

**Master's Degree in Curriculum and
Instruction
University of New Orleans**

Student and Faculty Handbook
4.0

Revised August 15, 2015

Thank you for your interest in pursuing a Master's degree through the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of New Orleans. Merged in Spring 2015 with the Department of Special Education, this student-centered, performance-based program is designed to develop an advanced knowledge base for understanding the interaction of theory and practice in culturally diverse, metropolitan, educational settings. Graduate students will engage in field activities and reflective inquiry as they explore theoretical and practical content in their specific areas of interest.

For complete information regarding policies, procedures, and resources for graduate students, see the Graduate Student Handbook at:

<http://www.uno.edu/grad/documents/GraduateStudentHandbook2014.pdf>

Application deadlines

- For fall semester– July 1
- For spring semester – November 1
- For summer semester– May 1

Each program of study will allow graduate students to:

- Address advanced content and performances to build expertise within their current certification area
- Include coursework and field experience to add an additional certification area
- Address advanced coursework in a content area to increase content knowledge
- Build expertise in one or more skill areas to enhance ability to contribute to school improvement or curriculum development
- Include up to 12 semester hours of related or required coursework for those entering the program earning a certification in another area of education.

Student Learning Outcomes

In attaining a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, students are expected to:

- Analyze and critique content knowledge in their area of concentration demonstrating theory-practice-research interaction.
- Plan and implement an action research project addressing an educational concern or issue.
- Demonstrate effective oral communication skills required of a professional in the field.

Key Features of the Performance-based Program Design

- 1) *Performance-based.* A performance-based model expects graduate students to repeatedly demonstrate effective skills rather than demonstrate a competency on a one-time basis. Each program of study moves beyond simply aligning specific competencies with specific courses. Rather, graduate students are encouraged to demonstrate the continuous development of multiple skills throughout their program through assignments, reflections, and field experiences.
- 2) *Role-focused.* A performance-based program focuses on teachers' being competent in performing the multiple roles associated with effective teaching. The following roles are included in the UNO conceptual framework for teacher education.
 - *Manage classroom contexts and environments*

- *Design curriculum and instruction*
 - *Deliver instruction and assess learning*
 - *Participate in professional responsibilities*
- 3) *Field activities.* Opportunities to practice roles are incorporated throughout coursework.
- 4) *Evaluation.* In addition to course grades as reflected through the graduate student's GPA, the Master of Education (M. Ed.) Program contains four required assessments: (1) the GRE for admission, (2) dispositions assessment (3) mid-program assessment, and (4) a final program assessment.

Student expectations/responsibilities

Graduate students are expected to be proactive and take the lead role in understanding the requirements and deadlines for movement through the program. Advisors and the Graduate Coordinator stand ready to help but will not automatically know when any specific graduate student is reaching a program benchmark. To enrich their experience in the program, graduate students are encouraged to communicate regularly with their professors to foster movement through the benchmarks.

All electronic communication will be conducted through UNO e-mail, therefore it is important that graduate students maintain their UNO mailboxes and check them often.

Programs of Study

General Program Specifications

- All programs must include a minimum of 36 graduate hours.
- All master's candidates must complete 3 hours of Education Foundations and Research. This is most often accomplished by taking EDFR 6700.
- Three additional courses are required in all programs of study: EDSP 6964 (Fundamentals of Technology), EDSP 6981 (Contemporary Issues), and EDSP 6060 (Action Research).
- A minimum of 18 hours of coursework offered through the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and/or the Department of Special Education must be included.
- All courses must be at the 5000-level or higher.
- At least 27 hours must be taken at the 6000-level.

Program Policies

- Retention Standards: A graduate student in the M. Ed. Program in Curriculum and Instruction may accumulate no more than two grades of "C" or lower at the University of New Orleans. A student receiving a third grade of "C" or lower will be subject to dismissal from the master's program. Graduate students must maintain a GPA of 3.0. When a graduate student's GPA falls below a 3.0, he/she will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. Being on academic probation for two consecutive semesters results in dismissal from the program.

