



## Science Education (Grades 7–12)

*Master of Arts (M.A.) – Leading to Initial Teaching Certification*

### Overview

*In an effort to build the teaching profession and provide new opportunities for prospective graduate students, the Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education offers a full-time Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program that will lead to initial teaching certification in Elementary Education, English Education, Mathematics Education, Science Education, Secondary Social Sciences Education, Business, Marketing, and Informational Technology Education, or World Language Education. All programs are campus-based programs.*

**Cohort-based.** Graduate students proceed together with peers and world-class faculty creating a community of educators in residential programs.

**Graduate Degree and Certification.** Upon successful completion, students will graduate with a master's degree, be fully certified to teach in Nebraska, be eligible for certification in other states, and be employable for the following school year.

**Who Should Apply?** These programs are designed for qualified graduate students who have earned a bachelor's degree *outside the field of education* and who can commit to an intensive and accelerated pathway to a career in the teaching profession. These programs are not suited for educators who currently have teaching certification in any subject area or former educators seeking to renew certification. For certification renewal, please [click here](#).

**Practicum + Student Teaching.** Students will be placed in the [Lincoln Public Schools](#) or [Omaha Public Schools](#) for teaching internships in the classroom. Collaborative relations with public schools offer students' field experiences in diverse classrooms, purposefully designed to help connect coursework theory and methods to classroom practice. Students will gradually build proficiency in teaching, adding responsibilities and skills throughout a nine-month period and be prepared to assume 14 weeks of full-time student teaching in Spring.

**Inquiry.** Inquiry infuses all aspects of this graduate program. Students will begin to focus on a curriculum inquiry project that requires the development of classroom research about a problem of practice in teaching and learning, a research project that will form the capstone experience of the program.

**Residency.** Students will be attending class on the UNL campus and gaining practical experience in K-12 schools in and near the Lincoln/Omaha area. During the academic year, the program schedule will follow the school calendar. Students must live within a reasonable traveling distance to the UNL campus and local cooperating schools. Please note that the funding available for our Master of Arts in Science Teaching Program requires applicants to be US citizens.



## Master of Arts leading to Initial Teaching Certification in Science Education

The Department of Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education offers a full-time Master of Arts degree program that includes the required education courses to become a certified secondary (7-12) science teacher in the State of Nebraska.

This 42-credit hour program is specifically designed for qualified applicants who have earned at least a bachelor's degree in an area of science (biology, environmental science, chemistry, geosciences, physics, agricultural science or natural resources) who want to become middle or high school science teachers. The intensive program requires full-time graduate student status starting in January. Upon completion of the program individuals will be eligible to graduate with a master's degree 18 months later.



We are looking for both recent science college graduates and experienced science professionals who seek a career change with strong academic backgrounds and a commitment to fostering adolescents' learning and enjoyment of science.



### Dr. Elizabeth Lewis ([elewis3@unl.edu](mailto:elewis3@unl.edu))

I began my professional life as a geologist and then a high school Earth & space science teacher. As coordinator for the Master of Arts leading to initial teaching certification in Science Education. I enjoy working with preservice science teachers learning how to teach diverse students science. I have an active research program studying teacher learning and mentor graduate students (masters and doctoral) in how to conduct educational research and better understand the science education research base.

For more information about Dr. Lewis, visit her faculty [webpage](#).



