



Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Curriculum and Instruction Graduate Student Handbook

Academic Year 2023-2024

Program Overview

The Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University Central Texas will prepare you to analyze student data, utilize research and employ best practices to improve the quality of teaching and learning in any classroom. The courses are specifically designed to provide a range of experiences to prepare you to serve as expert teachers and mentors in schools. At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we strive to provide current, relevant, and rigorous material in a time frame that meets the needs of working teachers.

The Master of Education Degree in Curriculum and Instruction prepares students to identify, evaluate, and investigate best practice in the field of curriculum and instruction. The degree prepares educators who aspire to attain positions such as school curriculum specialist, mentor teacher, ***reading specialist, community college faculty, or clinical adjunct faculty in higher education. High school teachers who teach dual enrollment courses or advanced placement courses may also choose to pursue this degree.

***Specific entry requirements for Master of Education C&I with [Reading Specialist-see page 4](#)

Program Learning Outcomes:

The student will be able to:

- Demonstrate a proficiency in the fundamental concepts in each of the major areas of curriculum and instruction.
- Illustrate the ability to read, understand, and critically analyze the ideas presented in research-based scholarly works to inform practices.
- Plan, organize, implement and evaluate instructional materials to improve student achievement.
- Examine the use of assessments and interpret data to evaluate programmatic effectiveness.
- Strengthen the profession by presenting educational research in written, oral, and visual formats.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Curriculum & Instruction is to produce reflective professional educators who make effective educational decisions that support the creation of dynamic learning environments. Teacher Education, one of the major programs at the University, emphasizes broad general education as a foundation for mastery of teaching skills and specialized knowledge in academic discipline. The primary purpose of teacher education is to prepare highly qualified teachers for employment in Texas and the nation. The goal of the department is to develop teachers who:

1. possess appropriate knowledge and abilities in specific content areas or teaching fields;
2. communicate effectively with students, parents, and other professionals;
3. apply the principles of instructional planning in the development of curriculum;
4. use effective teaching practices;
5. formally and informally evaluate student performance and use results of such assessment in the instructional decision-making process;
6. promote critical thinking and participatory citizenship;
7. are skilled in the use of instructional technology;
8. are proficient in mathematical skills;
9. operate within the legal guidelines and uphold the ethics of the teaching profession;
10. demonstrate concern for students' general welfare; and
11. are committed to continued professional growth and development.

GETTING STARTED

Candidates are recruited from school districts across Texas. Apply now to join cohorts forming for upcoming semesters. Complete the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction Program application process: Apply to TAMUCT on-line at [ApplyTexas](#) and select apply to the M.Ed. Curriculum & Instruction Program. Applicants must meet both A&M-Central Texas Graduate School and the Curriculum & Instruction criteria for selection.

Graduate School Admission

Students will be admitted into the M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction major by the faculty once the following application criteria are met:

1. Successful admission to graduate school.
2. One year creditable service as teacher of record.
3. Attendance at Graduate Student Program Information Meeting.
4. Appointment with Graduate Program Coordinator.

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction

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practices to improve the quality of teaching and learning in any classroom. The courses are specifically designed to provide you with a wide range of experiences in order to serve as expert teachers and mentors in schools. At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we strive to provide current, relevant, and rigorous material in a time frame that meets the needs of working teachers.

Tracks:

- M.Ed. – Secondary Education with Thesis (30-36 SCH)
- M.Ed. – Secondary Education without Thesis (30-36 SCH)
- M.Ed. – Elementary Education with Thesis (30 SCH)
- M.Ed. – Elementary Education without Thesis (30 SCH)
- M.Ed. – Special Education with Thesis (36 SCH)
- M.Ed. – Special Education without Thesis (36 SCH)

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction degree is a 30-36-hour online program (see program link): [M.Ed. C&I Program](#)

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with Reading Specialist Certification

Reading Specialists are a type of education professional who assist teachers with reading diagnoses and work with children with reading problems. These professionals work as part of a faculty and with administrators to establish an effective reading program. They give advice and determine appropriate learning strategies for struggling readers. These professionals also collaborate with other school professionals, parents, and community members. The goal is to provide expertise to establish an effective reading program, by making instructional decisions, and supporting student success. Their solutions often depend on the unique context of the students, campus environmental factors, and district resources. Reading specialists are often in a unique position to have a positive impact on a campus and district.