- Time Limit for Completing the M. Ed. Degree: In accordance with the UL system coursework and the final assessment must be completed in a six-year span, however, graduate students may, with the support of their major professor/advisor, appeal to waive the six-year rule. The appeal form is available on the graduate school website. It must be signed by the student, the major professor/advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chair and then submitted to the University Graduate Council. It is best to file the appeal the semester prior to completion of the program in case the Graduate Council denies the appeal or requires additional work from the student to verify currency.
- Appeal Process: At all stages from application to program completion, the graduate student has the right to appeal decisions related to his/her advancement. Appeals should be submitted first to the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator and then, if deemed necessary, to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development.
- Policy Modification: In accordance with the UL System Bylaws, the faculty retains the right to modify and define policies and procedures in relation to the master's degrees. These modifications will be presented in revised editions to the Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction Student and Faculty Handbook.
- Transfer Credit: the graduate student's major professor/advisor must approve transfer credit. A maximum of 12 graduate hours may be transferred if the courses fall within the six-year time frame for completion of the degree. Only courses in which the graduate student obtained a grade of A or B may be accepted for transfer credit. A *Request for Transfer of Credit* Form (available from the Graduate School Website) must be signed by the major professor/advisor and sent to the Graduate Coordinator with the *Application for Candidacy*.

Benchmarks in the Master's Program

1. Apply to the Graduate School through the Apply Yourself system.
2. Be admitted to graduate program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.
3. Declare a concentration.
4. Contact major professor/advisor and receive a preliminary *Application for Candidacy* form.
5. Enroll in courses and successfully complete 6-12 hours.
6. Communicate with the Graduate Coordinator about eligibility to enroll in EDSP 6981. Complete mid-program assessment and disposition assessment.
7. Make progress in completing courses.
8. After you have completed between 27 and 33 hours, enroll in EDSP 6060 (Action Research, during which you will engage a field-based project for the final program assessment.
9. Complete audit of candidacy forms with Graduate Coordinator.
10. Apply on WEBSTAR for graduation no later than the first week of class during the semester in which you expect to graduate.
11. Successfully complete the final program assessment and/or final coursework.

1. APPLY TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL.

Admission Requirements

- A baccalaureate degree with an undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or better
- A valid teaching certificate (If a student has an out-of-state certificate, he/she must register at www.teachlouisiana.net or send an electronic copy via e-mail (gradci@uno.edu) to the Graduate Coordinator in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction)
- A 3.0 GPA cumulative average on graduate courses taken prior to application
- Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores of 143 or higher on the Verbal, 138 or higher on the Quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), and 3.0 or higher on the Analytical Writing section on the exam. GRE scores must be within the last five years.
- Availability through PK-12 employment or schedule flexibility to complete all required field activities in school settings

Previously admitted graduate students who wish to transfer from a non-degree seeking status or another degree program to the Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction may do so by completing a new application in the ApplyYourself system.

Applicants with non-degree seeking status or those who are enrolled in other graduate degree programs cannot assume that any or all credits earned prior to admission to the M. Ed. program in Curriculum and Instruction will be counted toward the completion of their degrees. The Department will not accept more than 12 graduate hours completed prior to admission to the program, and these hours must support in some way the student's chosen major. The major professor/advisor will review all credits earned before the student is admitted to the program. Approved hours will be noted on the *Application for Candidacy* when it is filed. Students who wish to transfer credit from another graduate program will need to complete a Transfer Credit form.

2. BE ADMITTED TO GRADUATE PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION.

When Graduate Admissions has received all required documents, the Graduate Coordinator confirms that the applicant has a valid teaching certificate and makes a decision regarding admission based on Graduate School and Departmental criteria.

Admission to the M. Ed. program in Curriculum and Instruction requires that students meet all the requirements above. Applicants who have not obtained and maintained a valid teaching certificate, an undergraduate grade point average of at least 2.50, and GRE scores of 143 or higher on the Verbal section, 138 or higher on the Quantitative section, and 3.0 or higher on the Analytical Writing section will be denied admission to the program. It is recommended that students take additional courses as a non-degree seeking student to boost their GPA or retake the GRE and reapply to the program. Foreign students who do not hold a degree from a college or university in the United States must submit scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

3. DECLARE A CONCENTRATION.

The M. Ed. Degree in Curriculum and Instruction is a 36 credit-hour program. Candidates choose a program of study from one of the concentration areas listed below:

- Academically Gifted Add-on Certification
- Early Interventionist Add-on Certification
- English as a Second Language Add-on Certification
- Mild Moderate 1-5 Add-on Certification
- Mild Moderate 6-12 Add-on Certification
- Reading Specialist Add-on Certification
- Advanced Exploration.

