Department of Teacher Education

Graduate Program Handbook

This handbook provides information about graduate programs leading to a Masters of Arts in Education, Master of Arts in Special Education, and preparation for Colorado State educator endorsements in several areas, as well as Principal licensure.

The Department of Teacher Education maintains admission, retention, and graduation requirements in addition to those of the Admissions Office at Adams State University. These requirements are presented in this handbook. Candidates are required to read and understand the information in this document as well as the Adams State University Graduate Student Handbook which can be found using the following link. http://www.adams.edu/gradschool/

Information in this handbook is subject to change. Updated information is available on the website at (http://www.adams.edu/academics/ted/grad/index.php) for the Department of Teacher Education.

In 1926, Adams State was founded for the preparation of teachers for schools throughout rural Colorado. Today we continue this tradition of preparing teachers to meet the needs of all students, especially those students who are linguistically and culturally diverse.

Adams State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability in educational programs and activities.
The Department of Teacher Education at Adams State University provides graduate programs that prepare candidates for the degree of Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in Special Education Generalist.

Adams State University
Department of Teacher Education

Mission Statement
Preparing Teachers as Reflective Decision-Makers

Mission and Vision

Graduate programs in the Department of Teacher Education prepare candidates to exhibit leadership, demonstrate professional competence, and facilitate learning for all students.

I. Based upon the model of the professional educator as a reflective decision-maker, the Department of Teacher Education prepares
   A. educational leaders who actively participate in school improvement, applying the skills necessary to facilitate school reform while fostering collaboration and cooperation amongst multiple stakeholders,
   B. competent professionals who seek out and manage resources to support instruction, engage in constructive discourse on a wide-range of educational issues, understand and implement state standards, and model best practices, and
   C. culturally responsive teachers who facilitate learning for all students.

II. Content and pedagogical preparation includes
   A. application of evidence based theories and strategies of learning and instruction to classroom practice, including
      1. literacy development,
      2. Colorado Content Standards based curriculum,
      3. classroom and instructional management,
      4. ongoing formal and informal assessment practices that inform instruction, and
      5. instructional practices that respond to a wide range of learning styles, including effective strategies for linguistically and culturally diverse students.

Accreditation

The Department of Teacher Education at Adams State University is accredited and has program authorization from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) as well as the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).
Program Options

Several program endorsements provide options for candidates within a single degree, the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Education or the Master of Arts in Special Education Generalist. All candidates complete a common academic core (3 courses) and a series of cognate courses specific to their program of study. Programs approved for Colorado teaching endorsements are identified below.

The current endorsements offered include:

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
- Reading Teacher
- Special Education Generalist (Ages 5-21)
- Educational Leadership (Initial Principal License)

The Master of Arts Degree in Education with an emphasis in Curriculum & Instruction.

These programs of study reflect the identified needs of school districts and teachers. Programs are designed to assist schools in meeting the needs of all students.

Program Delivery

Programs are offered in a cohort model. Specific information is available from the Department of Teacher Education graduate office. Candidates follow a prescribed degree plan and delivery format is online. The specifics of each program of study are available on our web site at http://www.adams.edu/academics/ted/grad/index.php.
Admission

Candidates applying to a graduate program in the Department of Teacher Education must first be admitted to Adams State University. After an online application is completed, materials are then sent to the Department of Teacher Education Graduate Program Coordinator for acceptance into the requested program of study.

Admission to the Graduate School

The first step is to complete an online application to Adams State University. Application information and materials are available online at http://www.adams.edu/academics/ted/grad/index.php

Admission to the Department of Teacher Education Graduate Programs

In addition to general requirements for graduate admission, the Department of Teacher Education requires:

1. A formal letter of intent from the candidate explaining why they wish to be in the program. The letter must include goals, accomplishments, and experience in relation to the three areas in the mission and vision statement for the Department of Teacher Education: leadership, professional competence, and facilitation of learning for all students.
2. For unconditional admission, a 3.0/4.0 GPA in undergraduate coursework or in the last forty hours of college level coursework.
3. For conditional admission a GPA of 2.75-2.99 with a minimum passing GRE score or a minimum MAT score. Conditional admittance is at the discretion of the department.
4. Two current formal letters of recommendation addressing the applicant's potential for success in the program of study. Letters should address the three areas in the mission and vision statement for the Department of Teacher Education (pg.2): leadership, competent professional, and facilitation of learning for all students. One letter must be from a person in a supervisory or evaluative capacity in an educational setting. The second letter must be from another professional, preferably a colleague, who is familiar with the applicant's qualifications. All letters must be originals less than a year old and signed by the person giving the recommendation.
5. Copy of a current Teaching License.
6. Official transcripts from each college/university attended.

The Department of Teacher Education chair will notify applicants in writing regarding acceptance into their program of study.
Advising and Degree Plans

Upon acceptance into the program, candidates are assigned an advisor. The advisor works under the supervision of the Department of Teacher Education chair.

