departmental website for any updates and other timely information.

We encourage you to take advantage of other learning and professional development opportunities such as attending seminars and participating in social events. There are also opportunities to work on extra projects, engage in service activities, and gain valuable intern experience. This is an excellent way to build and maintain a network of professional contacts throughout your career.

As you begin and complete your certificate program, your academic advisor should be your first point of contact. However, even if I am not your academic advisor, you should feel free to contact us anytime. Once again, welcome!

Sincerely,

Jill Stefaniak, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Coordinator, IDD Emphasis Area and eLearning Design certificate

# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to describe the goals, requirements, and procedures of the graduate certificate in eLearning Design in the Learning, Design, and Technology program in the Department of Workforce Education and Instructional Technology, Mary Frances Early College of Education, at the University of Georgia.

# Overview of the Graduate Certificate in eLearning Design

The Learning, Design, and Technology Program (LDT) offers three degrees: M.Ed., Ed.S., and Ph.D. The Ph.D. is designed to prepare researchers and scholars to explore and further the theory and practice of the field. In contrast, the M.Ed. and Ed.S. are designed to prepare professionals to work in a variety of applied settings, such as schools, businesses and corporations, non-profit organizations, informal education (e.g., museums), military, and higher education.

Our program believes that theory and practice go hand-in-hand, so you will be introduced to foundational principles and ideas about learning and design while at the same time using current technologies and tools to create effective learning experiences and environments that you can use in your own work and intended fields of application. Our courses are also designed to be highly interactive, so you will be frequently discussing and collaborating online through video conferencing, written discussions, and many other digital tools, with your colleagues in the program.

Despite the different goals and purposes of these various degrees, all our students share the important goal of helping people of all ages reach their full potential through education and training. You should expect to collaborate with, learn from, and help teach all students and faculty in the department. You will likely take courses in which students from all our various emphasis areas and degrees are registered. We hope you will take advantage of this to learn more about the breadth of applicability of degrees within the LDT program.

Certificate students are a vital part of our program. They come from all over the country, and all over the world, bringing to the program their experiences and enthusiasm for designing and teaching in technology-enhanced learning environments in all kinds of contexts--business and industry, health care, non-profits, and schools at all levels from pre-K through higher education. Many are professionals working in full-time jobs, while others are looking to explore new areas or change jobs, and still others are finishing degrees in other disciplines and feel that more knowledge about online and digital learning will help them in their chosen fields. Whatever your reasons for working toward one of our Graduate Certificates, this Handbook is intended to help you plan your coursework and move smoothly through the program to Graduation!

The eLearning Design Certificate is for people who want to design online or technology-enhanced learning materials and experiences. Many of our certificate graduates work in business, industry, healthcare, or other fields where they are responsible for creating training programs or educational coursework that will be delivered or implemented by others. Students in this certificate learn the fundamental principles of instructional design and gain experience with many of the tools and programs used by instructional designers today.

## The eLearning Design Curriculum

The courses in the Graduate Certificate in eLearning Design curriculum consist of a minimum of 15 semester hours. Below is an overview of the courses that make up the curriculum, listed in the general order in which the courses are taken. The LDT program faculty recommend you complete the following coursework:

### *eLearning Design Core Courses*

#### **EDIT 6170e Instructional Design (3 credits)**

This course introduces participants to the skills and processes leading to the design, development, and evaluation of instruction.

#### **EDIT 6190e Design Thinking and Development Tools (3 credits)**

Students learn a variety of tools appropriate for computer-based development. These include graphics, media, and software development tools. Students are required to write a contract for the specific tools to be learned.

#### **EDIT 6200e Designing Interactive Learning Environments (3 credits)**

Instructional design, learning theory, project management, and evaluation of designing interactive learning environments for education and training. Students and faculty work in teams to produce interactive multimedia, electronic performance support systems, internet resources, and other evolving forms of technology-enhanced learning environments.

