

University of Houston



College of Education

COLLABORATION FOR LEARNING & LEADING

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM GUIDE

Revised August 2008

Table of Contents

1. Admission Policies and Procedures (Page 3)
 - i. General Admission Application Materials
 - ii. Additional Admission Information
 - iii. Graduate Record Examination Information
 - iv. Additional Requirements
 - v. Assignment of Advisors

2. General Program Description (Page 5)
 - i. Goals
 - ii. Degree Requirements

3. Description of Areas of Emphasis (Page 8)
 - i. Art Education
 - ii. Bilingual Education
 - iii. Elementary Education
 - iv. Early Childhood Education
 - v. Gifted and Talented Education
 - vi. Instructional Technology Education
 - vii. Mathematics Education
 - viii. Reading, Language Arts and Literature Education
 - ix. Second Language Education
 - x. Science Education
 - xi. Secondary Education
 - xii. Social Studies Education
 - xiii. Teacher Education

4. Comprehensive Examination (Page 10)
 - i. Description
 - ii. Procedures
 - iii. Grading
 - iv. Notification of Results

ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Admission Application Materials

Admission to the Master's of Education (M. Ed.) degree program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction is based on submitting the following:

1. A completed graduate admission form online at <www.uh.edu/gs/adm_info.htm>, indicating the Institutional code (006870) for the University of Houston Main Campus. Also, in order to expedite the process and to alert the Curriculum and Instruction Dept. that you are an applicant, fax a copy of the unofficial scores of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) to the CUIN Department with attention to Mary Bess Kelley (Fax: (713- 743-4990)).
2. Request two sets of official transcripts to be sent as follows:

Attention: Mary Bess Kelley
University of Houston
Dept. Curriculum and Instruction
Room 256 Farish Hall
Houston, TX 77204-5027
3. Request Graduate Record Examination test scores be sent to the University of Houston.
4. Include \$45 fee for a domestic application and \$75 for an international application with the graduate admission form.

Office of Admission, Ezekiel Cullen Bldg., University of Houston, Houston, TX 77204.

General Application Process for International Students

International students should read carefully the International Graduate Application Process information online. Go to www.uh.edu/admissions.

Additional Admissions Information

Admission to the Master's of Education Degree (M. Ed.) Program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction is based on the admission criteria described below.

- Prerequisite is a baccalaureate degree. However, one can apply in the last semester of the senior year.
- Applicants **must have** earned an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 to be unconditionally accepted into the master's program. Those applicants with a GPA less than 3.0, but not below 2.6 (A = 4.0) may be admitted conditionally.

- **Effective for admission applications submitted for the spring term, 2009**, the only requirement is for a student to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) within five years of the application date. **No minimal guideline score has been set by the College of Education for acceptance; program areas in the department will set their own GRE admission standard.**
- International students must have at least 550 on the TOEFL or a 75 on the English Department examination, PENSE. Applicants TOEFL scores are good for two years.

Graduate Record Examination Information (GRE)

The GRE is offered as a computer-based exam throughout the year, and is scored by the Educational Testing Service. Scores are forwarded from ETS in about ten days after the examination. More information on testing can be found at the web site of ETS: www.ets.org

Additional Requirements

Some program areas may have additional requirements, such as a personal interview with a candidate.

English Language Proficiency

All applicants who did not graduate from native English-speaking countries are required to provide adequate proof of their English proficiency before receiving admission to the university. A satisfactory score of 550 on the TOEFL paper based exam or 213 for the computer-based exam or 79 on the Internet based TOEFL (iBT) is generally acceptable proof of English proficiency. The minimum required IELTS score for admissions is 6.5 on a scale from 1 to 9. Applicants are expected to complete the Test of Written English portion of the TOEFL whenever it is included as part of the exam. Score must not be more than two years old. Photocopies or other duplication of scores are not acceptable. Scores should be sent directly to the university from the testing center. When sending scores, be sure to include the University of Houston's ETS School Code 6870.

To serve as a classroom lecturer or in other roles that require communicating with students in Spoken English, foreign graduate students who are non-native English speakers are required to take and achieve a score of 50 on the Test of Spoken English (TSE). This test is administered at TOEFL test centers on specific TOEFL test dates. If you have not taken the TSE upon arrival at UH, contact the Office of University Testing Services to take the Spoken Proficiency in English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) test. For more details concerning compliance with the requirements for English language proficiency, please contact the department of your major.

