

Humboldt State University Masters of Arts in Education

Graduate Handbook and Application Guide

Learn the History of Education

Trends in International Education

Theories of Social Justice in Education

Develop Leadership Skills in Educational Settings

Implement Effective Practices and Assess the Results

Conceptualize Solutions Based on Research and Lived Experiences

Master and Apply Learning Theories to Maximize Effectiveness in Schools

Take your Place as a Scholar in the Field and Contribute Insights and New Knowledge to

Benefit the Education Community

Over 100 Years of Preparing Educators on the North Coast





Master of Arts in Education Program

The Master of Arts in Education program provides education professionals the opportunity for in-depth exploration of their areas of interest leading to significant academic accomplishments with close support from faculty.

The mission

The M.A. in Education supports students as they develop deep areas of expertise becoming informed and reflective leaders in the field of education. We empower our graduates with the knowledge and skills to create positive change, assess that change, and use the professional and academic literature to maximize the probability for positive impacts on student lives.

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Introduction

Humboldt State University offers an intimate, naturally beautiful setting for your graduate studies with a strong reputation for academic excellence and educational value.

HSU has a long tradition of serving professional educators, dating back to 1913, when it first opened as a Normal School. Over the years, HSU has prepared most of the educators in this region while developing a reputation for innovation and close cooperation with local school districts. The School of Education's small cohorts of graduate students enjoy personalized support from a dedicated faculty and staff while developing strong learning communities with their professors and peers.

The MA in Education embraces the belief that the highest quality learning occurs when students shape their experiences and integrate new knowledge and skills according to their interests and passions. We view academic research, writing, and projects as the natural outcomes of educators' desire to improve their practice, develop more effective policies, and enhance the quality of the education they can provide. The faculty, through their courses and their individual interactions, put student success first. We offer an intellectually challenging curriculum tailored to the needs of students working full time in the field of education. We believe that the experiences, level of professionalism, and commitment to excellence of our students provide a rich environment for learning.

Program outcomes

The following learning outcomes guide the program's development and frame the types of studies being conducted as part of the M.A. experience:

- a. Graduates of the M.A. in Education will demonstrate the ability to: analyze the organizational, pedagogical, and curricular issues related to their professional endeavors; investigate those issues systematically; and develop deeper professional insights in the pursuit of effective educational practices.
- b. As leaders in the field, our graduates will demonstrate an informed sensitivity to the social, organizational, and professional concerns related to their practice.
- c. As educators, our graduates will demonstrate an integrated understanding of the psychology, nature, and process of learning in ways that can be demonstrated in their teaching practices and in the development of educational policies.
- d. As master's candidates, students will be able to develop sound theoretical arguments that either guide research enhancing the knowledge base in the field of education or inform the decisions made in applied projects that benefit the educational community.
- e. As professionals in the field of education, our students will demonstrate the ability to assess student learning using both formal and informal methods.
- f. Graduates will be able to write effectively and speak with authority and clarity regarding their areas of expertise.
- g. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to develop, validate, and implement research protocols.

The [M.A. Ed. program](#) website offers more information regarding our programs.

The [Handbook for Master's Students](#) provides a complete description of graduate study at HSU

The preliminary deadline for applying for fall admission is February 1. Applications received after February 1 will be considered on a space available basis.

Minimum Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission to the M.A. Ed. program must show satisfactory preparation for the proposed course of study and meet general requirements for admission.

Applicants must:

- hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited institution (or equivalent academic preparation).
- be in good academic standing at the last university attended.
- have a GPA of at least 3.0 in the last 60 semester units attempted (90 quarter units).
- score at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) if the bachelor's degree is from a postsecondary institution where English is not the principal language of instruction.

Students who wish to take graduate level courses for professional or personal growth but have no degree objective, enroll as *post-baccalaureate unclassified* students and may be admitted to courses, subject to availability and instructor approval. Such admission, however, does not constitute admission to the graduate degree program. Students in this classification should seek approval from the professor of the course.

