

# Master Arts 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 main 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 and 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 36 hours of courses and 14 hours of field experiences are required to earn the MAT with an emphasis in special education. Of the 50 total hours required for the MAT, students must complete a minimum of 31 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)
- CMAT 5505 Psychological Foundations of Education^ (3 hours)
- CMAT 5140 Digital Pedagogy and Assistive Learning Technologies (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

- CMAT 5015 Inclusive Practices and Methods for Teaching English Learners (3 hours)
- CMAT 5290 ELEM/SPED Differentiated Reading Assessment and Intervention (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\* (2 hours)
- CMAT 5199 Practicum Seminar (1 hour)
- CMAT 5212 Apprentice Teaching: K-12 Special Education\* (9 hours)
- CMAT 5096 Apprentice Teaching Seminar\* (1 hour)

\* Courses must be taken in residence.

Total: 50 credit hours

## Other Certification Requirements

- SPED 5860 Psychology of the Exceptional Student (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)  
or CMAT 5380 Teaching Reading and Writing in the Content Areas (3 hours)
- CMAT 5190 Elementary STEM Methods (3 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/](http://www.webster.edu/) apply. Transcripts should be sent from your institution electronically to [transcripts@webster.edu](mailto: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.

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- 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.

## 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 requirement:

- 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, and Content GPA (if applicable) 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 method courses.

## Requirements for Missouri Initial Teacher Certification

Prior to or upon Admission, students must make available official academic transcripts to the Coordinator of Educator Certification in the School of Education to complete an evaluation of coursework. Based on this transcript evaluation, the Coordinator of Educator 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 Educator 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. Students should talk to their advisor and the teacher certification professionals at Webster University throughout their program to understand how any changes to DESE requirements are accommodated in their personalized program of study.

## 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.

## Practicum

Students must complete a 5000-level practicum and accompanying practicum seminar with a grade of B or better. To enroll in a practicum, students must submit an application by September 15 for a spring placement and by February 15 for a fall placement. No late applications will be accepted. Candidates must meet with the Coordinator of Field Placement prior to applying for practicum.

## Apprentice Teaching

Apprentice teaching and the accompanying apprentice teaching seminar are required for all initial certifications. To enroll in apprentice teaching, students must submit an application by September 15 for a spring placement and by February 15 for a fall placement. No late applications will be accepted.

Prior to apprentice teaching students must have:

- met all course and departmental assessment requirements, including formal acceptance to teacher certification status.
- successfully completed practicum and practicum seminar with a grade of B or better.
- passed the state-required content assessment examination.

Apprentice Teaching placements are made by the Field Experience Office. Placements will be arranged with the St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County and Jefferson County School Districts along with private and independent schools. All candidates for certification must complete either their practicum or apprentice teaching in a diverse setting.