

# Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction

## Program Objectives

At the Master's level, the Curriculum and Instruction program offers two options. The Professional Educator option is fully online and the Educational Researcher option is blended-online and onsite.

### Professional Educator (<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/education-health-human-development/education/med-curriculum-leadership/professional-educator-option/>)

Students in the online Professional Educator program will share strengths, develop new instructional strategies, study theory and best practice, as well as examine current issues in education and consider implications for teaching practice. Students who complete the Professional Educator option of the Curriculum and Instruction Master's degree are expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a master teacher. For the Professional Educator option, all courses are offered in a 100% online format.

There are two specializations available within the Professional Educator option:

- K-12 Teachers
- Library Media Certificate Core

### Educational Researcher

Students who complete the blended-online and onsite Educational Researcher option of the Curriculum and Instruction Master's degree are expected to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a professional researcher. Most courses in the Educational Researcher option are offered and taken online, even though the Educational Researcher option is an on-campus program.

## Program Flow

The graduate faculty are committed to offering multiple avenues for students to fulfill their goals and expectations for advanced study in teaching, learning, and curriculum design. The program provides academic preparation for educators who seek higher education in order to become master teachers, scholars, researchers, or curriculum coordinators in schools, districts, and other educational agencies. The program is structured to allow full-time working professionals to continue their jobs while working toward an advanced degree.

## Chair and Committees

Students in the Professional Educator option of the Curriculum and Instruction Master's program will be assigned a Chair/Advisor. The Chair/Advisor will guide the student's course selection and progress toward degree completion including the submission of the student's Graduate Program of Study form. No committee members are required for the Professional Educator option.

Students in the Educational Researcher option will be guided by a Chair and Graduate Committee. A minimum of three members will be included on the student's Program of Study at the discretion of the Chair/Advisor.

## The Master's Capstone and Thesis ~

### Comprehensive Examinations

#### Capstone for the Professional Educator and Library Media Certificate Core Options

As MEd students in the Professional Educator Option approach the end of their coursework (approximately 21 credits completed), they will contact their Chair/Advisor to discuss the content, format, and time frame for their Master's Capstone.

The Master's Capstone for the Professional Educator and Library Media Certificate Core Options is composed of two elements:

1. The **Written Comprehensive Exam** entails the completion of EDCI 575 Professional Paper/Project. The content and design of the Professional Paper/Project will be determined by consultation between the Chair/Advisor and the student. The Professional Paper/Project will be designed to most appropriately meet the professional growth and learning needs of the individual student. Students are required to use APA format. The completed Professional Paper/Project will be evaluated for written competency (quality, thoroughness, depth, and professionalism) as well as the student's mastery of: pertinent literature, academic and theoretical underpinnings, development of professional skills, and the ability to conduct effective educational research.
2. The **Oral Comprehensive Exam** entails formal presentation of the findings from the Professional Paper/Project. The student will give a one (1) hour oral presentation of the Professional Paper/Project. Students can be queried about their research as well as all areas of program content during the oral presentation. The presentation will be evaluated for oral competency and mastery of: knowledge of pertinent literature, academic and theoretical grounding, development of professional skills, and the ability to conduct effective educational research.

#### Thesis for the Educational Researcher Option

The Master's Thesis for the Educational Researcher Option is composed of a Written Comprehensive Exam and an Oral Comprehensive Exam. These are the major final academic examinations during a Master's degree study that assure the student has attained sufficient mastery of a program of study. Through this thesis experience, students will demonstrate mastery in: knowledge of pertinent literature, academic and theoretical grounding, development of professional skills, and the ability to conduct effective educational research.

#### 1. Written Comprehensive Exam

As MEd students in the Educational Researcher Option approach the end of their first year of study, they will contact their Committee Chair to discuss the format, content, and time frame of their Master's Thesis. The content of the Master's Thesis will be an original research project determined by consultation between the chair and the student and must be approved by the student's Master's Committee. Students are required to complete the Master's Thesis using APA format. The completed Master's Thesis will be submitted to the student's Committee for evaluation. Committee members will have approximately two weeks to read and evaluate the content and written competency (quality, thoroughness, and completeness of the research) of the Thesis.