*Graduates from the Class of 2014 with program coordinator Dr. Beth Lewis*



## Typical Sequence of Required Coursework and Practical Experience

### Teacher Certification Courses

SPED 801B Special Education for Teachers (3 cr)  
TEAC 861 Education for a Pluralistic Society: Foundation and Issues (3 cr)  
TEAC 880A Instructional Technology (3 cr)  
EDPS 851 Psychology of Adolescence (3 cr)

### Clinical Coursework

TEAC 851V Secondary Science Methods I (3 cr)  
TEAC 894V Practicum I (1 cr)  
TEAC 852V Secondary Science Methods II (3 cr)  
TEAC 894V Practicum II (1 cr)  
TEAC 897V Student Teaching (4 cr)  
TEAC 803B Student Teaching Seminar (3 cr)

### Additional Courses for the Master of Arts Degree

TEAC 800 Inquiry into Teaching and Learning (3 cr)\*  
TEAC 801 Curriculum Inquiry (3 cr)\*  
TEAC 813M Teaching ELLs in the Content Areas (3 cr)  
TEAC 889 Masters Seminar (3 cr)\*

*\*Required MA degree coursework; other courses may be subject to change by program coordinator.*

## Who Should Apply?

This program offers a pathway to middle and high school teaching for those with degrees in a science field *but do not already have a teaching credential*.

### You should consider applying if you:

- Have earned a bachelor's degree (within the last 10-15 years) in an area of science (biology, environmental science, chemistry, geosciences, physics, agricultural science or natural resources), from an accredited college or university (if your degree is over 10 years old, you must show relevant current work/professional experience).
- Have completed academic coursework in a science focus area as part of an undergraduate degree (a minimum of 24 hours in a science such as biology, environmental science, chemistry, geosciences, physics, agricultural science or natural resources and 12-24 additional hours among the supporting sciences).
- Qualify for admission to the Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education's Master of Arts degree program.
- Can commit to participating fully in a cohort-based, full-time, face - to - face academic teacher education program.

### Please Note:

Students attend classes at the UNL city campus and gain practical experience in local public schools. Consequently, students must be located at a reasonable distance to travel to the UNL city campus and the local cooperating public schools on a daily basis.

This program is *not* suited for educators who currently have teaching certification or former educators seeking to renew certification. These students can be served more appropriately within the traditional **M.A.** programs.



## Program Values

This program is designed for graduate-level preservice teachers to learn how to teach diverse learners of science.

**UNL teacher graduates are distinguished by their capacities for:**

- Using theories of learning to inform instructional practices
- Developing a curricular vision
- Competent teaching of subject matter
- Teaching diverse learners
- Becoming agents of change and reform
- Understanding teaching fundamentals
- Using a range of assessment practices
- Ethical professional judgment
- Structuring engaging learning environments
- Growing professional knowledge

## Financial Support

**\$10,000** available through the **American Chemical Hach Scholarship**

**\$12,000** available through the **NSF Robert Noyce Grant**

**October 1st, 2019** is the next deadline to apply to be eligible for an **NSF Robert Noyce Teacher Stipend**. Recipients of a Noyce Stipend will receive **\$12,000** to support completion of the program.

Respond to the Noyce Teacher Stipend prompt by writing a 2-page essay.

(12-point, double-spaced, 1" margins, and approximately 500 words).

*Describe three goals you have as a future science teacher of diverse students. Provide specific examples of these goals and make an argument for why you would be a high-qualified science teacher.*

## Requirements for Secondary Science Endorsement

In order to become endorsed to teach science at the secondary (7-12) level in the state of Nebraska, you must have completed sufficient academic coursework, typically as part of an undergraduate degree. This should include at least 24 credit hours in one area of science and 12-24 credits among three ancillary sciences, which are required for certification. These science content courses must be completed before starting the program as the program does not include science coursework. **Please complete and submit this form to your application.**

**We will not admit applicants with deficiencies in any of the above areas that cannot be remedied by October 2020.**

Applicants must register for the Praxis II exam(s) by October 1, 2019 and plan to take the exam(s) before May 2020; these are required for both single-subject (biology, chemistry, Earth and space science, or physics) and broad field (science) Nebraska secondary science endorsements.



Applicants seeking single-subject endorsements should register for and take the Praxis II exam that corresponds to that endorsement area. Applicants seeking a broad field science endorsement should register for and take the Praxis II exam in the subject area in which they have the most credit hours as well as the general science exam.

