

Cassandra Buffington-Bates

PhD Student

 cassandrabuffington-bates@my.unt.edu  410.892.6609  [linkedin.com/in/cassandrabuffingtonbates/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/cassandrabuffingtonbates/)  [Google Scholar](#)

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

Dedicated doctoral candidate in Learning Technologies at the University of North Texas, maintaining a 4.0 GPA. My interdisciplinary research bridges adult development, healthcare IT, instructional design, and the ethical integration of AI in healthcare education. With advanced degrees in Public Health and Education, I’m deeply committed to promoting holistic education, health literacy, ethics, and lifelong learning.

I design impactful learning environments by leveraging instructional design, educational technology, and evidence-based strategies. My goal is to advance research and implement innovative approaches that strengthen education systems and enhance individual and community well-being. I aim to continue contributing to the healthcare sector in a leadership role, while also pursuing opportunities in consulting to help organizations navigate change at the intersection of health, education, and technology.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Adult Development and Life Span	Healthcare Ethics & Health Literacy
Creative Andragogy	Multimedia Learning
Holistic Education	Emotional Intelligence
Well-being	EdTech Innovation

CORE SKILLS

Strategic Leadership & Vision	Data Analysis & Technology Integration
Stakeholder Engagement	Research Acumen/Analysis
Instructional Design	Critical Thinking
Healthcare IT Expertise	Project & Program Management
Creative Problem Solving	Communication & Collaboration
Content Development	Coaching/Training/Teaching
Health Literacy/Equity/Ethics	Curriculum Development
	Resource Management
	Process Improvement

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CERTIFICATIONS

National Commission for Healthcare Credentialing, Inc.

Certified Health Education Specialist

October 2023-September 2028 (ORIG. 10/2018-9/2023)

Certified Microsoft Innovative Educator Program

Johns Hopkins Health System

May 26, 2020

EDUCATION

Doctorate of Philosophy - Learning Technologies (In Progress)

Current GPA: 4.0 out of 4.0

University of North Texas - Denton

Research Interests: Holistic Education, digital storytelling, wellbeing, health literacy, creative expression in healthcare, adult development & life span

Expected Graduation: May 2027

Master of Science- Public Health

GPA: 3.71 out of 4.0

University of New England

Thesis TITLE: The state of stress and African-American women: a contributing factor of health disparity

Conferred: 2015

Master of Arts - Education

GPA: 3.81 out of 4.0

University of Maryland - University College

Thesis TITLE: Integrative capstone project utilizing technology and additional resources for early learners to recognize and count numbers

Conferred: 2007

Project Management Institute (PMI) Project Management Training

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Certificate of Completion

August 2016

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CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

PLOS ONE – Manuscript ID: PONE-D-25-33027

November 11, 2025

Title: Aesthetic Evaluation Framework for Plant Color Schemes for Sustainable Landscape Architecture Design

International Society for the Learning Sciences

Conference Reviewer, International Conference of the Learning Sciences (ICLS), Helsinki, Finland, 2025.

Served as a peer reviewer for submissions to the International Conference of the Learning Sciences (ICLS), held in Helsinki, Finland, 2025. Provided constructive feedback on research proposals to ensure the high quality of the conference program.

National Communication Association

Conference Reviewer, National Conference, Denver, Colorado, 2025.

Served as a peer reviewer for submissions to the National Conference held in Denver, Colorado 2025. Provided constructive feedback on research proposals to ensure the high quality of the conference program related to healthcare, communication, and storytelling.

SERVICE TO FIELD | PEER REVIEWING ACTIVITIES

Reviewer, PLOS ONE (2025 - Present)

MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Dr. Yvonne J. Chandler Mentorship Program

Mentee

University of North Texas [Denton, TX] — [January 2024 – May 2024]

Engaged in structured mentor-mentee activities focused on research support, communication, and leadership development.

Gained training in effective mentoring practices within academic and research environments.

AWARDS & HONORS

College of Information, Department of Learning Technologies, University of North Texas

Graduate Student Travel Award (2025): Provided up to \$500 to support travel expenses, acknowledging research in progress to the field.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

UNT Department of Learning Technologies Student Association (**LTSA**), 2023 - Present

Howard County Commission For Transitional Youth with Disabilities - Appointed Member:
2021-2023

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

IRB-25-616: Interrogation of Generative AI Systems Ontological and Epistemological Views of Reality and Knowledge.

