

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

This program is offered by the School of Education . It is available online (asynchronous).

Admission is offered once a year in the Spring 1 term.

Program Description

Designed for aspiring educators eager to make an immediate impact in the classroom, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program may be completed in 12-18 months, depending on certification area. The Master of Arts in Teaching is tailored for career changers, recent graduates, and professionals seeking initial teaching certification, combining flexibility, efficiency, and comprehensive teacher preparation for today's diverse educational environments.

Delivered in a fully online format, the program features an evidence-based curriculum focused on practical skills, classroom management, and inclusive teaching strategies. Students engage in virtual field experiences and collaborative projects, ensuring they gain real-world insights and hands-on practice. Weekly synchronous cohort seminars provide mentorship, peer support, and opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, replicating the collaborative nature of professional teaching.

Graduates emerge from the program equipped to inspire and support learners across K–12 classrooms. With its accelerated structure, the program reduces time and financial barriers, providing the foundational teacher preparation for initial teacher certification in the state of Missouri.

The Master of Arts in Teaching program is approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the following emphasis areas: elementary education, middle school education, secondary school education, or special education.

The Master of Arts in Teaching is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

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 47 hours of courses and 13 hours of field experiences are required to earn the MAT with an emphasis in special education. Students are advised that Missouri initial teacher certification may require more hours than are listed for the MAT degree. Students must consult their advisor to obtain a personalized program of study.

Professional Coursework (47 hours)

- CMAT 5000 Teaching in a Diverse Society (3 hours)
- CMAT 5015 Inclusive Practices and Methods for Teaching English Learners (3 hours)
- CMAT 5025 Applications in Teaching and Learning (10 hours) repeated multiple terms
- CMAT 5170 Classroom Culture and Behavior Management (4 hours)
- CMAT 5190 Elementary STEM Methods (3 hours)
- CMAT 5270 Methods of Teaching Elementary Reading (3 hours)
- CMAT 5280 ELEM/SPED Teaching Reading and Writing in the Content Areas (3 hours)
- CMAT 5290 ELEM/SPED Differentiated Reading Access and Intervention (3 hours)
- CMAT 5505 Psychological Foundations of Education (3 hours)
- SPED 5010 Differentiated Math Instruction (3 hours)
- SPED 5240 Psychoeducational Assessment (3 hours)
- SPED 5245 Counseling for Life's Transitions (3 hours)
- SPED 5860 Psychology of the Exceptional Student (3 hours)

Clinical Field Experiences (13 hours)

- CMAT 5001 Introductory Teaching Practicum (1 hour)
- CMAT 5112 Practicum: K-12 Special Education (2 hours)
- CMAT 5212 Apprentice Teaching: K-12 Special Education (10 hours)

Total: 60 credit hours

Admission

See the Admission section of this catalog for general admission requirements. Students interested in applying must submit their application online at www.webster.edu/ apply. Transcripts should be sent from your institution electronically to transcripts@webster.edu. If this service is not available, send transcripts to:

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

Additional Requirements

Requirements for admission to the master of arts in teaching (MAT) with an emphasis in special education program include:

- Receipt of all official transcripts.
- Final degree conferred GPA of 2.5 or higher.
- Grade of B- or better in a college-level composition.
- Grade of B- or better in a college-level mathematics.
- Proof of attempt or passing score on certification area specific licensure exam(s) as required by the state of Missouri.

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Admission to Teacher Certification

Admission to teacher certification is a significant milestone in a candidate's academic career. This means that a candidate is formally accepted in the initial teacher certification program and on track to meet the requirements of both the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Webster University.

Candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Completion 15 hours of graduate credit, including CMAT 5000 and 5001, with grades of B or better.
- Successful completion of Passport Tasks 1-5.
- Minimum professional GPA of 3.0. This must be maintained throughout the program.

After 15 hours of graduate credit, candidates will be restricted from registering in further coursework until admitted to teacher certification status.