Endorsement	Praxis II Test	Test Number
Biology	Biology Content Knowledge	5235
Chemistry	Chemistry: Content Knowledge	5245
Earth Science	Earth and Space Science: Content Knowledge	5571
Physics	Physics: Content Knowledge	5265

## Application Requirements

The deadline to apply is October 1 and February 1.

### Application Checklist

- Complete the **initial teaching certification application**, including transcripts and fees, two weeks before the department application deadline.
- Complete the **master's degree application**, including transcripts and fees, two weeks before the department application deadline.
- Application Essay\*
- Resumé
- Three letters of recommendation\*\*
- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- Successfully complete a Criminal Background Check\*\*\*
- Successfully complete the Praxis® Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core)\*\*\*\*
- Completed course worksheet for State of Nebraska initial teaching certification
- Submit academic record transcripts



## International Applicants

- TOEFL score of at least iBT 79; all subscores must be at least in the Intermediate/Fair range. If the IELTS is taken in place of the TOEFL, all subscores must be a minimum of 6.5. Applicants taking the TOEFL or the IELTS may be asked to take part in an online interview.
- The equivalent of at least one year of full-time teaching experience is required for consideration.

## Application Essay and Letters of Recommendation

The Graduate Admissions Committee will review for the following evidence:

- Academic strengths and readiness to do graduate study
- Professional and academic goals and whether these align with the goals of the Department

In addition to the minimum requirements listed above, transcripts and resume, the Graduate Admissions Committee closely examines your letters of recommendation and your application essay.

**\*Application Essay.** The Graduate Admissions Committee looks closely at the applicant's goals in the application essay for further evidence of your meeting the admissions criteria. A well-written essay is crucial to admissions decisions. This application essay is a concise statement in which you address clearly why you want to pursue this graduate program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In this essay you should address clearly:

1. Your academic and/or professional goals and how this graduate program will enable you to meet these goals.
2. Your academic strengths, with specific attention to your background in higher education and how this qualifies you for graduate study at a major university.
3. Any professional experience, knowledge, and skills you possess and how these further qualify you for graduate study at a major university. This statement should be between 700-1000 words.

**\*\*Letters of Recommendation.** The application requires three letters of recommendation. The Graduate Admissions Committee considers letters an important part of any application. You should solicit letters that directly address your readiness and qualification to do graduate study in Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education. Letters should come from those who are familiar with your academic and professional work, such as former professors, employers or administrators. Do not include letters from friends, family members, or your own high school teachers. Each of these will be disregarded in the review and detract from your application.

**\*\*\*The Nebraska Department of Education and Nebraska** school districts require that College of Education and Human Sciences students who plan to pursue a degree in an education-related field, athletic training majors, and any other UNL students who enroll in CEHS courses that involve practicum experiences in the schools are required to undergo a formal screening process related to criminal history through One Source. Consequently, a background check is a pre-requisite for application to our programs.

**\*\*\*\*The Nebraska Department of Education Competency Requirement.** It is now required for admission that you take the Praxis® Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core), which replaces the Pre-Professional Skills Test or CORE. This is a minimal knowledge competency examination that the Nebraska State Department of Education requires of all applicants for admission to any teacher education program. Students need documentation of proficiency in the 3 areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Successful completion of the Core tests meets this requirement. You must



successfully pass this test before the application deadline. Scores must be sent directly from ETS to UNL (institutional code 6877) and may take up to 6 weeks to be reported. It is preferable that you take the test 4-6 weeks before the application deadline so that your official scores can be included in your application.

You are allowed to re-take the CORE once within any calendar month. Please plan accordingly to allow adequate time.

Only completed application files will be considered for admission. It is the applicant's responsibility to be certain that all materials are submitted and received prior to the deadline dates.

**Apply at [go.unl.edu/gradapp](https://go.unl.edu/gradapp).**

## **Contacts**

### **Faculty Contact**

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### **Program Contact**

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