Students requiring financial aid or graduate student support should contact the Financial Aid Office for general financial aid information, Research and Graduate Studies for information on grants and fellowships, and the Graduate Coordinator for any Education-related assistance possibilities.

Summary of Application Procedures

First, go to the HSU Registrar's website to complete [Graduate Application for Admission](#). Then, by the **February 1** deadline submit the following to Enrollment Management:

- Completed application for graduate admission
- \$55 application fee
- Official transcripts of college academic records

By the same deadline, submit to the Coordinator's Assistant in the School of Education:

- One photocopy of the completed *Application for Graduate Admission* (complete a separate Statement of purpose as described next).
- Your *Statement of Purpose* including your rationale for pursuing graduate work in education, an overview of and reflection on experiences in education, and your personal philosophy of education. In addition to the academic performance reflected in your transcripts, the statement of purpose plays a significant role in admissions decisions.

Faculty will rate each applicant's statement of purpose and letters of recommendation based on evidence of:

- A clearly articulated rationale for pursuing graduate work in education;
- Strong writing ability;
- Ability to critically reflect on experiences in education;
- A clearly articulated philosophy of education;
- Ability to conceptualize a broad vision for education;
- Strong interpersonal communication skills;
- Full-time teaching, administrative, and/or other professional experience in the field of education; and
- Strong potential for success in graduate study and for contributions to the profession.

- Copies of all college transcripts sent to Enrollment Management
- Photocopies of all teaching and specialist credentials earned
- Three letters of recommendation submitted electronically from persons who can assess your potential for graduate work.

Applicants without a professional credential (Multiple Subjects, Single Subjects, Administrative Services, Special Education Level I) may still be accepted into the program. Note, however, that the M.A. Ed. is geared toward professionals in the field and is designed to use the strengths and knowledge base acquired while working with students in an educational setting.

Coursework

All students accepted into the Master's degree program in Education must complete all of the following:

- EDUC 610 Education in Society (3 units)
- EDUC 620 Pedagogy: Practice and Research (3 units)
- EDUC 630 Educational Psychology (2 units)
- EDUC 640 Assessment (3 units)
- EDUC 645 Academic Writing (2 units)
- EDUC 655 Educational Research (3 units)
- EDUC 688 Mixed-Methods in Educational Research (4 units)
- EDUC 690/692 Thesis or Project (3 units)
- Area of emphasis courses chosen by student/advisor (9 units)

Total Units required for a M.A. in Education 32 units.

Typically students take two -three classes (5-6 units) each semester which works well for those currently working. Students are not restricted to this schedule, but it is recommended.

For students who already have a good idea of what they want to focus on and are prepared to begin working on their research, Track B (see below) will facilitate a more rapid completion of the program. For those exploring a variety of interests, and yet unclear regarding the topic of their research/project, Track A provides a broad overview of the field with ample opportunities to explore different issues before choosing one to study in depth.

Curricular Overview: MA

		Track A	Track B
Year 1	Fall	EDUC 610 Education in Society EDUC 620 Pedagogy	EDUC 634 Academic Writing EDUC 698 Educational Research
	Spring	EDUC 630 Educational Psychology EDUC 640 Assessment EDUC 690 (1 unit)	EDUC 688 Mixed-Methods EDUC 690 (2 units)
Year 2	Fall	EDUC 634 Academic Writing EDUC 698 Educational Research	EDUC 620 Pedagogy EDUC 610 Education in Society
	Spring	EDUC 688 Mixed-Methods EDUC 690 (2 units)	EDUC 630 Educational Psychology EDUC 640 Assessment EDUC 690 (1 unit)

In addition to the core classes listed above students are required to complete:

3-units of thesis/project

9-units in an area of emphasis selected in consultation with an advisor

For example, students may focus on American Indian Education by completing three of the following three-unit courses:

- AIE History of Indian Education
- AIE Social & Cultural Considerations
- AIE Educational Experiences

Combined MA and Administrative Services Level I Credential (this has been renamed Educational Leadership as of 2013-14)

Students earning an Administrative Services Level I as part of their MA program, are required to take the following MA courses in addition to successfully satisfying the credential requirements. For the minimum requirements for admission to the credential programs please follow the links: [AS-I](#).

