Teacher Education Program

Montana State University is one of the units in the Montana University System charged with the responsibility of recommending teacher candidates for teacher licensure. In discharging this responsibility, the College of Education, Health and Human Development attempts to encourage, prepare, and recommend for licensure only those students who show promise of teaching excellence. Consequently, certain criteria have been established for admission to the Teacher Education Program, and screening procedures have been provided at several points in the program.

The Teacher Education Program endeavors to select applicants who have the ability to become highly competent teachers. As an accredited teacher education program, the curriculum in teacher education adheres to the standards of the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards outlined by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council/ Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (TEAC/CAEP). Within these guidelines, the Teacher Education faculty have the freedom and ultimate responsibility for the selection and evaluation of its students; the design, implementation, and evaluation of its curriculum; and the determination of who should be recommended for a degree and state licensure. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on prior satisfactory academic achievement, but also on a range of factors which serve to ensure that the teacher candidate can demonstrate the Professional Expectations required in the Teacher Education Program.

The program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability. When requested, the University will provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

Admission to the Teacher Education Program

Admission to the Teacher Education Program requires completion of the “Application for Admission.” These forms are available at www.montana.edu/ehhd/educ/advising/index.shtml and must be turned into the Education Advising Center, Reid Hall 132. Students should apply to the Teacher Education Program during the semester prior to taking their methods/practicum coursework.

For Elementary Education majors, the requirements for admission to the Teacher Education Program are:

1. a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.75
2. a 2.75 grade-point average in the teaching major, minor and option with no grade below a “C” in any of these areas
3. a current background check completed as outlined by Sec. 20-4-110 of the MCA

For Secondary Education majors, the requirements for admission to the Teacher Education Program are:

1. a cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.75
2. a 2.75 grade-point average in the teaching major and minor, with no grade below a “C” in any of these areas
3. a current background check completed as outlined by Sec. 20-4-110 of the MCA

Application and Approval for Student Teaching

Certain requirements must be met by all students desiring to student teach:

1. maintenance of the same standards required for admission into the program including satisfactory clearance on a federal criminal background check
2. completion of all required courses (meeting academic requirements as listed above) prior to student teaching
3. certification in first aid with CPR

Student teaching is limited to seniors. A completed application must be submitted to the Office of Field Placement and Licensure before any placement is made.

If special services or accommodations (for a disability) are needed or required while student teaching, requests must be submitted to the Office of Field Placement and Licensure and arrangements will be made.

Recommendation and Approval for Licensure

The requirements for recommendation by Montana State University for licensure include:

- completion of all courses in the Teacher Education Program as outlined in the individual’s approved plan
- maintenance of the same standards as are required for student teaching
- attaining a passing score on the Praxis II exam in every teaching major and minor
- completion of the licensure application (http://www.montana.edu/fieldplacement/pages/licensure_application.shtml)

Residency Requirements for Professional Education Courses

In order to recommend prospective teachers in elementary and/or secondary education for Montana teacher licensure, students must enroll in most methods, teaching practicum(s), and student teaching through the MSU-Bozeman campus.

Based on MSU graduation requirements, twenty-three of the last thirty credits earned to meet the graduation requirement (http://catalog.montana.edu/curriculum-enrollment-graduation/#Credits_for_Degree_Completion) must be MSU credits. Specific majors may have program-specific requirements for courses that must be taken from MSU to meet graduation requirements. Such requirements are clearly identified in the curriculum description for that department.

Second Degree and Non-degree Licensure

Students already holding valid Bachelor’s degrees may fulfill licensure requirements by completing a second undergraduate degree, or in some cases, a non-degree program. Students completing a second degree are required to complete 30 credits, nine of which must be 300-400 level. Students should contact the Office of Field Placement and Licensure for further information. Non-degree and second-degree students must meet the same standards for program entrance and student teaching as first-degree students.

Professional Expectations For Prospective Teachers

The Professional Expectations for prospective teachers required by the Department of Education at Montana State University include communication competencies, intellectual (conceptual, integrative, and quantitative) abilities for problem solving and effective teaching, and professional, behavioral, and social competencies relevant to the performance of a professional educator.

Communication competencies are demonstrated by behaviors such as:

- Using appropriate grammar (syntax, inflection, and word choice) in oral communication
- Speaking distinctly and with confidence
- Communicating with sensitivity to the situation and circumstances of professors, students, peers, and colleagues
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• Using correct spelling, standard English language mechanics, and meaningful word choice in written expression

Intellectual competencies are demonstrated by behaviors such as:

• Ability to master relevant content in subjects commonly taught in K-12 schools
• Ability to master pedagogical principles and their application in field settings at a level deemed appropriate by the faculty
• Ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze, and synthesize material
• Ability to develop reasoning and decision-making skills appropriate to the practice of teaching

Professional, behavioral, and social competencies are demonstrated by behaviors such as:

• Completing assignments and meeting responsibilities on time
• Participating fully in class and field settings
• Seeking assistance from instructors and supervisors when appropriate
• Developing positive relationships with peers and education professionals
• Working effectively in groups, actively listening to other viewpoints, and treating individuals with respect
• Perceiving a wide range of interpersonal cues from others and responding appropriately
• Displaying openness to new ideas and constructive criticism and using that criticism to improve performance
• Recognizing one’s own strengths and weaknesses and taking personal responsibility to respond appropriately
• Displaying professional appearance, poise, flexibility, and a positive attitude
• Prioritizing responsibilities
• Taking initiative
• Using good judgment, tact, and discretion