#### 2. Oral Comprehensive Exam

Following the Written Comprehensive Exam, the student will give an oral presentation and defense of the thesis. Students can be queried about all areas of program content during the oral presentation and Thesis defense. The presentation will be evaluated for research content and oral competency.

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## Contact Information

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### Options

- Professional Educator Option (<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/education-health-human-development/education/med-curriculum-leadership/professional-educator-option/>)
- Educational Researcher Option (<http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/education-health-human-development/education/med-curriculum-leadership/educational-researcher-option/>)

## Application Process for the MEd in Curriculum and Instruction

Applicants are required to complete the online application and submit the following documentation via the **Graduate School Online Application System** (<https://www.montana.edu/gradschool/admissions/howtoapply.html>)

1. **Completed Graduate School Application**
2. **Academic Transcripts:** Applicants must provide official transcripts verifying all Bachelor's Degree coursework (as well as a confirmation of bachelor's degree earned) from the applicant's certifying university. *Unofficial transcripts* may be uploaded during the application process. *Official* electronic transcripts may be emailed directly from the Institution to [gradschool@montana.edu](mailto:gradschool@montana.edu) or [edgrad@montana.edu](mailto:edgrad@montana.edu). Transcripts may also be mailed to the Department of Education Graduate Programs Office, 215 Reid Hall, PO Box 172880, Montana State University, 59717. Transcripts from a degree awarded through MSU do not need to be provided. **NOTE:** We require an undergraduate and graduate GPA of at least 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale). Transcripts will be evaluated for rigor and academic fit.
3. **Three (3) Personal Essays** – Each essay should be a maximum of 2 pages in length, typed, double spaced, and must respond to the following:
  - a. Essay 1: Describe your career goals for the future and how you see the completion of a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction as helping you achieve your goals.
  - b. Essay 2: Describe your personal strengths as an educator and identify the ways in which you believe you could use your strengths to contribute to the cohort of students with whom you will be studying.
  - c. Essay 3: Describe the areas in which you want and need to grow as a professional educator/researcher.
4. **Resume/Curriculum Vitae**
5. **Three (3) Professional References – During the application process you will be asked to submit contact information for each recommender.** One of the recommenders should be from your current direct supervisor. Applicants who do not have a letter from a present supervisor must provide a written explanation identifying the specific reason(s) why they were unable to secure a letter of recommendation from their present supervisor. During this online process, applicants will be asked to provide information about their references. The electronic process will also prompt each reference to submit a signed reference letter.
6. **For International Applicants ONLY:** Please visit the Graduate School International Application Admission (<https://www.montana.edu/>

[gradschool/admissions/international\\_admissions.html](https://www.montana.edu/gradschool/admissions/international_admissions.html)) website for application submission information.

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## Application Deadlines

Below are the deadlines by which all application materials for the MEd program in Curriculum and Instruction must be submitted via the online application system. In order for a graduate degree application to be reviewed for admission, all required application documents must be submitted by the department's posted deadline. Applications received after the deadline may be reviewed for acceptance on a case-by-case basis.

- Fall Semester: April 1st
- Spring Semester: November 1st
- Summer Semester: April 1st

\* An early review deadline of February 1<sup>st</sup> has been set for those applicants wanting to be considered for Graduate Assistantships. Applications must be complete for an early review. A student must be accepted to an education program before requesting a Department of Education Graduate Assistantship. Graduate Assistantships require students to work on campus 19 hours per week. For further information regarding teaching assistantships visit webpage: <https://www.montana.edu/education/grad/ga/index.html> (<https://www.montana.edu/education/grad/ga/>)

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## Admission to Curriculum & Instruction Programs

Complete applications will be reviewed and rated by members of the Graduate Admissions Committee who then convene to make final admission decisions. Once applicants are accepted, their applications will be forwarded to The Graduate School for final administrative processing. Please note that the application review process will begin at the close of the application deadline and not before.

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## Contact Information

### Graduate Program Assistant

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