Required MA courses for the combined program with AS Level 1 (EDL):

- EDUC 655 Educational Research EDUC (3 units)
- 645 Academic Writing (2 units)
- EDUC 688 Mixed-Methods Research (3 units)

And one of the following selected in consultation with your advisor:

- EDUC 610 Education in Society (3 units)
- EDUC 620 Pedagogy: Practice & Research (3 units)
- EDUC 630 Educational Psychology (2 units)
- EDUC 640 Assessment (3 units)

In addition to the core courses, students will take no fewer than three units of thesis or project preparation (EDUC 690 or 692).

Educational Leadership (formerly Administrative Services)

Students who are enrolled in the Level I Educational Leadership credential program may earn both a Level I Administrative Services credential and an M.A. in Education. Students interested in this program must have completed three years of successful full-time teaching. For information about this program, please contact the Administrative Services (EDL) Program Coordinator:

Required coursework

Core courses	10-11	units
Courses in area of emphasis	24	units
Thesis preparation	3	units
TOTAL	37-38	units
 TOTAL:	 36-37	 units

Additional Requirements

Students must maintain good academic standing with an overall GPA of 3.0 in all coursework taken in the program. No grade below a B- can be counted towards the degree.

Candidates who do not maintain either the overall or the programmatic GPA for one semester or who are not making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree may be placed on probation. Those students whose overall or programmatic GPA is below a 3.0 for a second semester will be disqualified. In the case of extenuating circumstances, such as a medical or family emergency, disqualified students may apply for reinstatement. Student must maintain continuous enrollment or apply for a Leave through the [Graduate Studies Office](#).

The Handbook for Master's Students provides more detailed information on disqualification, application for formal readmission to the University, and reinstatement.

Advancement to Candidacy

The form for requesting advancement to candidacy is available online at the [Office of Research and Graduate Studies'](#) web site.

Students need to obtain a major professor and committee members and need to have an abstract of the thesis or proposal approved by the committee. Students should give careful attention to the choice of their committee members and meet with the committee at an early stage of the research process so as to ensure that all individuals are well-informed and in agreement.

Candidates in the M.A. in Education program must have a minimum of three faculty members on their committees. Major Professors must be Humboldt State University faculty members who hold earned doctorates. Other committee members must include at least one faculty member in the School of Education. Candidates should consult with their major professors when they are in the process of selecting committee members.

The next section reviews the requirements for writing a thesis or project. It provides details on such vital information as pre-submission procedures, the format, copy quality, deadlines, general appearance, copyright information, and order of the pages. For any questions beyond what is contained in the handbook, please consult with the major professor of your thesis/project committee, the Graduate Coordinator in the Department of Education, or the staff in the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Thesis *versus* Project

As a culminating experience to their Master's degree, students in the Department of Education have two options: thesis or bound project. The Handbook for Master's Students defines the two as follows:

Thesis

A thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets the sources for, and methods of, gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required.

The faculty recommends the following structure for a thesis:

Abstract

- State the problem.
- Provide an overview of the method including who was studied and the instrument used.
- Describe any major results/conclusions.

Introduction: *What is our central research topic and why is it important?*

- State the problem, the background of the problem, and the significance of the problem.
- Include an operational definition of the variables involved where necessary.

Literature review: *How does the current literature inform our research?*

- This section situates the current study in the context of other research in the field by describing current understandings, areas under contention, and/or gaps in the literature that the current study will help to fill.
- The literature review presents the author's analysis of the current state of the field and develops an argument leading to the research question with a clear rationale of how investigating the questions move the discipline forward.

