

# **Master of Science Degree in Teaching and Learning**

## **School of Teaching and Learning**

### **Advisement Guide**

The Master of Science degree in Teaching and Learning is designed for teachers who want to further develop and advance their professional careers. This program offers candidates for the MS degree an opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge and skills in concentrations in their fields of expertise. By doing so, they will prepare themselves for positions such as lead teachers, curriculum specialists, instructional consultants, and peer coaches. As well, they may see themselves continuing in the role of teacher, but with the added responsibility of being a role-model or mentor for fellow teachers. Some candidates for the Master's degree are preparing for leadership roles within their school districts, such as curriculum director or department chairperson, while some are planning on pursuing further study at the doctoral level.

The mission and curriculum for the M.S. in Teaching and Learning has five goals which are based on the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The master graduates will:

- Be committed to students and their learning;
- Know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students;
- Be responsible for managing and monitoring student learning;
- Think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; and
- Be members of learning communities.

The Master of Science degree in Teaching and Learning offered by the School of Teaching and Learning requires teacher certification for admission. Moreover, the program does not lead to initial or advanced teacher certification.

#### **Admission Requirements**

To be admitted to the Master of Science degree program in Teaching and Learning applicants must:

- Have obtained a cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for either the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate work or any previous work in a Master's program.
- Possess a current teaching certificate
- Have at least one year of teaching experience
- Prepare a satisfactory 1-2 page Professional Goals statement
- Complete the TOEFL exam (for international applicants only) with scores of at least 79 iBT or IELTS score of 6.5 band.
- Complete an on-line Graduate School application at <https://illinoisstate.edu/apply/>
- Document teaching experience (schools and dates of employment) on the on-line

Application Admission deadline dates:

- Fall Term: June 15<sup>th</sup> Deadline; Applications submitted after June 15<sup>th</sup> will be accepted as space permits.
- Spring Term: Applications are not accepted for the Spring term.
- Summer Term: March 15<sup>th</sup> Deadline; Applications submitted after March 15<sup>th</sup> will be accepted as space permits.

## Program Course Modalities

The Master's in Teaching and Learning is offered either as a 100% online program or as an on-campus program that includes face-to-face and online courses.

**On-campus Program** - The on-campus program is geared toward local teachers and international students. The program can be completed as a part-time or full-time student. In the on-campus program the core courses and research courses (TCH 407, TCH 409, TCH 411, TCH 478, TCH 481, and TCH 482) are taken as face-to-face course on campus in the evenings. The area of concentration courses (explained below) are generally online courses. The on-campus program is not a cohort program and can be taken at any pace.

**Online Program** – The online program is a 100% online experience with a majority of asynchronous courses. The online program is designed for teachers across the state and nation that would prefer to take coursework from home. The program is more prescriptive than the on-campus program and students are asked to choose between a 2-year and 3-year option. In the two-year option, two classes are taken each semester (Fall, Spring, Summer). In the 3-year option, students take one class in the Fall and Spring semesters and two courses in the Summer.

## Key Advisement Information

**Core courses** – The core courses are designed to engage students in key areas of teaching and learning, including learning theory, student diversity, curriculum design, assessment, and educational research. The core courses (TCH 407, 409, and 411, 478 and EAF 410) should be completed prior to beginning the culminating research experience.

**Research Experience / Thesis Option** – There are two options for the culminating experience in this Master's Degree program. The majority of students choose the teacher research option (TCH 481 and TCH 482). This option engages students in an action research project in which teachers design and conduct classroom research to answer a question in their own practice. This is a structured, sequential, two-semester experience. For students that are interested in conducting a larger scale and more independent research project, they can choose the thesis option.

If a candidate is deeply interested in conducting educational research and/or is interested in pursuing a doctoral degree at some future date, it is highly recommended that he/she consider, in consultation with his/her advisor, the thesis option (six semester hours) instead of completing TCH 481 and 482. Once this decision to pursue a thesis has been made, the candidate and the advisor should review the program and Graduate School policies regarding this process (on respective web sites). In addition, the candidate, the advisor, and the program coordinator should meet to discuss the timeline, topic, and process.

**Area of Concentration / Electives** – The Master's in Teaching and Learning includes three courses (9 credit hours) that are designed to serve as an Area of Concentration. These courses allow the students to develop an area of expertise within the program. Typical areas of concentration include Educational Technology, Literacy, Science Education, and School Librarianship. Courses in these areas are commonly offered by the School of Teaching and Learning. Students can also choose to create an individualized plan consisting of courses from graduate courses offered by another department in the University. To create an individualized area of concentration, the student would need to contact the Graduate Coordinator in the other department to determine course offerings and to receive any needed permissions to enroll in the courses.

**Transfer Courses** – Candidates who believe they have course work that can transfer as elective/concentration credit must consult with the Graduate Coordinator, follow graduate school guidelines, and complete the appropriate graduate school form. Courses that counted as credit toward a previous degree may not be used as transfer credit. Students may transfer up to nine (9) semester hours of approved graduate coursework (described in an accredited university's graduate catalog).

**Taking courses as a Visiting Student** – Some students may start taking classes as a visiting student prior to being accepted into the Master’s program. Students may only count up to 12 semester hours of course work completed successfully at Illinois State University as a graduate visiting student.

**Completing the Program** – As candidates progress toward completing the program, they should keep track of their courses on a Plan of Study (see below). A Degree Audit form (on-line through the Graduate School web site) must be submitted to the program coordinator via email prior to the candidate’s last semester of coursework. The Graduate Coordinator will submit the Degree Audit to the Graduate School. Once the Degree Audit has been approved by the Graduate School, the program coordinator and the candidate will receive a copy of the approved Degree Audit.

In addition to the Degree Audit, candidates must also apply for graduation (Application for Degree Completion) through the Graduate School website. Please refer to the Deadlines and Dates calendar for the due date of both the Degree Audit and the Application for Degree Completion.

### **Contact Information**

**Coordinator:** Dr. Ellis Hurd ([ehurd@ilstu.edu](mailto:ehurd@ilstu.edu))

**Illinois State University**  
**School of Teaching and Learning**  
**Plan of Study for M.S. in Teaching and Learning (effective Fall 2013)**

Current Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Catalog Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ UID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Degree: M.S. in Teaching and Learning Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TRANSFER COURSES**

University	Course Number and Title	Substitute For	Hrs.	Grade	Sem/Yr

**CORE COURSES - 15 Semester Hours Required**

Course No.	Substitution	Course Title	Hrs.	Grade	Sem/Yr
TCH 407		Learning in Educational Settings	3		
TCH 409		Student Diversity and Educational Practices	3		
TCH 411		Curriculum Theory	3		
TCH 478		Evaluating Student Performance	3		
EAF 410		Research Meth. & Statistics in Education I	3		

**SPECIALIZATION AND ELECTIVES – 9 Semester Hours**


**PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH – 6 Semester Hours**

**Option 1: Synthesizing Experience**

TCH 481		Professional Research I			
TCH 482		Professional Research II			

**OR**

**Option 2: Thesis**

TCH 499		Thesis			
TCH 499		Thesis			

**SUBSTITUTES**

Substitute	For:	Rationale			

**Total Hours (30 minimum) \_\_\_\_\_**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept. Chair/Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean, Graduate School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_