



Elementary Education (Grades K–6) *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.



Required Courses	UNL MA courses that may be substituted

Notes



Typical Sequence for Required Coursework and Practical Experience (45 credits)

Summer Sessions

TEAC 890
SPED 801
TEAC 880A
TEAC 861A

Fall Semester

TEAC 811
TEAC 813
TEAC 802

Spring Semester

TEAC 808
TEAC 816B
TEAC 894A

Take the Praxis II exam

Summer Sessions

TEAC 893
CYAF 971
TEAC 800

Fall Semester

TEAC 897A
TEAC 801

Spring Semester

TEAC 889



Who Should Apply?

This Master of Arts degree is a program leading to initial certification. It offers a way to enter the field of elementary teaching for those with degrees in the natural sciences, social sciences, arts or humanities, *but not a teaching credential or certification*.

You should consider applying if you have:

- Graduated from an accredited college or university— or will graduate prior to start of the program—with a bachelor's degree in the arts, natural sciences, social sciences, or humanities, but **not in teaching or teacher education**.
- A strong academic background that qualifies you for admission to the TLTE Master of Arts program, including an undergraduate GPA minimum of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Relevant experience working with elementary-age children.
- Earned sufficient credits to fulfill the **General Academic Coursework** requirement for all teachers in the State of Nebraska (see below).
- The commitment to participate fully in a full-time residential graduate teacher education program.

Program Values

This program is designed for pre-service graduate-level teachers to learn how to form meaningful, affectionate and trusting intellectual relationships with children.

Our graduates are distinguished by their capacities for:

- Knowing Theories of Learning and Relationship Roles in Teaching Practice
- Developing Curricular Vision
- Teaching Subject Matter
- Teaching Diverse Learners
- Becoming Agents of Change and Reform
- Knowing Teaching in Terms of Its Foundational Dimensions
- Assessing Practices and Professional Judgment
- Structuring Learning Environments
- Growing Professional Knowledge

State of Nebraska Academic Coursework Requirements for Elementary Endorsement

In order to become “endorsed”, or certified, to teach at the elementary level in the State of Nebraska, you must have completed sufficient general academic coursework, typically as part of your undergraduate degree.

A minimum total of 30 semester credit hours of academic coursework distributed across English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies/history. A minimum of 6 semester hours in each of the four core areas. Coursework in the four core areas includes:



- Communication in English language arts, including literature, composition, and speech;
- Mathematics, including statistics and fields of mathematical reasoning;
- Natural sciences; and
- Social sciences

In addition to the 30 semester hours listed above, academic coursework is required in each of the following areas (no credit hours specified):

- Fine arts;
- Health and wellness; and
- Humanities

We do not admit applicants who have deficiencies in any of the above areas. These must be fulfilled by May, prior to the start of the program.

To see if you have met our requirements, please complete our [Application Coursework Worksheet](#). This worksheet is required to be completed by applicants as part of the application process.

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.

Contacts

Faculty Contact

Dr. Amanda Thomas, Ph.D.
214A Henzlik Hall
(402) 472-2231
amanda.thomas@unl.edu

Program Contact

Kate Rask, Graduate Project Associate
118 Henzlik Hall
(402) 472-3098
krask@unl.edu