### *eLearning Design Elective Courses (choose 2)*

#### **EDIT 7350e Evaluation and Analytics in Instructional Design (3 credits)**

Planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting systematic evaluations of instructional designs and environments.

#### **EDIT 6400e Emerging Approaches in Teaching, Learning, and Technology (3 credits)**

Teaching, learning, and performing, and the ways technological environments can be designed to support these approaches. Describes the theoretical and research foundations of these approaches and demonstrates varied uses of technology.

#### **EDIT 6500e Video Production for Teaching and Learning (3 credits)**

Design, production, and use of digital video. Laboratory experiences with studio and portable cameras; editing and other equipment suitable for educational use.

**EDIT 7520e Online Teaching and Learning (3 credits)**

An introduction to the world of teaching and learning online, including discussion of instructional strategies and current innovations and issues. From choosing and setting up course elements in a Learning Management System through the actual delivery and interactions of an online class.

**EDIT 7550 Project Management in Instructional Design (3 credits)**

Planning, organizing, supervision, and evaluation of technology-based education and training projects and support services in a variety of settings.

## Course Sequence

The Graduate Certificate in eLearning Design is delivered in a flexible mode that combines innovative class scheduling and online courses to accommodate a variety of work schedules and geographical locations. Students should finish the program in 2 to 3 semesters. The following table provides an overview of the expected sequence.

We are unable to offer all courses in all semesters and some courses are offered only once per calendar year. This, coupled with the fact that some courses are prerequisite to other courses, means that your completion of the program could be delayed if you are unable to complete the program in the prescribed sequence. Your advisor will work with you to map out an appropriate course sequence. The following is an overview of when our courses are typically offered.

Course	Semester(s) Typically Offered
EDIT 6170e- Instructional Design	Fall and Spring
EDIT 6190e- Design Thinking and Development Tools	Fall and Spring
EDIT 6200e- Designing Interactive Learning Environments <i>Pre-reqs: EDIT 6170e and EDIT 6190e</i>	Spring and Summer
EDIT 7350e- Evaluation and Analytics in Instructional Design	Fall and Spring
EDIT 6400e- Emerging Approaches to Teaching, Learning, and Technology	Fall and Summer
EDIT 6500e- Video Production for Teaching and Learning	Summer
EDIT 7520e- Online Teaching and Learning	Fall and Summer
EDIT 7550e- Project Management in Instructional Design	Summer

In general, these courses are taught using an online hybrid approach. There will be opportunities for classes to be synchronously via video conferencing software. No routine travel to the University campus in Athens is necessary. We have organized the curriculum with the full-time working professional in mind, but with the assumption that the professional workday extends from morning until late afternoon. We cannot accommodate full-time working schedules that deviate from this standard.

## Studio Approach to Instructional Design

While the course-based model is the long-standing approach to graduate education, it is often problematic for programs, such as ours, in which students must master design knowledge and the set of tools needed to bring designs to life. For example, our students must master principles and procedures in the design, development, and evaluation of instruction. They also must master a wide range of technological skills (most of which are computer-based) in a short amount of time and then successfully apply these skills to their instructional design projects. However, one significant problem instructors and students have long faced is how to adequately teach and learn computer-based tools to appropriately apply them in an instructional design project within the scope of a 16-week course. Frequently, students are just beginning to master the tools when the course draws to a close. Instructional design as it is authentically applied in education and training does not lend itself easily to 16-week blocks of time.

To address this problem, we have designed a studio approach based on a constructivist perspective. While it is difficult to adequately summarize this perspective here, it is based on several core ideas:

- 1) Learning is an active process in which meaning is constructed by each individual;
- 2) Learning is a social activity founded on collaboration and mutual respect of different viewpoints; and
- 3) Learning is embedded in the building of artifacts that are shared and critiqued by one's peers.

Table 1 lists the core principles upon which the studio curriculum is based. The studio experiences provide an opportunity in courses for participants to explore design (instructional and otherwise) given the capabilities of today's multimedia tools. The design concepts and development skills nurtured in the studio go beyond any particular context. Instead, you begin the studio curriculum with the opportunity to explore design issues of personal importance while you build your skill base with multimedia development tools. As you progress, you will be expected to apply your skills and understanding about design to instructional problems individually and in groups.