Key Responsibilities:

- Keeping up with state and federal regulations for reading programs.
- Receive requests from teachers and perform staff development for effective reading practices.
- Understand and select reading testing and assessment tools.
- Evaluate reading test results and communicate the findings to appropriate people.
- Review and document student progress for teachers, parents and administrators, as well as evaluations obtained through one-on-one interviews and observations.
- Understand district resources and produce individual plans for student success in reading.
- Collaborate with teachers, parents, students, and sometimes community organizations to enable an effective reading program.
- Assist teachers in implementing the reading improvement plan.
- Monitor the reading program's success and make changes as appropriate.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Students will be admitted into the M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction major by the faculty once the following application criteria are met:

1. Successful admission to graduate school.
2. Two years creditable service as a teacher of record or one year creditable service with letter indicating continuing employment at a TEA approved site (**M.Ed. Reading Specialist Certification**)
3. Attendance at Graduate Student Program Information Meeting.
4. Appointment with Graduate Program Coordinator.
5. A minimum 2.75 grade point average (GPA) overall or in the last 60 hours to include semester where 60th hour occurred.

6. Complete Program application packet to include:

- Interview
- Valid Teaching Certificate
- Letter of Intent to Pursue Certification

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a Reading Specialist Certification degree is a 36-hour online program (see program link): [M.Ed. C&I Program](#)

PRACTICUM for READING SPECIALIST

RULE §228.35(8) For certification in a class other than classroom teacher, each EPP shall provide a practicum for a minimum of 160 clock-hours whereby a candidate must demonstrate proficiency in each of the educator standards for the certificate class being sought.

1. A practicum experience must take place in an actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting.
2. A practicum may not take place exclusively during a summer recess.
3. A practicum shall not take place in a setting where the candidate:
 - a. has an administrative role over the site supervisor; or
 - b. is related to the field supervisor or site supervisor by blood (consanguinity) within the third degree or by marriage (affinity) within the second degree.

An application for practicum must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator no later than October 15 or March 15, one semester prior to the year in which the student plans to begin the practicum. Candidates for certification who do not satisfactorily complete practicum are automatically removed from the Educator Preparation Program.

During the practicum experience, the candidate is employed by a district within an approximate 60 mile radius of Killeen and must be enrolled in graduate coursework in fall and spring semesters. Prior approval from the Graduate Program Coordinator must be obtained for a candidate seeking employment outside of the 60-mile radius. In addition, please note that additional fees will be assessed and required to be paid by the candidate.

*Candidates are responsible for a background check through the district if not currently employed at the location of practicum.

Supervision

Supervision of each candidate shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a field supervisor.

Supervision provided on or after September 1, 2017 must be provided by a field supervisor who has completed TEA-approved observation training. The initial contact, which may be made by

telephone, email, or other electronic communication with the assigned candidate, must occur within the first quarter of the assignment. For each formal observation, the field supervisor shall participate in an individualized pre-observation conference with the candidate; document educational practices observed; provide written feedback through an individualized, synchronous, and interactive post-observation conference with the candidate; and provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's site supervisor. Neither the pre-observation conference nor the post-observation conference need to be onsite. Formal observations conducted through collaboration with school or district personnel can be used to meet the requirements of this subsection. Informal observations and coaching shall be provided by the field supervisor as appropriate. The field supervisor shall collaborate with the candidate and site supervisor throughout the practicum experience.

- (1) Formal observations must be at least 135 minutes in duration in total throughout the practicum and must be conducted by the field supervisor.
- (2) If a formal observation is not conducted on the candidate's site in a face-to-face setting, the formal observation may be provided by use of electronic transmission or other video or technology-based method. A formal observation that is not conducted on the candidates' site in a face-to-face setting must include a pre- and post-conference.
- (3) Regardless of the type of certificate held by a candidate during a practicum, an EPP must provide a minimum of one formal observation within the first third of the practicum, one formal observation within the second third of the practicum, and one formal observation within the final third of the practicum.