Once admitted, the advisor is the first point of contact for information about:

- The program of study (e.g., course content; graduation requirements)
- Degree plans
- Course scheduling

It is the responsibility of the candidate to maintain regular contact with the advisor.

Prior to the completion of the first six hours of graduate study, the candidate will complete a degree plan in consultation with the advisor. The candidate and the Department of Teacher Education both retain copies of the degree plan. Once signed, the degree plan constitutes a formal agreement between the student and ASU. No changes or substitutions can be made in the degree plan without the written approval of the Department of Teacher Education chair and advisor. This includes course transfers or changing the sequence of coursework. The degree plan is subject to change at the department’s discretion.

Degree plans for all programs listed on page 3 are available from the Department of Teacher Education office.

Department of Teacher Education
Adams State University
208 Edgemont Blvd. Suite 3050
Alamosa, CO 81101
719.587-7768
800.662-3382
Fax. 719.587-8145
www.adams.edu/academics/ted/

Course Transfers

A maximum of six hours of coursework may be transferred and applied to a degree plan, subject to approval by the Department of Teacher Education chair. Candidates must submit a formal written request and include a copy of the original course syllabus and official transcript. All requests must be made before completion of the first semester of study or prior to the beginning of coursework. The Department of Teacher Education is not obligated to accept any specific course for credit.
Missed Courses

A candidate, who misses a course in the program of study, must arrange with the advisor to take the course at a later date. Independent study courses are not accepted in the graduate program. With the written approval of the advisor and approved revision of the degree plan, the candidate may:

1. Take the course the next time it is offered
2. Take an equivalent course at another accredited institution, with prior review and written approval by the Department of Teacher Education chair.

Assessment Continuum

Evaluation measures are required of all candidates at each of three stages of graduate study and for each of the three components of a reflective decision-maker: leadership, professional competence, and facilitator of learning for all students. Each program area (e.g. Special Education) will have slightly different expectations for candidates. These differences reflect the knowledge and skills required of graduates as outlined in the state and national standards for each of the areas.

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* For Masters candidates only

Coursework

All programs include a common academic core of 3 classes and a series of cognate courses specific to the program. All courses are listed on the degree plan. Candidates are required to maintain a term GPA of 3.0/4.0 as well as a cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0 throughout the program. Candidates who have a term GPA less than 3.0 will have their standing reviewed.

All candidates are expected to conform to the academic requirements of their program of study, remain a candidate in good standing, and maintain academic integrity as defined by Adams State University graduate handbook. Candidates may be placed under review or be dismissed or asked to withdraw from the program completely at the discretion of the department chair in consultation with the advisor.
**Internship**

Graduate programs of study that prepare the candidate for endorsement or license require an internship experience. This internship is completed in a school context appropriate to the program of study. The candidate will apply for internship no later than the 1st of April for fall or the 1st of September for spring semester prior to the internship.

The number of hours required to complete the internship and the internship itself is a state requirement and cannot be waived. The total number of hours will vary from 100-300 depending on the program. Candidates pursuing the endorsement or license only must complete the internship. The advisor informs the candidate about the number of hours required for their internship and assists the candidate in determining the best way to fulfill the requirement.

**Capstone Project**

All candidates for the MA in Education and MA in Special Education Generalist will, as part of their program of study, complete a Capstone Project (CAP). Graduate level studies in the field of teacher education imply a combination of practice and theory; that is, an ability to think critically about one’s work and make decisions based on both experience and knowledge. It is not enough to espouse an idea without being able to connect it to practice or others’ ideas. Likewise, unexamined practice precludes the possibility of change and development.

Therefore, in determining whether a candidate has the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that describe a master educator, the MA degree requires both a knowledge base and firsthand experience in a school setting. Part of that experience should be reflective, in that it requires the candidate to reason about their practice.

The CAP is not the purview of a single course, nor is there a seminar or credit hour attached to the actual project.

**PLACE**

In order to apply for a Colorado State educational endorsement or license, candidates must complete an approved program of study and pass the appropriate PLACE exam approved by CDE. Endorsement and license areas are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education, Reading Teacher, Special Education Generalist, and School Principal. Ideally, this exam should be taken following completion of all course work and during the internship.

**Graduate Study and Licensure or Endorsement**

The Department of Teacher Education graduate program may involve preparation for both professional licensure and an academic degree. Adams State University provides a graduate program of study leading to the conferral of the degree of Master of Arts in Education or Special Education Generalist. The academic program prepares a candidate for initial licensure (School Principal) or endorsement (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education, Reading Teacher, and Special Education Generalist). Qualifications for licensure and endorsement are defined by the State of Colorado 1991 Educator Licensure Act. The CDE grants licensure or endorsement. At the request of the candidate and submission of the page of the CDE application form entitled, “Approved Program Verification Form,” the Department of Teacher Education will provide appropriate assurances, and return the application to the candidate. Application for licensure or endorsement is the responsibility of the candidate.
It is recommended that the candidate apply for licensure or endorsement as soon as possible following program completion as program and state requirements may change. Licensure application forms are available on the website for CDE. The candidate is responsible for filing the completed application with CDE.