Exemption from TOEFL/IELTS

You are exempt from the TOEFL/IELTS requirement if you:

* Have earned a high school diploma or bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited U.S. high school, college or university.

* Speak English as your native language. This exemption refers to students from Australia, the Bahamas, and Belize, the British Isles, and English-speaking Canadian provinces, the Fiji Islands, Guyana, Jamaica, Liberia, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Trinidad, The United States, the Virgin Islands, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.

Assignment of Advisors

A faculty member from the student's area of emphasis serves as advisor. The advisor is assigned on the basis of student career aspirations and current advising load. The student is responsible for initiating contact with the assigned advisor.

GENERAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Goals

The Master's of Education Degree in Curriculum and Instruction prepares graduates for leadership in the improvement of education at all levels from preschool through university schooling; in public and private schools, colleges and universities; in business and industry; and in community organizations with educational components. Schooling in metropolitan settings is given a central focus in the program. Applicants can select any one of 14 areas of emphasis. The Department offers majors in the following areas:

- Art Education
- Bilingual Education
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Gifted and Talented Education
- Instructional Technology
- Mathematics Education
- Reading, Language Arts, and Literature Education
- Science Education
- Secondary Education
- Second Language Education
- Social Studies Education
- Teacher Education

Degree Requirements

A Master's of Education Degree in Curriculum and Instruction can be achieved by two means: (a) successful completion of 36 semester credit hours and a departmental comprehensive examination or (b) successful completion of 30 semester credit hours and successful defense of a written thesis for which 6 credit hours can be awarded.

Semester Credit Hours Requirement

A minimum of 36 semester credit hours is required for a master's degree, of which:

- Nine (9) hours of core courses (from an approved list) must be completed.
- A minimum of 12 credit hours must be taken in the student's major area of study. Typically students take 18 credit hours in their major area of study or 12 credit hours in their major area of study plus six (6) credit hours for the writing of a thesis.
- Between three (3) and nine (9) hours of coursework are available for elective coursework with approval of the student's advisor.

College Core Requirements

Nine (9) credit hours of core must be completed, three (3) hours from each of the following three broad disciplinary foundations. A list of approved courses meeting requirements from each of these disciplinary foundations can be provided by the advisor or Department office. Exceptions to courses on the approved list will be considered, by petition, on a case-by-case basis by the College Graduate Studies Committee.

- Historical/Cultural/Philosophical Foundations
- Human Growth/Learning
- Inquiry

Historical/Cultural/Philosophical Foundations

CUIN 6360: Principles of Curriculum Development	ELCS 7365: Administration in Multicultural Settings
CUST 6311: Education in a Multicultural Society	HLT 6323: Cross-Cultural Aspects of Health
CUST 6360: Foundations of Educational Sociology	PEP 6321: Sport in Contemporary Society
CUST 6370: Cultural Foundations of American Education	

Human Growth/Learning

EPSY 6330: Human Growth and Development	PEP 6340: Principles of Motor Learning
EPSY 6340: Principles of Human Learning	

Inquiry

CUIN 6378: Instructional Evaluation	EPSY 6310: Introduction to Educational Research
EPSY 6300: Introduction to Educational and Psychological Measurement	PEP 6305: Measurement in Health and Physical Education

Application of Upper Division Undergraduate Courses to Master's Degree

College of Education courses numbered lower than 6000 may not be applied toward the degree. Non-education courses numbered 3000 or above must be approved by the advisor, department chair, and Executive Associate Dean to be included in the program, and graduate credit must be permissible for these courses.

Comprehensive Examination or Defense of Thesis

A student must either successfully complete a departmental comprehensive examination or write and successfully defend a thesis.

Time Restraints for Completion of Master's Degree Requirements: All course credits, including thesis, must be completed within five years.

Degree Plan

With the advisor, the student develops a degree plan that outlines the program of study. This degree plan should be submitted and approved electronically at MyAdvisor during the first semester of the program and must be filed before approval is given to take the Master's Comprehensive Examination. The degree plan serves as an agreement between the student and the Department/College and remains in effect in accordance with requirements stated in the University *Graduate and Professional Studies* bulletin. It is in the student's best interest to file it as early as possible. Degree plans must be approved by the student's advisor, department chairperson, and the Executive Associate Dean of the College of Education.

Transfer of Credits

Transfer of credits may be approved under the following conditions:

1. A maximum of six (6) hours, or the total hours earned during one semester, taken under non-degree (NDO) status may be applied to a master's degree.