When a graduate student is admitted to the Master's program, the Graduate Coordinator will send a letter regarding admission status and the current Master's Degree Student Faculty Handbook. Activate UNO email account, check it frequently, and use it for all program correspondence.

4. CONTACT MAJOR PROFESSOR/ADVISOR AND RECEIVE A PRELIMINARY *APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY* FORM.

There are designated advisors for each concentration. Therefore when a graduate student selects a specific concentration she/he, in most cases, is assigned a faculty advisor who will serve as major professor/advisor. It is the graduate student's responsibility to arrange the initial and subsequent appointments with his/her major professor/advisor.

Concentration	Advisors
Gifted Certification	Dr. Jan Janz (jgjanz@uno.edu)
Early Interventionist Certification	Dr. Linda Flynn-Wilson (Lflynnwi@uno.edu)
English as Second Language Certification	Dr. Richard Speaker (rspeaker@uno.edu)
Mild Moderate 1-5 Certification	Dr. Jan Janz (jgjanz@uno.edu)
Mild Moderate 6-12 Certification	Dr. Jan Janz (jgjanz@uno.edu)
Reading Specialist Certification	Dr. Richard Speaker (rspeaker@uno.edu)
Advanced Exploration	Dr. Pat Austin (paustin@uno.edu)

The major professor/advisor's role is to assist the graduate student by explaining the program, filing a preliminary *Application for Candidacy* form, discussing the final assessment. Major professors/advisors will either upload the completed form themselves or forward it to the Graduate Coordinator to upload in a Faculty M.Ed. Moodle site.

5. ENROLL IN COURSES AND SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE 6-12 HOURS.

Students are encouraged to consult their major professor/advisors when selecting courses to fulfill their professional goals and to work toward the development of the final field-based project. EDSP 6964 and EDFR 6700 should be included in this first 12-hour block.

6. COMPLETE DISPOSITIONS ASSESSMENT AND MID-PROGRAM ASSESSMENT.

Students are to communicate with the Graduate Coordinator about eligibility to enroll in EDSP 6981. During the semester in which students are enrolled in Contemporary Issues

(EDSP 6981), they will complete the Professional Dispositions Assessment and Mid-Program Assessment.

The Professional Dispositions Assessment comprises both a review by program faculty and a self-assessment for dispositional growth and development. Professional dispositions, as defined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education are “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development” (NCATE glossary).

The purpose of the Mid-program Assessment is to assess the student’s performance in analysis and critique of content knowledge and skill in orally presenting that knowledge. The mid-program assessment will comprise a written paper and an oral component presented to peers and faculty members. Students will select and research a contemporary issue in education, provide the historical root of the issue, and explore the current theoretical and research base surrounding the topic. In keeping with the College’s mission to develop reflective practitioners, students will consider how their understanding of the roles and responsibilities of professionals in education has changed based on expanded understanding of the topic. The roles and responsibilities, as described in the conceptual framework of the College of Education and Human Development, are as follows:

Roles and Responsibilities of Professionals in Teacher Education

Effective teachers *manage classroom contexts and environments*, establishing a culture for learning by managing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, organizing physical space, organizing classrooms to integrate technology, and maintaining accurate records using available technology. They create an environment of respect and rapport by using cultural contexts in the classroom, demonstrating knowledge of diversity among students, and presenting rationales for change to meet student needs.

Effective teachers *design curriculum and instruction*. They understand and use curriculum and instruction, by knowing content and pedagogy, setting instructional outcomes, designing coherent instruction, designing student assessments, and incorporating knowledge of diversity in the classroom. They plan for the use of technologies in curriculum and instruction and demonstrate knowledge of resources, including technologies. They plan for the use of collaborative group practices in the classroom, and they incorporate effective written and oral communication in the classroom.