We acknowledge that participants come to the program with a wealth of experience, knowledge, and motivations. For a satisfying and rewarding experience, you should look to build on what you know while at the same time be willing to learn from your peers. As any professional, you are expected to understand and apply the field's literature to your own work. It is important to know what has preceded your inquiry into these issues and to examine critically the ideas and evidence presented in the literature.

Table 1. Studio Core Principles

- 1) Learning about design (especially the design of user interactions)
- 2) Personally relevant and meaningful experiences for those who participate
- 3) Appropriate experiences for all educational settings (e.g. corporate, K-12, higher education, etc.)
- 4) Skill development within authentic contexts (individual and team projects)
- 5) Collaboration & Cooperation
- 6) Mentoring (within and among all program participants and faculty)
- 7) Understanding the literature (select organize integrate)
- 8) Performance-based Assessment
- 9) Public Service

## Technology Requirements

It is difficult to imagine any professional working today without ready access to adequate computer resources. This is especially true among those working in the Instructional Technology profession given our increasing reliance on computer technology. All students admitted into the program must have their own laptop computer, prescribed software, and video camera, and be prepared to bring these resources to each class or event. Consult the hardware and software specifications provided as part of the materials sent to you when you were admitted into the program. You are expected to have an operating webcam and microphone so that you may participate in class interactions.

Purchasing these materials is a good investment, not only for completion of your graduate studies, but also for your future as an IT professional. It is likewise very important to have access to broadband Internet access, especially since many courses you will take will be delivered online.

Hardware and software specifications constantly change to reflect industry standards and practices. Although we believe that the hardware and software you purchase at the beginning of your program will remain adequate until you graduate, you should be prepared to purchase updates and upgrades where necessary.

We have several courses that use Articulate 360. While you are enrolled in a course that requires it, you will be provided with a free subscription. Access will be provided by the program director.

**Please note:** Articulate 360 is a Windows only product. If you are using a Macintosh, you must have a dual boot system or a virtual machine solution. See here for further details:

<https://access.articulate.com/support/article/using-articulate-storyline-on-a-mac>

# Milestones in the Graduate Experience

## Initial Advisement for Coursework

Following admission to the program, you will be sent a letter welcoming you to the department. This letter will provide, or direct you to, important information, such as steps for completing the admission process, and specifications for required hardware and software resources.

The name, email, and phone number of the faculty member assigned as your advisor will be contained in the welcome letter. Develop good communication with your advisor early in your program and maintain this communication throughout. Your advisor should be the first person you contact for questions, or to discuss problems you are having. Please plan accordingly if you need to schedule a face-to-face appointment with your advisor.

## WEIT Student Listservs

Email is the official means of communication within UGA for all academic matters. Probably the most important communication link between all LDT faculty and students is email and the IDD-L listserv. Similarly, our Department of Career and Information Studies maintains a student listserv for all WEIT graduate students. You will be subscribed to each of these important listservs shortly before your classes begin using the email address included in your graduate application. All important announcements are distributed to students in the department only using the WEIT and IDD listservs and all students are required to remain subscribed to them while a student. You are responsible to check your email frequently.

UGA MyID. The University provides several computer resources to registered students, such as a University email account along with web server space. Almost all of these services are accessed using one special university account called "MyID." A MyID account is also required for many course resources and activities, so be sure to get and become acquainted with your MyID account soon after being admitted.

Once you have obtained a UGA email address, you are encouraged to contact the IDD coordinator to request that it be used for receiving all IDD-L listerv email.

Also, please note that the department, college, and university consider your UGA email as your official email address, so if you do not plan on using it as your main email, you should forward your UGA email to your preferred email address. You also need to check your UGA "junk" folder occasionally just in case important email is inadvertently marked as spam. If your email address changes, it is your responsibility to notify the department.