Colorado Department of Education
http://www.cde.state.co.us/

**Application for Graduation**

Candidates are required to submit the Intent to Graduate form the semester prior to graduation. This application initiates a review of program requirements and completion degree check. Applications, forms, and deadlines are posted on the website for the Graduate School: http://www.adams.edu/gradschool/forms.php. It is the candidate’s responsibility to complete and return the required forms and information by the deadline.

**Program Completion and Post-Graduate Data**

Following program completion, candidates will be asked to complete a ‘Post Program Survey’ which is available on our website at http://www.adams.edu/academics/ted/grad/index.php about their program of study. The Department of Teacher Education collects data on the graduate candidates experience in leadership, professional development, and facilitation of learning for all students. The data is used for review, evaluation, and revision of graduate programs.

**Candidate Responsibility**

Upon being accepted to the Department of Teacher Education graduate programs, the candidate is responsible for understanding and following the most current requirements, procedures, and policies. This information is located in the Adams State University Graduate School Handbook, and the Department of Teacher Education Graduate Handbook. These documents are in addition to program materials related to the specific program of study, including the signed degree plan. Failure to read and understand requirements for your program does not excuse the candidate from responsibility for compliance.

**Adams State University Graduate Student Handbook**

In addition to this document, the candidate is responsible for accessing and understanding the content of the *Adams State University Graduate Student Handbook*, which addresses the following:

- General campus policies/student rights and responsibilities
- Academic policies
- Terms of enrollment or required withdrawal
- Code of conduct
- Disciplinary actions
- Anti-discrimination policy
- Sexual harassment policy
- Campus sexual assault victim bill of rights
- Drug and alcohol policy
- Disability services policy
• General student services

This handbook is available on the website for the Adams State University Graduate School at http://www.adams.edu/gradschool/

Dismissal From the Program

Academic requirements for program continuation are described in the Adams State University Graduate Student Handbook.

In addition, candidates may be removed from the program for behavior which, in the judgment of the faculty, would constitute mandatory or discretionary grounds for licensure suspension, revocation or denial, under the Colorado Educator Licensing Act of 1991, as amended and the Rules for the Administration of the Colorado Educator Licensing Act of 1991, Sections 15.00, 15.01, 15.02, available at (http://www.cde.state.co.us/). Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to:

- Conviction or acceptance of a guilty plea of felony child abuse, a crime of violence, a felony, the underlying factual basis of which includes an act of domestic violence, or a felony offense involving unlawful sexual behavior
- A finding of guilt or acceptance of guilty plea or a plea of nolo contendere to any felony other than those outlined above, which in the judgment of the faculty, renders the student unfit to perform the services for which the student is being prepared
- Conviction or acceptance of guilty plea of indecent exposure or a substantially similar offense
- Conviction, plea of nolo contendere to or a deferred sentence for a violation involving contributing to the delinquency of a minor; a misdemeanor, the underlying factual basis of which has been found by the court on the record to involve domestic violence, and the conviction is a second or subsequent conviction for the same offense; misdemeanor sexual assault; misdemeanor unlawful sexual conduct, misdemeanor child abuse; or misdemeanor sexual exploitation of children
- A finding of guilt or acceptance of a guilty plea or plea of nolo contendere to a misdemeanor violation involving the illegal sale of controlled substances
- Substantial and continued inability to engage in professional assignments
- Failure to make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety
- Providing professional services in a discriminatory manner regarding age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, language, disability, socio-economic status, or status with regard to marriage
- Failing to keep in confidence information obtained in the course of professional services unless disclosure serves to protect the child, other children or school personnel, or is required by law
- Deliberately distorting or suppressing curricular materials or educational information in order to promote the personal view, interest or goal of the license holder or applicant
- Engaging in immoral conduct that affects the health, safety or welfare of children, conduct that offends the morals of the community or conduct that sets an inappropriate example for children of youth whose ideals the student is expected to foster and elevate
- Engaging in unlawful distribution or sale of dangerous or unauthorized prescription drugs, or other dangerous nonprescription substances, alcohol or tobacco.
Candidate Concerns and Appeal Process

Candidate concerns are addressed according to the principle of subsidiary, which is, attempting to resolve an issue at the point where it arises before taking the issue to a higher authority. For example, concerns about a course grade are first discussed with the instructor. The next step of appeal is with the chair. This stage of appeal requires a written request to the chair of the Department of Teacher Education, summarizing the issue and presenting the candidates’s concern with a request for resolution. The chair reviews the case and makes a determination. The chair may convene a Candidate Review Committee to review the matter and provide a recommendation. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the candidate may make an appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs office. See the Adams State University Graduate Student Handbook for specific procedures.

Concerns regarding program standing, eligibility, and progress (e.g. grades) should first be brought to the course instructor, if the concern remains, the candidate will speak with the chair. If the concern is still not resolved, the Department chair may empanel a Candidate Review Committee to advise the chair in deciding the matter. See the Adams State University Graduate School Handbook for additional information.