Effective teachers *deliver instruction and assess learning*. They engage students in active learning by interacting effectively with students, demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness, and integrating technology and other resources. They integrate disciplines into instruction by applying connections to multiple disciplines and demonstrating connections to real life. They use assessment in instruction by incorporating performance tasks in the classroom, using questioning and discussion

techniques, and using pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment appropriately. They embed diversity in decision-making by selecting resources, delivering instruction, and assessing learning,

Effective teachers *participate in professional responsibilities*. They advocate for children, in terms of services and supports by communicating with families and demonstrating knowledge of resources in school and the community. They collaborate to improve professional practice by engaging in a professional community, participating in professional development, collaborating with teachers and mentors, developing goals for social justice, and using research-based practices that include current available technology. They reflect on teaching and learning, focusing on cultural contexts and social justice and systematically collect and analyze data to improve practice.

IMPORTANT: Following successful completion of the mid-program assessment, the major professor/advisor and the graduate student update and file the *Application for Candidacy*. This form must be signed by the graduate student, the major professor/advisor, and the department chair and must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

7. MAKE PROGRESS IN COMPLETING COURSES AS WELL AS IDENTIFYING AREA OF INTEREST FOR CULMINATING FIELD-BASED PROJECT.

Graduate students are encouraged to work consistently with their major professor/advisor to ensure currency in program requirements and policies. It is the graduate student's responsibility to consult with his/her major professor/advisor in order to meet deadlines for filing the necessary forms and candidacy papers. It is the joint responsibility of the graduate student and the major professor to ensure that all forms are accurately and correctly completed, forwarded to the Graduate Coordinator, and submitted to the Graduate School. More importantly, continued dialog with the major professor/advisor will enable students to identify and discuss a burning question apropos to their practice to explore in the Field-based project, which will culminate the master's degree.

8. AFTER COMPLETION OF 27–33 HOURS, ENROLL IN EDSP 6060, ACTION RESEARCH DURING WHICH STUDENTS WILL COMPLETE THE FINAL ASSESSMENT.

Communicate with the Graduate Coordinator about eligibility to enroll in EDSP 6060. If the course is not offered during the semester the student expects to graduate, he/she will need to take it prior to the final semester in the program.

9. COMPLETE AUDIT OF APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY FORM WITH GRADUATE COORDINATOR.

A complete audit of the graduate student's program by the Graduate Coordinator is necessary to verify candidacy status. It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate this audit via an email contact (gradci@uno.edu). If the student has had significant changes to the program since the mid-program assessment, he/she should email an updated copy of the *Application for Candidacy* form to the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate

Coordinator must receive this application within the first month of classes the semester prior to candidate's intended graduation. *For example, if a student expects to complete all requirements and graduate during Spring Semester, he/she must submit the Application for Candidacy form to the Graduate Coordinator during the first month of classes of Fall Semester.*

The Graduate Coordinator will conduct a program audit to verify the following:

- The candidate holds GCI classification.
- All transfer credits have been noted on candidate's transcript.
- No course exceeds the six-year limit or an appeal has been filed and approved.
- The candidate has a GPA of 3.0 or better.
- The *Application for Candidacy* has been completed and signed.

If the candidate has completed all coursework prior to the semester he/she intends to graduate, the Graduate Coordinator will ensure that the candidate has permission to enroll in EDCI 7040, Exam Only. All candidates must be enrolled in the university the semester they take the final assessment and/or graduate.

Following the audit, the Graduate Coordinator will contact the candidate and discuss any issues that may prevent graduation and outline steps he/she needs to take in order to resolve these issues.

10. APPLY FOR GRADUATION ON WEBSTAR.

When the candidate is eligible to take the final program assessment and possibly graduate, he/she is responsible to apply for graduation by paying the diploma fee through Webstar. The deadline for paying this fee is usually the Friday of the first week of classes of the semester the candidate intends to graduate. This fee is not refundable or transferable to another semester.

When the diploma fee has been paid, the Graduate Coordinator will receive notification from the Graduate School and will place the candidate on the graduation list.

11. SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE FINAL PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND/OR FINAL CREDITS.

Candidates who enroll in EDSP 6060 during their final semester will write, complete, and present during that semester. Candidates who complete the final assessment before the final semester will complete all coursework to be eligible for graduation.