Field Supervisors

Field supervisors will be currently certified educator, hired by the educator preparation program, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor their performance, and provide constructive feedback to improve their effectiveness as educators. A field supervisor shall have at least three years of experience and current certification in the class in which supervision is provided, an accomplished educator as shown by student learning, or with experience as a campus-level administrator and who holds a current certificate that is appropriate for a principal assignment may also supervise classroom teacher, master teacher, and reading specialist candidates. If an individual is not currently certified, an individual must hold at least a master's degree in the academic area or field related to the certification class for which supervision is being provided and comply with the same number, content, and type of continuing professional education requirements. A field supervisor shall not be employed by the same school where the candidate being supervised is completing his or her clinical teaching, internship, or practicum. A mentor, cooperating teacher, or site supervisor, assigned as required by §228.35(f) of this title (relating to Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training), may not also serve as a candidate's field supervisor.

Site Supervisors

Site supervisors for a practicum candidate will be an educator with at least three years of experience in the certification class being pursued by the candidate, and who: (1) is

collaboratively assigned by the campus or district administrator and the educator preparation program (EPP); (2) is currently certified in the certification class in which the practicum candidate is seeking certification; (3) has completed training by the EPP, including training in how to coach and mentor candidates, within three weeks of being assigned to a practicum candidate; (4) is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; (5) guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the practicum; and, (6) reports the candidate's progress to the candidate's field supervisor.

CERTIFICATION

To be eligible to receive the standard Reading Specialist Certificate, a candidate must:

- (1) successfully complete a reading specialist preparation program including program and practicum requirements
- (2) successfully complete the examination based on the standards identified in §239.92
- (3) Conferred Master's Degree
- (4) hold a valid classroom teaching certificate; and
- (5) have two creditable years of teaching experience as a classroom teacher, as defined in Chapter 153, Subchapter CC, of this title (relating to Commissioner's Rules on Creditable Years of Service) and the Texas Education Code, §5.001(2).

TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM EXIT/WITHDRAWAL POLICY

I acknowledge that I am being prepared for Reading Specialist Certification by the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Educator Preparation Program (EPP) at Texas A&M University – Central Texas,

My signature below acknowledges that I have read and understood this document.

I agree to:

- Remain professional with CEHD faculty and EPP staff at all times.
- follow program policies within TEA guidelines as established by the CEHD including, but not limited to:
 - o ensure that I am prepared to receive a reading specialist certificate, CEHD shall establish benchmarks and structured assessments to track my progress and ensure that I am adequately prepared to pass the appropriate content exams required for classroom teacher certification.
 - o CEHD shall determine my readiness to take the appropriate certification exams based the EPP's data informed protocols.
 - o I understand that the CEHD evaluates the design and delivery of components in the EPP based on performance data and research practices and uses these data to continuously improve the program, which may result in changes to certification exam approval policy at any time.

o CEHD retains documents showing evidence of my eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of program requirements for a period of five (5) years after I complete, withdraw from, or am discharged or released from the program.

- Follow the plans established by CEHD faculty and EPP staff to ensure completion of program requirements;
- If applicable, attend prescribed courses/trainings as required by TEA for certificate issuance.
- Participate in self-tracked test preparation on Certify Teacher and/or 240Tutoring as assigned to me by EPP faculty and staff.
- Complete test prep assignments according to the schedule provided by CEHD faculty and EPP staff.
- Complete and submit any remediation program as assigned by EPP staff/faculty.

I understand that:

- I must notify EPP staff if I voluntary withdrawal from the program.
- If I am inactive from the A&M University - Central Texas coursework for greater than 12 months, I will be removed from the EPP as a reading specialist candidate and will no longer have TExES exam eligibilities.
- If I am inactive from Texas A&M University - Central Texas for greater than 12 months, I will need to reapply to the University and the EPP
- Policies in effect at the time of reapplication will apply to the new admission.

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE, 261.101: REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

In accordance with the Texas Family code (TFC) anyone suspecting the abuse or neglect of a child must report the suspected abuse to the Child Protective Services Child Abuse hotline at 1-800-2525400.

Specifically, a teacher must report no later than 48 hours of first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected. All reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are confidential. If the report is made in good faith, without malice, reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability. Although your school district may have its own protocol regarding reporting, the person suspecting the abuse must be the reporter. Reporting may not be delegated to another person, remember, the law requires you to report suspected abuse, not prove that abuse occurred. In fact, professionals ask that you not attempt to validate the abuse. Knowing failure to report is a Class B misdemeanor offense.