Principal Investigator: Dr. S. Warren (Co-Principal Investigators: Barnes, M., Buffington-Bates, C., Yohn, H., Alqahtani, R., Schlitz, I., Dawood, H., Chevalier, J., Alqahtani, M., Gamez, J., Cummings, J., Taylor, M., Villanlobos, O.)

This study examines whether popular generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Mistral, Grok) convey clear ontological and epistemological perspectives. By repeatedly prompting six AI systems across three weeks and multiple users, we analyze how consistently each tool defines concepts of existence and knowledge. Expected to result in a peer-reviewed publication.

IRB-24-703: Tuned In or Tuned Out? The Impact of Digitally-Mediated Sound Upon Working Memory

Principal Investigator: Dr. D. Cockerham (Co-Principal Investigators: Buffington-Bates, C., Chevalier, J.)

This study investigates the impact of various background sounds, including silence, conversations, vocal music, and instrumental music, on short-term memory in children and adults. Short-term memory, also known as working memory, is what we use to hold small pieces of information in mind for a few seconds, allowing people to solve problems, follow instructions, or learn new things. Expected to result in the peer-reviewed publication in ETR&D.

PUBLICATIONS

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9073-8982>

Buffington-Bates, C. E. (2025). Digital Learning and Healing: Impacts of AI in Art Therapy. *Journal of Human Services, Training, Research and Practice*. 11 (2) 2.

<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/jhstrp/vol11/iss2/2>

James, S., Cummings, J., Buffington-Bates, C., James-Avalos, G., Gamez, J., Villalobos, O., ... & Taylor, M. (2025, May). Symposium Part 2: Leveraging Technology to Enhance Learner Engagement and Learning Outcomes: Innovations in Educational Practices and Environments Symposium. In *EdMedia+ Innovate Learning* (pp. 936-944). *Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE)*

Buffington-Bates, C.E. (2024). Self-care tips for doctoral students. *AERA Graduate Student Newsletter*, 26.

PRESENTATION EXPERIENCE

Chevalier, J., Buffington-Bates, C.(2026, June 10-12). Is my music helping me study? Exploring the role of background music and working memory.The 2026 Learning Ideas Conference. Columbia University, New York, New York.

Buffington-Bates, C., Dawood, H. (2026, February 11-13). The caregiver paradox: How multigenerational caregiving depletes and develops human capital for Industry 4.0. The 2026 Academy of Human Resource Development International Conference. Irving, TX.

Buffington-Bates, C. (2025, October 5-8). Digital storytelling for health promotion: a novel approach to enhance well-being and communication. 23rd International Conference on Communication in Healthcare, Ottawa, CA.

Patole, S., Buffington-Bates, C., Baker, R. (2025, February 6-8). AI integration in teams and team performance [PowerPoint slides]—22nd Emotional Intelligence Training and Research Institute Conference, Corpus Christi, TX, United States.

Buffington-Bates, C., Chevalier, J. (2025, February 21). Music immersion, emotion, and communication. UNT Multidisciplinary Information Research Symposium, Denton, TX.

Lewis, B., Buffington-Bates, C., Chevalier, J. (2024, September 19-22). Fostering communities of inquiry and practice through peer interactions for doctoral students in distributed programs. 2024 Annual Doctoral Residency Meeting, Educational Research Exchange, Denton, TX, United States.

Buffington-Bates, C., Chevalier, J., Baker, R. (2024, September 26-28, and 30-October 1). Anthropomorphic connections' influence on performance [PowerPoint slides]. 23rd International Society of Performance Improvement Europe, Middle East, Africa (ISPI-EMEA) Conference, Virtual Event.

Fehrenbach, A., Buffington-Bates, C., Morrison, J., Jack, G., Lebowsky, L. (2024, September 26-28, and 30-October 1). Performance improvement within an evolving technology landscape: Open assist - CoolBricks [PowerPoint slides]. 23rd International Society of Performance Improvement Europe, Middle East, Africa (ISPI-EMEA) Conference, Virtual Event.

Buffington-Bates, C.E. (2024, May 14-16). From silence to empowerment: how to apply creative expression and effective listening in health literacy ethics. 23rd Institute for Healthcare Advancement Health Literacy (IHA) Conference, Virtual Event.

Smith, P., Buffington-Bates, C., Johnson, V., Johnson, M, & Baker, R. (2024, May 6-9). Connectedness, wellness, and performance improvement [PowerPoint slides]. 62nd International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) Conference, Fort McDowell, AZ, United States.