DESCRIPTION OF AREAS OF EMPHASIS

The Master's of Education (M.Ed.) in Curriculum and Instruction has 14 emphases that reflect concentrated study in a specific area. Questions about a program emphasis should be directed to the faculty advisor in each of the areas described below: Contact with professors in these program areas can be made through the office staff in Room 256 Farish Hall at (713) 743-4950.

- **Art Education**

The Master's of Education is a professional degree that has as its major objective the enhancement of a candidate's ability to function as an art educator in arenas such as K-12 schools, art museums and community arts organizations. Course work includes integrative curriculum design, current issues and trends in art education, philosophical considerations of art, and new technology in art. Students can earn the state of Texas All-level Certification and a Master's Degree simultaneously.

- **Bilingual Education**

Bilingual Education is a field with many opportunities for teachers who can speak Spanish and English. The master's program integrates educational psychology, research, and curriculum and instructional theory in preparing teacher educators. Students may specialize in bilingual education upon demonstration of bilingual proficiency in English and Spanish.

- **Curriculum and Instruction**

This program area is for students who are seeking initial certification while pursuing a master's degree. Students who are working in this area are advised by the faculty in the particular program area that best aligns with their certification area.

- **Early Childhood Education**

The Early Childhood Education emphasis has been planned to guide teachers to extend their pursuit of excellence as teachers of young children (PK – 3rd grade). The goal of this program is to prepare a profession of well-educated early childhood teachers who are prepared to assume new leadership roles as professionals with exceptional teaching skills, capabilities, and aspirations. Students will be prepared, both in terms of theory and practice, to think about and act upon issues surrounding the teaching of young children. The program has been planned to provide the best possible preparation for careers as master early childhood teachers and leaders in schools and child-related agencies such as hospitals, industry, mental health agencies, and related fields.

- **Elementary Education**

The purpose of the Master's of Education Degree with an emphasis in Elementary Education is to expand the preparation of elementary school teachers. This program has flexibility to permit an advisor to tailor the course requirements to the unique needs of the student.

- **Gifted and Talented Education**

The master's program with emphasis in Gifted and Talented Education is designed to serve the needs of four groups: 1) Teachers who wish to participate in the education of identified gifted and talented students in their school or school district; 2) Teachers who want to learn how to accommodate the unique needs of gifted and talented students in their regular classrooms; 3) Persons employed in non-school settings who want to know how to work with gifted and talented children and youth; 4) Parents interested in gifted and talented education. The thirty-six (36) semester-hour program is designed to develop awareness, knowledge, and understanding about teaching gifted and talented students, as well as competence in curriculum development, delivery, and evaluation.

- **Instructional Technology Education**

The Master of Education Degree (M.Ed.) in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Instructional Technology prepares graduates to be active leaders in the use of instructional technologies in education at all levels, from early childhood through post-secondary, in business and industry, and in other organizations with educational components. The program thoroughly explores the areas of design and development of technology-based resources, curriculum development, teaching, design of learning environments, and assessment of programs and learning outcomes.

- **Mathematics Education**

The masters program with emphasis in Mathematics Education is designed to provide educators at all grade levels (pre-school through secondary) with specialized knowledge and skills in curriculum development and mathematics teaching, including general methods, instructional applications of technology, and diagnostic/prescriptive instruction in mathematics. The program serves several populations, such as secondary, middle, and community college mathematics teachers who wish to pursue graduate degrees; elementary teachers who wish to become middle school teachers or mathematics specialists; and teachers interested in technological enhancements to mathematics instruction.

- **Reading, Language Arts, and Literature Education**

To prepare professionals for positions in literacy education, the Department of Curriculum & Instruction offers two Master's of Education degree programs. While both programs are aimed at K-12 teachers whose assignments involve the teaching of reading, language arts/English, and literature, one leads to Texas certification as a Reading Specialist. The Reading Specialist M.Ed. is structured to meet Texas guidelines for certification. The other M.Ed. degree (Master's Degree in Reading, Language Arts, and Literature Education) does not lead to a Reading Specialist Certificate, but does enable the student and advisor to tailor a program to specific interests in literacy education.

