Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) with an Emphasis in Special Education

This program is offered by the School of Education and is available only at the St. Louis home campus.

Program Description
The master of arts in teaching (MAT) program provides candidates with a strong knowledge base of content, child and adolescent development and current research that supports best practices in education. This program is centered around contemporary design-based research principles with a focus on how students learn within inquiry-based environments.

This graduate degree program is designed to provide the foundation for teacher preparation leading to Missouri initial teacher certification in the following emphasis areas: elementary education, middle school education, secondary school education, or special education.

Learning Outcomes
The goals of the MAT with an emphasis in special education are to cultivate graduates who are:

- Knowledgeable of the history of special education, characteristics of students with disabilities and principles and foundations underlying best practices.
- Proficient in designing, adapting and modifying effective assessment plans, instructional strategies and curricula and/or intervention plans based on current research regarding cognitive, social and emotional development in students with disabilities.
- Reflective about their roles as educators to improve learning outcomes, and who collaborate with families and other members of the community in order to advocate for inclusive and equitable educational opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Capable of recognizing, valuing and responding to the unique individual abilities and differences of students with special needs.

Emphasis in Special Education
The emphasis in special education is designed to provide the foundation for teacher preparation leading to Missouri initial teacher certification in mild/moderate disabilities: cross-categorical (K-12). Coursework is specifically directed toward knowledge of characteristics of learners with special needs, assessment practices, research-based behavior and academic interventions and inclusive practices.

Required Coursework
The following 37 hours of courses and 14 hours of field experiences are required to earn the MAT with an emphasis in special education. Of the 51 total hours required for the MAT, students must complete a minimum of 37 hours in residence, with courses required in residence marked below with an asterisk. Students are advised that Missouri initial teacher certification may require more hours than are listed for the MAT degree. Students must consult an advisor to obtain a personalized program of study. To receive Missouri teacher certification in mild/moderate disabilities: cross-categorical (K-12), students are required to complete 49 hours of courses and 13 hours of field experience.

Foundations
- CMAT 5000 Teaching in a Diverse Society* (3 hours)

Other Certification Requirements
- CMAT 5505 Psychological Foundations of Education* (3 hours)
- Appropriate Educational Technology course (1 hour)
- SPED 5030 Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities* (3 hours)
- SPED 5245 Counseling for Life's Transitions* (3 hours)
- SPED 5240 Psychoeducational Assessment* (3 hours)
- SPED 5050 Language Development (3 hours)

*CMAT 5505 meets the requirements for Child Psychology, Adolescent Psychology, and Educational Psychology.

Methods
- COMM 5960 Differentiated Reading Instruction (3 hours)
- EDUC 5080 Planning for the Inclusive Classroom* (3 hours)
- SPED 5010 Differentiated Mathematics Instruction (3 hours)
- SPED 5250 Behavior Management for Children with Special Needs* (3 hours)
- SPED 5380 Methods for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities I* (3 hours)
- SPED 5381 Methods for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities II* (3 hours)

Clinical Experiences
- CMAT 5001 Introductory Teaching Practicum* (1 hour)
- CMAT 5112 Practicum: K-12 Special Education* (3 hours)
- CMAT 5212 Apprentice Teaching: K-12 Special Education* (9 hours)
- CMAT 5096 Apprentice Teaching Seminar* (1 hour)

Total: 51 credit hours

Other Certification Requirements
- SPED 5860 Psychology of the Exceptional Student (3 hours)
- COMM 5820 Foundations in Reading Instruction (3 hours)
- COMM 5840 Reading and Writing as Cognitive Processes (3 hours)
  or COMM 5920 Reading and Writing in the Content Field (3 hours)
- MTHT 4310 Elementary-School Mathematics Methods (3 hours)

Additional Elementary Content
To gain additional expertise in elementary content and better prepare for Missouri licensure assessments, students may choose to complete an additional 12 hours in elementary content.

- COMM 5440 Integrated Language Arts (3 hours)
- COMM 5000 Fiction, Non-fiction, and Poetry for Children (3 hours)
- CMAT 5020 Inquiry Methods for STEM and Social Sciences (3 hours)
- COMM 5199 Teaching Writing (3 hours)
  or COMM 5340 Language Arts Seminar (3 hours)

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

- Receipt of official transcript from the baccalaureate-granting institution.
- Undergraduate cumulative GPA of 2.75.
- Grade of B- or better in a college-level math course.
- Grade of B- or better in a college-level composition course.

Send all admissions materials to:

Office of Admission
Webster University
470 East Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) represents a significant milestone in a candidate's academic career. Candidates who successfully advance to candidacy have demonstrated mastery of program standards and may continue enrolling in courses to complete their major. In the case of the MAT, ATC means that a student is formally enrolled in the initial teacher certification program.

Advancement to Candidacy occurs provided that a student:

1. Completes 15 hours of graduate credit with grades of B or better (including CMAT 5000).
2. Completes Passport 1.
3. Is accepted into the Teacher Certification program (contact the School of Education Teacher Certification Office for more information).
4. Remains in good academic standing and maintains a cumulative GPA of 3.0.

After 15 hours of graduate credit, candidates will be restricted from registering in further coursework until advanced to candidacy.

Requirements for Missouri Initial Teacher Certification

Students must make available official academic transcripts to the Coordinator of Teacher Certification in the School of Education in order to complete an evaluation of coursework. Based on this transcript evaluation, the Coordinator of Teacher Certification will identify the exact number of credit hours that an MAT candidate will require to complete initial teacher certification with respect to Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requirements. Prior coursework, such as transfer courses and content area courses, will be identified from the students' transcripts. Using this evaluation, an academic advisor, in conjunction with the coordinator of Teacher Certification, will prepare a personalized program of study for the student. Students may be required to take more than the required coursework listed for the emphasis area.

Background Checks

Students are required to obtain various annual background checks prior to field experiences. The state requires current fingerprint clearance prior to issuing the teaching certificate.

State Assessments

To obtain a teaching licensure in Missouri, students are required to complete a number of state assessments. State required assessments are administered by designated agencies, and students are required to pay all associated fees. All state assessments are administered in digital format. Students must pass the state-required Missouri Content Assessment before Apprentice Teaching Orientation.

Application and Eligibility to Practicum

Application and registration in Practicum must be approved by the student's advisor by September 15 for Spring placement and by February 15 for Fall placement. No late applications will be accepted. A grade of B or higher is required for successful completion of the practicum.

Application to Apprentice Teaching: Special Education

Successful completion of Apprentice Teaching: Special Education is required to meet the graduation requirements of the emphasis area. Application and registration in Apprentice Teaching and CMAT 5096 Apprentice Teaching Seminar must be approved by the student's advisor and the Office of Field Experience by September 15 for Spring placement and by February 15 for Fall placement. No late applications will be accepted. Students who are full-time paraprofessionals or teachers in an approved educational setting may be eligible to earn credit for Apprentice Teaching through an assessment process. Eligible candidates earning credit for Apprentice Teaching through the alternate assessment process (Credit by Examination) must complete this assessment process within one academic year of successfully completing their practicum.

Eligibility requirements for acceptance to Apprentice Teaching:

1. Students must have successfully completed all required courses for Missouri initial teacher certification in their chosen emphasis and content area.
2. Students must have successfully completed Practicum with a grade of B or higher.
3. Students must have passed the state required content area exam with a score equal to or greater than the Missouri qualifying score prior to registration in Apprentice Teaching. Students should talk to their advisor or the teacher certification professionals at Webster University in order to understand how DESE changes are accommodated in their personalized program of study.