Research and Evaluation Methodology

The research and evaluation methodology (REM) program offers a way to combine substantive interests about education with advanced training in research methods. A central mission of the program is to give students the training they need to use sophisticated methods that shed light on policies, programs and practices that have been enacted to facilitate student learning and to mitigate educational inequality. Students will learn not only how to apply a methodological approach, but to think deeply about when and why the approach is sensible given the real-world context that motivated the need for research. Learning how to do high quality research is just one piece of the puzzle. Communicating one’s findings with clarity is another. In REM, students will develop the ability to convey the results from complicated studies to a broad audience.

A spirit of critical inquiry is a defining feature of the community. When claims about education are made—by students or faculty—it is expected that those claims will be supported by an empirical warrant. The faculty strive to foster an environment for students that is at once challenging and supportive. During the weekly “REM seminar,” students have the opportunity to interact with invited speakers, discuss timely research topics and studies, brainstorm ideas for publishable papers and practice giving oral presentations. Close contact between students and faculty is the rule, not the exception. The faculty teach courses and mentor students with the same commitment and dedication that is evident in our scholarly research. Students can expect to experience on-going support as they embark on a path that begins with coursework, transitions to dissertation prospectus and defense, and culminates in a job that meshes with career aspirations.

Students participate in graduate research assistant-ships each semester and can expect to work with faculty on research projects as part of CADRE.

The Center for Assessment, Design, Research and Evaluation (CADRE)

All REM students can expect to be involved in CADRE research. The mission of CADRE is to produce generalizable knowledge that improves the ability to assess student learning and to evaluate programs and methods that may have an effect on this learning. CADRE projects represent a collaboration with the ongoing activities in the School of Education, the university, and the broader national and international community of scholars and stakeholders involved in educational assessment and evaluation. Visit the center’s CADRE Projects and Resources (http://www.colorado.edu/cadre/cadre-projects-and-resources) website for examples.

Career Opportunities

Opportunities for students with a PhD from REM include:

- University teaching and research
- Research, evaluation and testing in state departments of education and large school districts
- Research and policy analysis for think tanks like the RAND Corporation, SRI International, and federally funded regional research and development laboratories
- Measurement or statistical analysis for assessment and testing organizations such as the Educational Testing Service
- Consultation for government and education agencies

Examples of our REM graduates’ careers over the past ten years:

- National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (Senior Associate)
- Educational Testing Service (Research Scientist)
- Center for Assessment, Design, Research and Evaluation (Associate Director)
- SRI International (Principal Research Scientist)
- Stanford University (Assistant Professor)

Doctoral Degree

- Education - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/education/programs-study/education-doctor-philosophy-phd)