Research question(s)

- The research question(s) provide clear descriptions of the relationships or differences to be assessed.
- This section may include specific hypotheses when appropriate.

Method: *How did we conduct our study?*

- This section includes the specifics of how the research is carried out.
- Describe the participants in detail and how they were selected.
- Describe the instruments in detail and provide evidence that they are appropriate for the intended use.
- Describe human subjects protections
- Include a detailed account of the study design and procedures used.
- The type of analysis used should be described and justified.

Results: *What did we find?*

- This section presents the results of the study, using the appropriate matrices, tables, graphs and statistical techniques where appropriate. Data presented in tables or figures should be fully described in the text.

Discussion: *What do the results mean?*

- This section includes analysis of results and how those results answer the original research question. The generalizations, conclusions, and limitations discussed in this section should logically flow from the data presented in the results section.

Conclusion: *What can we conclude, and what are the implications for future research?*

- Recommendations for building on the current work, future research questions that need to be explored, and limitations in the application of the current research in terms of its significance to the discipline.

The School of Education uses the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (fifth edition) as the required style manual for theses and projects.

Projects

A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project is required.

The faculty recommends the following structure for a bound project:

Introduction

- Statement of the problem/objective
- Describe the significance of the project to the broader field of education.

Lit Review

- This section provides the background for the current state of the field including an analysis of similar projects, or project components, from the literature.
- The analysis leads to a theory/rationale underpinning the project design that frames the project in terms of what has been learned through practice and research, or on the basis of a theoretical perspective grounded in the literature.

Method

- This section refers to the relevant literature to ensure that the method used reflects best practices or makes an argument of how the current project requires a unique methodology to meet the goals of the project.
- Overall, the methods section describes what steps the author took in developing the project and provides a clear rationale for why that specific process was the optimal approach to meet the goals of the project.

Content

- May take a variety of forms including, but not limited to, curriculum packages, CD or DVD products, performance video or text materials.

Conclusion

- Includes a summary of main points in the design, development, and product of the project including limitations in the application of the current project in terms of its significance to the broader field of education, recommendations for building on the current work, and future issues that need to be explored.

When appropriate, the structure may be amended to suit specifics of the project on the basis of consultation and acceptance by the student's committee. Where the main elements such as the literature review are not presented in standard chapters, the student will be required to identify the methods, results, and conclusions in a clear table of contents so they will be easy to find and evaluate.

Epilogue

We are delighted that you have chosen Humboldt State University's School of Education to pursue your graduate degree. We are dedicated to providing you with the personal assistance and high quality educational opportunities that are the hallmarks of this institution. Please let us know if there is any way the faculty or staff can help you. This handbook is considered a work in progress. We are very interested in your suggestions for improvements and additions so that it can best meet the needs of our incoming and continuing students. Please provide your suggestions to the Graduate Coordinator.

How to Apply

The Master's in Education program is currently taking applications for Fall 2014.

The application period is open until the cohort is filled.

Summary of Admissions Procedures

[Office of Graduate Studies](#) (a new browser window will open)

By February 1st, submit the following to Graduate Studies:

- completed [application for graduate admission](#)
- \$55 application fee
- official transcripts of college academic records
- statement of purpose (see below)
- one copy of all college transcripts sent to Admissions (Do not send HSU Transcripts)
- three letters of recommendation from persons who can assess your potential for graduate work

Procedures for Applying

Deadline for applying (fall semester entry): **February 1st**. Following faculty review, applicants will be notified of their admission status by April 15.

