INTERNATIONAL PHD PROGRAM IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

School of Educational Technology, Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University

WELCOME TO BEIJING NORMAL UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1902, Beijing Normal University (BNU) has a distinguished tradition of academic excellence in education, research, and professional training. Since its founding, BNU has been at the forefront of educational reform and innovation in China and continues to play a leading role in the country's rapidly evolving educational landscape. As a globally recognized institution, BNU places strong emphasis on domestic and international exchange and collaboration and has established a strong reputation for scholarship, research, and professional development.

Established in 2009, the Faculty of Education (FOE) at Beijing Normal University is a nationally renowned center dedicated to advancing knowledge through teaching, research, and public service in education and related fields. FOE is committed to developing future academic leaders and is supported by a distinguished faculty. It currently has 214 academic staff members, 90% of whom hold doctoral degrees, including 83 full professors and 77 associate professors. Since its establishment, FOE has played a leading role in China's educational landscape and has become a major center for high-quality educational research. It comprises 14 academic units, including the Institute of Education Theories, the Institute of International and Comparative Education, the Institute of Education History and Culture, and the School of Educational Technology. FOE is also an important hub for international academic exchange, with bilateral or multilateral agreements with more than 30 prestigious universities worldwide. In addition, it is a founding member of the International Network of Educational Institutions (INEI), together with nine other leading schools of education worldwide.

The School of Educational Technology (SET) has been a pioneer in learning and technology research since the late 1970s. For more than four decades, SET has conducted both theoretical and applied research in learning technologies and educational innovation. In addition to integrating advanced technologies into formal and informal learning environments, the School offers training courses, academic programs, and policy consulting in educational technology. It also maintains active international collaborations with institutions and organizations worldwide. Research at SET spans multiple disciplines, including education, philosophy, cognitive psychology, computer science, linguistics, and mathematics. The School ranked first in the National Discipline Assessment in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Of its 40 faculty members, 57% are professors. Each year, SET enrolls approximately 50 undergraduate students and more than 60 master's and doctoral students.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

The International PhD Program in Artificial Intelligence in Education is designed to prepare highly qualified interdisciplinary scholars who can advance the integration of artificial intelligence and education. The program responds to the ongoing digital transformation of education and focuses on the theories, technologies, learning environments, pedagogical innovations, and governance issues reshaping education in the age of artificial intelligence.

We warmly welcome students from around the world to apply to this international program and join a diverse academic community committed to advancing research and practice in artificial intelligence in education.

THE AIM OF THE PROGRAM

The program aims to prepare globally minded scholars with advanced expertise in artificial intelligence in education and strong cross-cultural competence. Doctoral students will develop a systematic understanding of the foundations and frontiers of AI in education, as well as learning mechanisms, pedagogical models, and educational-system transformation in the AI era. They will study major AI applications in education, including generative artificial intelligence, learning analytics, educational data mining, natural language processing, intelligent tutoring systems, and intelligent interactive technologies. Students will also develop the capacity to design future-oriented intelligent learning environments and curricula; conduct research on smart learning spaces, adaptive learning systems, human–AI collaborative learning, and data-driven instructional innovation; and critically examine major issues related to AI ethics in education, data security, algorithmic bias, and system governance.

DURATION, CURRICULUM, AND REQUIREMENTS

Duration

The program is offered on a full-time basis and normally lasts three years. Students are expected to complete all requirements within this period. Extensions of the study period or scholarship duration are not permitted. Under exceptional circumstances, such as health-related reasons, students may apply for a suspension of study and, where applicable, scholarship support in accordance with university regulations, for a maximum of one year.