## Coursework

It is your responsibility to communicate with your advisor prior to registering each semester. It may be necessary to schedule a face-to-face appointment with your advisor, but it is likely that email or phone (or an online form set up by your advisor) will suffice for most people and situations. Plan well in advance to avoid network congestion and stress during the last days of registration. Consult Athena ([athena.uga.edu](http://athena.uga.edu)) for deadlines.

For a searchable PDF version of the schedule of classes, visit the Schedule of Classes on the UGA Registrar's site (<https://reg.uga.edu/enrollment-and-registration/schedule-of-classes/>).

For brief official course descriptions, visit the Courses section of the UGA Bulletin (<http://bulletin.uga.edu/CoursesHome.aspx>).

For sample past syllabi of courses (when available), visit <https://syllabus.uga.edu/> and go to Syllabus System Browse. Note that a past syllabus does not in any way guarantee what will be on a new syllabus for a given course. But it can provide a general idea.

## Application for Graduation

This is the final report to earn your graduate certificate in eLearning Design. To apply to graduate, carefully follow these steps:

[Athena.uga.edu](http://athena.uga.edu) → Click "Graduation" → "Apply to Graduate" → Follow Instruction to Confirmation Page

This must be completed during the semester you graduate from the university (fall, spring, summer). Failure to apply to graduate with the graduate certificate in eLearning Design on Athena will prevent the certificate from being added to your official university transcript.

## Graduation

Congratulations!

You are invited, but not required, to participate in Commencement ceremonies sponsored by the Graduate School as well as a Convocation sponsored by the College of Education. Information about these events is posted each semester on the graduate school's website and the College of Education website, respectively.

# Additional Information

## UGA Academic Honesty

You are expected to communicate your own ideas in your own words and give academic credit where it is due. Please review the UGA Academic Honesty Policy to learn what is expected of you in both your coursework as well as other academic artifacts you produce.

<https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>

If you are unsure about how to uphold UGA's Academic Honesty Policy, there are a number of excellent resources readily available online. Some of those are provided below, but you are encouraged to find your own:

- A. Ashford University' Steps to Avoiding Plagiarism: <https://writingcenter.ashford.edu/steps-avoiding-plagiarism>
- B. 6 Ways to Avoid Plagiarism: <http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism>

## Accessibility and Testing Center

The Accessibility and Testing Office at the University of Georgia is a department in the Division of Student Affairs. The Office's primary commitment is to assist the University of Georgia in educating and serving students with disabilities who qualify for admissions. While Accessibility and Testing's mission is to ensure equal educational opportunities as required by the ADA and other legislation, the DRC strives to promote a welcoming academic, physical, and social environment for students. Additional information about the Accessibility and Testing services is at:

<https://drc.uga.edu/drc-and-university-statements/>

## Accommodations

If you have a disability and would like to request accommodations, please communicate with Accessibility and Testing. All individuals receiving accommodations in the classroom must be registered with Disability Services. Visit their website at: <http://accessibility.uga.edu/> for further information.

## Appeals

Students at the University of Georgia have the right to appeal academic decisions. The decision that a student has failed comprehensive examinations would be considered a decision of graduate curriculum requirements and would be appealed first to the department. Policies and procedures are available from the university at: <https://grad.uga.edu/index.php/current-students/policies-procedures/academics/appeals>

## Grievance Policy

Occasionally, difference of opinion or differing interpretation of expectations arise during work on a graduate program of study. Our intent is that all disputes are amicably resolved in a timely fashion. Please refer to the UGA Grievance Policy ([https://legal.uga.edu/Grievance\\_and\\_Disciplinary\\_Review\\_Policy.html](https://legal.uga.edu/Grievance_and_Disciplinary_Review_Policy.html)) if you believe you have cause to challenge any of the processes or procedures regarding any aspect of the LDT doctoral program. To initiate the process, you should approach the department head about your issue, unless the issue involves that person. In such cases, please approach a faculty member who you trust. This could be your Major Professor or a different faculty member who is not involved in the issue.