Candidates must show satisfactory preparation for the proposed course of study and meet general requirements for admission outlined in the HSU *Handbook for Master's Students*. Candidates must:

- Hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited institution (or equivalent academic preparation)
- Be in good academic standing at the last university attended.
- Have a GPA of at least 3.0 in the last 60 semester units (90 quarter units) attempted.
- If the bachelor's degree is from a postsecondary institution where English is not the principal language of instruction, score at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

In completing the Statement of Purpose we recommend carefully addressing the following criteria used by faculty to rate each applicant:

- a clearly articulated rationale for pursuing graduate work;
- strong writing ability;
- ability to reflect critically on experiences in education;
- a clearly articulated philosophy of education;
- ability to conceptualize a broad vision for education;
- strong interpersonal communication skills;
- full-time teaching, administrative, and/or other professional experience in education; and
- strong potential for success in graduate study and for contributions to the profession.

Applicants will be admitted as graduate classified (meets all professional, personal, scholastic, or other standards).

Applicants without a professional credential—e.g., multiple subjects, single subjects, administrative services, special education level I—may still be accepted into the program. Note, however, that the M.A. Ed. in education is geared toward professionals in the field and is designed to use the strengths and knowledge base acquired while working with students.

Those with no degree objective who still desire to take graduate-level courses for professional or personal growth (post-baccalaureate unclassified students) may be admitted to courses subject to availability and instructor approval. Such admission, however, does not constitute admission to the graduate degree program. Students in this classification should seek approval from the department's graduate advisor as well as the course instructor. The department will provide the necessary forms.

Upon acceptance into the program, work with your advisor to create a plan of study. All students need an approved plan on file with the department prior to completing the core courses. The plan, signed by the student, the advisor, and the graduate coordinator, is also a graduation checklist.

Contact [Financial Aid](#) for general financial aid information, [Graduate Studies](#) for information on grants and fellowships, and the department's [graduate coordinator](#) for education-related assistance.

School of Education
Master of Arts in Education
Student Planning Form

Name of Student _____ Planning Meeting Date _____

Name of Major Professor _____

The following list of activities is intended to assist M.A. Ed. Students in completing the necessary steps toward the degree. The major professor and student are asked to take time during their initial planning meeting to indicate the expected date of completion for each activity. Please give a copy to the Program Coordinator. Completion of this form is for planning purposes only and is not a binding contract.

* Office of Graduate Studies forms are online: <http://www.humboldt.edu/~gradst/gradinfo.shtml>.

** Human Subjects information/forms are online: www.humboldt.edu/~oaa/oaafoms.html.

Phase I Activities

Expected Dates of Completion

- | | |
|---|-------|
| _____ Identify major professor in area of emphasis | _____ |
| _____ Determine relevant emphasis-area coursework
(*Prepare draft of Approved Graduate Course List form) | _____ |
| _____ Preliminary review of literature guided by major professor | _____ |
| _____ First draft of thesis/project proposal to major advisor | _____ |
| _____ Identification of other committee members | _____ |
| _____ Abstract of thesis/project proposal approved by committee | _____ |
| _____ Human Subjects policy compliance (**Complete forms.) | _____ |
| _____ *Advancement to Candidacy form signed by committee,
Graduate Program Coordinator, and Dean, Office of Graduate Studies,
with Approved Graduate Course List and Thesis or Project Proposal
Abstract Form (during or before completion of last nine units) | _____ |

Phase II Activities

Expected Dates of Completion

- | | |
|--|-------|
| _____ Literature review | _____ |
| _____ Project/intervention/research/data collection & analysis | _____ |
| _____ First complete draft of thesis or project to major professor | _____ |
| _____ Second draft of thesis or project to committee | _____ |
| _____ Revisions; defense | _____ |
| _____ Final original thesis or project submitted to Office for
Research and Graduate Studies | _____ |
| _____ Copies of thesis or project submitted for binding (use form*)
(12/10 for fall graduation; 5/10 for spring; 8/10 for summer) | _____ |
| _____ Graduation | _____ |

Important Note: The School of Education uses the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Fifth Edition) as the required style manual for theses and projects.

For more information:

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