Candidates must be admitted to teacher certification in order to take specified EDUC or CMAT methods courses.

Requirements for Missouri Initial Teacher Certification

Demonstration of Missouri Teacher Standards Through Quality Indicators

The Department of Teacher Education (DTE) Passport Portfolio is an integral element in the assessment system for initial teacher certification programs. The system is designed to foster the iterative development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions for pre-service teacher candidates in the digital age and is aligned with the Missouri Teacher Standards, which "convey the expectations of performance for professional teachers in Missouri."

Passport tasks are integrated with key coursework assignments and are assessed both for a course grade and for competency within the Passport system. Passport tasks will be collaboratively evaluated by the course instructors and cohort coordinators.

Where appropriate, candidates may be asked to revise and resubmit key assignments. Successful completion of Passport tasks allows the candidate to move through the phases of the program.

Early Field Experience (CMAT 5001)

Candidates enrolled in CMAT 5001 must complete a 30-hour early field experience designed to provide an introduction to educational environments. This early field experience serves as a foundational step in understanding the dynamics of schools, educators, and student learning. In this experience, candidates will choose from a menu of activities, such as classroom observations, interviews with educators, attendance at extracurricular school events, and participation in school board meetings and document their engagement. Candidates must have access to a school setting to fulfill these requirements. Students are responsible for seeking their own Early Field Experience placements and must coordinate all arrangements with the Field Experience office. The Program Handbook provides a guide for locating and securing approval and agreements needed for all field experiences.

Students will apply for substitute teacher licensure in the state in which they will be completing their field experiences. It is the student's responsibility to consult their state's education

department or licensing board to understand and meet the substitute teacher licensure requirements for their state.

Additionally, students must obtain and submit a letter of agreement from the school(s) where they will complete their Early Field Experience and Intermediate Practicum requirements. The Program Handbook provides guidelines to support the student in this process.

Intermediate Practicum

Students must complete a 5000-level Practicum in a classroom setting appropriate to their intended content area with a grade of B or better and the concurrent CMAT 5025 Applications in Teaching and Learning with a passing grade (P) or a grade of B or better. Practicum requires 45-135 hours involving observation, lesson planning and teaching during daytime hours.

Prior to intermediate practicum students must complete the application process as outlined in the Program Handbook, including:

- Provide proof of substitute teacher licensure.
- Submit school location and cooperating teacher information to the Field Experience office for approval in the semester prior to intermediate practicum.

Apprentice Teaching

Apprentice teaching along with the concurrent section of CMAT 5025 Applications in Teaching and Learning are required for all initial teacher certifications. Students are responsible for seeking their own apprentice teaching placement and must coordinate all arrangements with the Field Experience office. Placements may be made in public, private, or independent schools. All candidates for certification must complete either their practicum or apprentice teaching in a diverse setting.

Prior to apprentice teaching students must complete the application process as outlined in the Program Handbook, including:

- Submit school location and cooperating teacher information to the field office for approval and secured a signed MOU (template provided in the Program Handbook) after Field Experience office site approval in the semester prior to apprentice teaching.
- Met all course and departmental assessment requirements, including formal acceptance to teacher certification status.
- Successfully completed practicum and concurrent section of CMAT 5025 Application in Teaching and Learning with a passing grade (P) or a grade of B or better.
- Passed the state-required content assessment examination.

State Licensure Requirements

Upon successful program completion, students will qualify for initial teacher certification in the state of Missouri. It is the student's responsibility to apply for Missouri licensure at the appropriate time and meet any additional requirements of the application process. Additionally, if the student will be transferring Missouri licensure to their home state, it is the responsibility of the student to meet any additional certification requirements of that state. Some states have specific licensure requirements that are not part of the MAT program and must be fulfilled in addition to the degree requirements. These state licensure requirements might include but are not limited to: submission of all official transcripts, state-specific subject-specific licensure exams, state-specific teacher performance assessments, coursework related to state

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history, basic skills exams, application fees, and background clearances.