Program Curriculum

No.	Curriculum	Type	Minimum Credits
1	Chinese History and Culture (Education Systems, Policy and Management in China)	Public Compulsory Courses (≥6 credits)	2
2	Basic Chinese I		2
3	Basic Chinese II		2
4	Academic Writing and Publishing	Foundational Degree Courses (≥4 credits)	2
5	Advanced Quantitative Research Methods		3
6	Advanced Qualitative Research Methods		3
7	Frontiers of Educational Discipline Development		2
8	Artificial Intelligence Technologies	Specialized Degree Courses (≥4 credits)	2
9	Artificial Intelligence in Education		2
10	Frontier Exploration of Artificial Intelligence	Elective (≥2 credits)	2
11	Practical Application of Artificial Intelligence		2
12	Advanced Technologies for Learning		2
13	Doctoral Research Seminar		2
14	Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning		2
15	Academic Writing		2
16	Mid-Term Examination	Required Tasks (6 credits)	2
17	International Experience		2
18	Research and Teaching Practice		2

Credits

PhD candidates must complete at least 22 credits: at least 6 credits from public compulsory courses, 4 from foundational degree Courses, 4 from specialized degree courses, 2 from elective courses, and 6 from required tasks. Students who have completed Chinese History and Culture (Education Systems, Policy and Management in China) during their master's studies may apply for an exemption; however, the exempted credits must be replaced with credits from other courses. Courses taken

elsewhere within the University may also count toward the specialized elective course requirement in accordance with program regulations.

Mid-Term Examination

After completing all credit requirements specified in the program and their individual study plan, PhD candidates may apply to take the Mid-Term Examination. Successful completion carries 2 credits and includes: (1) a review of foundational and frontier literature in the candidate's field; (2) academic presentations, including two public presentations during the doctoral study period; (3) an examination of academic ethics and research integrity; and (4) a dissertation proposal examination. A candidate who does not pass the dissertation proposal examination may revise the proposal once and take a second examination. Failure to pass the second examination will result in termination of study in accordance with program regulations.

PhD Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation must be completed independently by the candidate under the guidance of the supervisor or supervisory group and should normally be written in English in accordance with Beijing Normal University's regulations governing degree dissertations. It should demonstrate a solid theoretical foundation, systematic specialized knowledge, the capacity for independent research, innovative or frontier-oriented contributions of theoretical or practical significance, and rigorous academic quality. Before external review, the dissertation must pass a pre-defense. After completing the required review procedures and obtaining the supervisor's approval, the candidate must complete a public dissertation defense in accordance with university regulations.

Degree Award

Candidates who complete all academic, research, practical training, international experience, dissertation, and defense requirements within the prescribed study period will be considered for graduation and degree conferral in accordance with Beijing Normal University regulations. The final decision on degree conferral is made through the University's degree evaluation procedures.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A recognized master's degree or equivalent.
- Applicants should have an academic background in a relevant field, such as educational technology, education, psychology, computer science, or electronics.
- Applicants must provide proof of English proficiency through one of the following:

an IELTS Academic overall band score of 6.0 or above; a TOEFL iBT score of 100 or above; or completion of a previous degree at an accredited institution in a program taught entirely in English (relevant supporting documents is required, e.g. a certificate issued by the graduating institution to prove that you were taught fully in English).

- Applicants must be in good health, as certified by a local public hospital, and must not have any condition that would prohibit entry into China under applicable Chinese laws and regulations. Applicants should be free from serious chronic illnesses (e.g., severe hypertension, cardiovascular or cerebrovascular disease, or diabetes), mental disorders, or infectious diseases that pose a public health risk; should not be recovering from major surgery or an acute illness; and should not be seriously disabled or pregnant. Preference will be given to applicants with work experience in education.
- Applicants should provide a summary of their research achievements and/or professional experience, including a detailed description of one project they have led or participated in.
- Applicants should submit the abstract and full text of their master's thesis, together with the full text of one published academic paper.
- All applicants must submit a research proposal. Doctoral applicants should submit a proposal of at least 10,000 words.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is RMB 30,000 per student per year, for a total of RMB 90,000 per student over the three-year program.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For administrative inquiries, please contact:
Professor Lanqin Zheng
School of Educational Technology, Faculty of Education
Email: bnuzhenglq@bnu.edu.cn

For more information about the School of Educational Technology, Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University, please visit fe.bnu.edu.cn.