Baker, R., Smith, P., Buffington-Bates, C. (2024, February 8-10). Emotionally intelligent solutions for loneliness and connectedness [PowerPoint slides]. 21st Emotional Intelligence Training and Research Institute Conference, Corpus Christi, TX, United States.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER (CONTRACT)

University of California - Berkeley, School of Public Health - Online MPH Program

April 2025 - August 2025

- Designs graduate and post-graduate public health courses, including quantitative subjects, aligning learning objectives, activities, and assessments to fit advanced and diverse content areas.
- Advises faculty and TAs on technology and teaching strategies, using data to enhance engagement and learning in large self-paced online courses.
- Supports multimedia content creation and manages production schedules for course materials.
- Ensures digital content meets accessibility standards and handles copyright clearance for third-party media.
- Collaborates across teams, including faculty, TAs, instructional designers, and tech staff, with professionalism and clear communication to design and support effective instruction.
- Develops specialized training to support student success in quantitative courses across diverse organizational roles.
- Pursues ongoing professional development to stay current with instructional design and online education trends.

LEAD INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

Healthcare Information Management System Society (HIMSS)

November 2022 - December 2024

- Spearheaded the design and development of eLearning and instructor-led courses, leveraging adult learning principles and interactive activities to enhance healthcare professionals' skills.
- Authored comprehensive business proposals and micro-learning courses focused on workflow analysis and design, AI/ML in healthcare, data literacy, and advanced analytics in healthcare, supporting organizational digital transformation efforts.
- Directed content creation and learning platform administration, including curriculum mapping, video production, and interactive catalog development.
- Collaborated with healthcare leaders and vendors to craft cutting-edge educational resources, ensuring alignment with industry trends.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN CONSULTANT

Insight Global

June 2022 - December 2022

- Delivered multimedia-rich training programs targeting Medicare/Medicaid claims processing systems.
- Partnered with SMEs and leadership to evaluate training effectiveness and streamline instructional workflows using Kanban methodologies.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER II
MPACT Strategic Consulting, LLC
February 2021 - July 2021

- Conducted needs assessments and designed instructional roadmaps for government agency training programs, focusing on skills progression for field officers.
- Created facilitator guides, participant resources, and supplemental learning materials to enhance the learning experience in virtual and instructor-led formats.
- Developed interactive training modules aligned with organizational goals, ensuring content was accessible and compliant with government standards.

EPIC INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGIST
Johns Hopkins Health System
January 2019 - February 2021

- Designed and implemented blended learning solutions for telemedicine, nutrition services, and revenue cycle management teams, resulting in improved performance metrics.
- Provided mentorship to junior instructional designers on ISD methodologies, eLearning tools, and content management in LMS platforms.
- Updated eLearning resources to modern formats and enhanced accessibility during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SR. TRAINING SPECIALIST/ANALYST III
CTIS, Inc.
August 2017 - December 2018

- Led training initiatives for NIH projects, ensuring compliance with 508 accessibility standards and technical training for SaaS platforms in clinical protocols.
- Enhanced training programs using data-driven methodologies and advanced instructional design tools, ensuring alignment with CMMI Level 3 standards.

PROJECT LEAD
ALTA IT Service, Inc.
March 2015 - November 2015

- Directed creating learning artifacts, including a SharePoint-based repository, to support organizational learning objectives.
- Implemented training process improvements, achieving enhanced learning outcomes for over 200 end-users.
- Facilitated project planning, logistics, and reporting to ensure the successful execution of workforce training initiatives.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CLINICAL APPLICATION ANALYST

Trinity Health / Holy Cross Health

August 2016 - August 2017

- Developed and delivered training programs for clinical applications, ensuring seamless integration of workflows across 29 systems.
- Authored comprehensive user manuals, job aids, and process documentation to support end users and improve system adoption.
- Collaborated with clinical teams to troubleshoot and resolve application issues, enhancing overall system performance.

University of Maryland Medical System

IT MANAGER | SR. TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

January 2008 - July 2014

- Oversaw end-to-end learning and development projects for ambulatory and inpatient clinics, delivering blended training programs that improved workforce performance by 50%.
- Developed instructional content tailored to specific clinical roles and workflows, including Captivate modules and workflow-based curricula.
- Managed project teams and resources, ensuring successful go-lives and sustained improvements in workforce capabilities.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Academy of Communication in Healthcare - ACH (Active Member)
- American Educational Research Association-AERA (Active Member)
- Emotional Intelligence Training & Research Institute-EITRI (Active Member)
- International Society for Performance Improvement-ISPI (Active Member)
- Toastmasters International | Voice of a Woman Club (Active Member)