- **Science Education**

The master's program with emphasis in Science Education is designed for classroom teachers in the elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as individuals from non-traditional settings (such as the zoo, arboretum, museum, and planetarium). The program

meets the needs of those whose responsibility it is to improve scientific literacy among many age groups. It promotes the broad goals of Science Education, which aim to develop content knowledge, inquiry skills, attitudes, and interest in science, and how science, technology, and society influence one another. The program stresses high quality instruction through the use of a variety of teaching skills, instructional strategies, and management techniques that relate to science classrooms, laboratories, and field trip settings.

- **Second Language Education**

This program is designed as a specialization in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction leading to a master's degree. Teachers who have a Texas teaching certificate may also apply for pre-approved courses from the specialization area toward an endorsement in English as a Second Language.

- **Secondary Education**

The purpose of the Master's of Education Degree with an emphasis in Secondary Education is to expand the preparation of middle and secondary school teachers. This program has flexibility to permit an advisor to tailor the course requirements to the unique needs of the student.

- **Social Studies Education**

The master's program in Social Studies Education is designed to challenge teachers who are able to draw upon the social and behavioral sciences to understand and investigate problems in education. The student may select a theme that will provide an interdisciplinary basis for his or her program. The program also provides for attention to the teaching of social issues, the social sciences and history as well as to such topics as curriculum construction, controversial issues, the conduct of inquiry, and political socialization.

- **Teacher Education**

This program is designed to meet the needs of a teacher who is seeking to increase his or her instructional effectiveness as a classroom teacher. Rather than focusing on the curriculum and methodologies of a particular content area, this program is designed for the student who is concerned with the design, development, implementation, and operation of instructional programs and focused on developing their skills as instructional specialists. The program is designed for those professional teachers and persons whose job responsibilities involve the design, delivery, and evaluation of educational or training programs.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Description

- The CUI master's comprehensive examination is a three-hour written exam, composed of three questions covering specific areas or topics that have been studied in master's-level courses in the College of Education.

- Each question will be graded by the faculty member who wrote the question and/or a faculty member in the same program area.
- At least two full-time faculty members in the College of Education will write and grade the examination questions.
- Questions may not be supplied or graded by adjunct or part-time faculty.

Procedure

- Approximately three months prior to taking the comprehensive exam, the student is responsible for scheduling a meeting with his/her advisor to decide on the three specific areas or topics the student will be examined on. Also, at this time, the student and advisor will complete the appropriate paperwork necessary for the student to take the comprehensive exam.
- Following the above student/advisor meeting, the student will contact each of the specific faculty members who taught the courses agreed upon and obtain each faculty member's agreement to provide an examination question. If the student was taught by a part-time or adjunct faculty member, the student should request the examination question from the full-time faculty member responsible for overseeing that course.
- The members of the examination committee should provide appropriate review materials to the student when he or she requests an examination question. The UH catalog number and title of the course must be used. For example: CUIIN 6301: The Teaching Profession. Under no circumstances should a student be given an exact question that will appear on the exam.
- At least five working days before the master's comprehensive application deadline, the students should contact by e-mail or phone or in person, his or her advisor and other professors to ensure that the faculty submit the comprehensive questions to both the advisor and an e-mail copy to the executive secretary of the department, giving the UH catalog number and title for each course/topic to be tested.
- The comprehensive exam should be administered twice per academic year – one in the fall, and once during the spring semesters.
- The application deadlines and examination dates for fall and spring should be posted on the CUIIN department Web site by the first week in May.
- The proposed application and examination schedules should be established in consultation with the EPSY and ELCS faculty who are currently with the CUIIN department.
- Under exceptional circumstances, students may petition to take the comprehensive examination in the summer, but it must be approved by the advisor, graduate studies committee, and the department chairperson, and proctored by the advisor.

Grading

- Within five working days after the student completes the comprehensive exam, staff in the Curriculum and Instruction Department will send the student's written responses to the student's advisor who will distribute the appropriate student response to the faculty member who wrote that question.
- The faculty member is responsible for scoring the exam question and returning it to the advisor within fifteen working days. Each question will be scored as Pass or Fail.
- The student must Pass all questions. In the event that a student Fails any of the comprehensive examination questions, he/she needs to retake a similar question (or questions) from the same general area(s) within the next academic year. This requires, once again, following all the steps in the Procedure section above.
- Students have a total of two opportunities to Pass all exam questions. Should the student Fail any parts of the examination a second time, the student shall be ineligible for a master's degree in the College of Education at the University of Houston.

Notification of Results

The Executive Associate Dean of the College of Education notifies the student of the results of his/her examination.