**LEARNING, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT LAB**

PHONE: 812-855-9703, ROOM: PSY A100

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

ABOUT LEAD LAB: In the Learning, Education, and Development lab we conduct research on how children think, learn, and solve problems in mathematics. Our goal is to understand how children gain proficiency in math, both independently and with instructional guidance. We care about the strategies that children generate, about the errors that children make, and about their ability to learn and transfer information to new contexts.

YOUR COMMITMENT: We generally ask for a commitment to work in the lab for an entire year (two semesters) – to make the process more educational for you and to make our investment in training you more worthwhile for us.

YOUR TASKS: Specific tasks will vary depending on the particular project(s) with which you are involved. Some tasks include running subjects in an experiment, designing materials, entering and coding children’s answers in a database, copying materials, and scheduling participants. Everyone will attend and participate in weekly lab meetings. These meetings are where we discuss current projects (e.g., the meaning and implications of the research or specific project details), read and critique current literature in the area, and present findings or ideas.

YOUR TRAINING: We will provide training for everything we need you to do – for example, the procedures for running subjects in a particular study or for coding children’s answers to particular questions. It is important that you feel confident and secure in your knowledge of the tasks. If you don’t, ask questions. We would much rather have you ask questions so we can explain things again, than to have you make mistakes. Quality over quantity.

EXPECTATIONS: Reliability is very important. For example, when subjects are scheduled to participate in a study, the assistant must be there. If unavoidable emergency (such as a sudden severe illness) arises, contact Dr. Fyfe or one of the lab members so they can fill in on an emergency basis. A professional attitude is also important especially when running subjects. This includes respectable clothing, appearance, and conversation. This is important for our research results, because your professional attitude helps convey to subjects that the experiment they are participating in is important and meaningful, and is worth their full attention and effort.

YOUR GRADE: If you participate in the lab via the research courses, grading will be based on your reliability and performance on assigned tasks, your participation in lab meetings, as well as a brief written research paper that highlights your involvement in a project.

GOING FURTHER: If you want to take the initiative to get more deeply involved in a specific

research project that particularly interests you, there is certainly room for that. We invite you to

collaborate with one of the lab members in refining your research idea, to present it at lab

meeting for discussion and feedback, and to run the study. In other words, you can get out of this experience about what you put into it. If you want to learn to design and execute your own experiment, statistically analyze data, or write a research proposal, all that is possible – if you are willing to take the initiative and put in the effort.

GETTING STARTED: We are almost always looking for motivated, dedicated students with an interest in learning and development. The most important requirement is understanding the broad goals of the LEAD lab and why they are of interest to you. It is helpful to have computer and word-processing skills, including familiarity with Word and Excel. It is also helpful, but not necessary, to have some knowledge of developmental psychology and research methods/statistics. If you are interested in joining, please email Dr. Fyfe (efyfe@indiana.edu) indicating why you are interested in joining the lab as well as a list of the courses you’ve taken and grades (an unofficial transcript).

Most importantly, we want the LEAD lab to be a positive and educational experience for you.

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