Reading (MA)

This program is offered by the School of Education.

Program Description

The MA in reading fits into the unit’s overarching goals of developing knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators. It is designed for teachers K-12 who want to increase their expertise in teaching reading or become master reading teachers, reading specialists or literacy coaches. Individuals who work in literacy within agencies or colleges may pursue the MA, also.

Coursework within the reading MA, built upon cognitive, socio-constructivist and socio-cultural theories in language and literacy learning, integrates all aspects of literacy including reading, writing, thinking, listening, speaking, and viewing. The program is aligned with both state and national standards for the reading teacher and specialist/literacy coach role. It is nationally recognized by the International Literacy Association. Candidates engage not only in diagnostic teaching to develop strategic readers, but they learn to teach for critical literacy to develop responsive readers.

This program is offered at the St. Louis home campus.

Learning Outcomes

The following are learning outcomes for this major:

- Develop a strong knowledge base in foundations of literacy and the reading process.
- Learn about and be able to demonstrate and use best practices drawn from theory and research.
- Become proficient in using a wide range of methods and materials, including visual media and technology, to meet needs of diverse learners.
- Employ formal and informal assessments to identify strengths and needs of all learners and to inform teaching of whole group, small group and individual students.
- Become effective in creating positive literacy environments to motivate and engage all learners.
- Collaborate with teachers, school leaders, families and the community to enrich or reform practices.
- Serve as a coach or supervisor to support excellence in teaching reading and as a leader to develop and support reading initiatives.
- Engage in self-reflection and assessment for ongoing professional development.

Requirements

All reading majors take the following required courses:

Core Courses

- COMM 5280 Written Communication (3 hours)
- READ 5190 Language Development and Acquisition (3 hours)
- READ 5777 Literacy Coaching (3 hours)
- READ 5800 Applied Research (3 hours)

Reading Coursework

- READ 5860 Review of Reading Research (3 hours or equivalent)
- READ 5910 Investigations in Reading: Primary (3 hours)
- READ 5188 Comprehension Strategies (3 hours)
- READ 5940 Investigations in Reading: Grades 6-12 (3 hours)

Clinical Coursework

- READ 5950 Diagnosis and Correction of Reading Problems (3 hours)
- READ 5970 Practicum in Diagnosis of Reading Problems (3 hours)
- READ 5980 Practicum in Remediation of Reading Problems (3 hours)

If candidates have extensive experience and prior graduate coursework in a specific area, advisors may approve alternatives, such as READ 5870 Supervision of Reading Programs. Students may transfer up to 6 credit hours of prior graduate work not used for another degree. A total of 33 credit hours are required for completion of the program. A sequential MA in reading is offered as a second master’s degree consisting of 21 hours of reading coursework.

Special Reading Certification

A valid Missouri teacher’s certificate and two years of classroom teaching experience are needed before Special Reading Certification, K-12, can be granted through Missouri’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Coursework embedded within the MA in reading can count toward the special reading certification and includes 21 hours of required coursework:

- Three reading methods courses (READ 5910; 5188; 5940) (9 hours)
- Diagnosis and correction of reading problems (READ 5950) (3 hours)
- Language acquisition and development (READ 5190) (3 hours)
- Practicum in diagnosis of reading problems (READ 5970) (3 hours)
- Practicum in remediation (READ 5980) (3 hours)

Thus, for candidates who choose this option, many of the courses in the reading major will also fulfill state requirements. Additional courses for the state certification may have been taken in the undergraduate program or can be taken at the undergraduate or graduate level at Webster. These include:

- Child Psychology (3 hours)
- Adolescent Psychology (3 hours)
- Psychology of the Exceptional Child (3 hours)
- Behavior Management Techniques (3 hours)
- Counseling Techniques (3 hours)
- Psychoeducational Assessment or Evaluation of Abilities and Achievement (3 hours)

Following admission and after an initial meeting with the coordinator of the reading program, students interested in pursuing special reading certification should have their transcripts evaluated by the Webster University Certification Office for prior coursework. Reading faculty members serve as mentors/advisors throughout the program.

After successfully completing 12 credit hours within the major, all MA degree-seeking students are required to be advanced to candidacy.

Admission

Students who are interested in applying to this program should see the Admission Section of this catalog for general requirements.

Admission Requirements

- Receipt of official transcripts from the baccalaureate granting institution.
- Undergraduate cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.

Send all admission materials to:
Reading (MA)

Office of Admissions
Webster University
470 E. Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Advancement to Candidacy

Automatic advancement to candidacy (ATC) is based on 12 credit hours of 3.0 GPA graduate level READ courses.