

2024-2025

EPP Master's Performance Report

Fayetteville State University



North Carolina Department of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Overview of Master's Program

The College of Education at Fayetteville State University offers two master's degree programs: the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) and the Master of Education (M.Ed.). The M.A.T. program is designed for individuals with a non-education bachelor's degree who aspire to become licensed teachers, offering pathways in various teaching areas. The M.Ed. program is intended for licensed teachers seeking professional growth or leadership positions, with concentrations available in different education fields. Both programs emphasize evidence-based practices, technology integration, cultural competency, and data-driven decision-making. The faculty members provide rigorous instruction and mentorship, while field experiences and culminating projects enable practical application and advanced competencies. Fayetteville State University's College of Education aims to produce highly skilled educators prepared to make a positive impact in the field of education.

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Fayetteville State University continued to offer its Master of Education (M.Ed.) program as a graduate-level pathway designed to strengthen the professional practice of licensed educators. Aligned with the North Carolina Standards for Graduate Teacher Candidates, the M.Ed. program prepares educators to become reflective practitioners and instructional leaders who enhance student learning across diverse educational settings.

The M.Ed. program supports specialization in various teaching fields, including Elementary Education—with options to focus on mathematics, literacy, or science—as well as Middle Grades Education (language arts, mathematics, science), Secondary Education (biology, mathematics, and comprehensive science), Reading Education, and Special Education (learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, and intellectual disabilities). This wide array of focus areas allows educators to deepen their expertise in content knowledge and pedagogy.

Admission into the M.Ed. program requires candidates to hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, with a minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.7, though a 3.0 GPA is preferred. Alternatively, applicants may qualify with a GPA of 3.0 or higher in their last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework, which may include up to 12 credit hours of graduate study. Standardized test scores (GRE or MAT within the past five years) are typically required unless the applicant holds a 3.0 GPA or higher in a completed undergraduate or graduate degree from an accredited institution.

Applicants must also hold a valid North Carolina “A” level teaching license and submit three letters of recommendation, a current resume, and a written essay outlining their educational goals and professional objectives. These requirements ensure that individuals admitted to the M.Ed. program possess the foundational knowledge, teaching experience, and commitment needed to successfully engage in graduate-level coursework and field-based learning.

The M.Ed. program is comprised of a 30 to 33 credit hour curriculum that blends theory, research, and practice. Core courses address essential areas such as understanding diverse learners, instructional processes, educational research, and data-informed leadership. In addition to the foundational coursework, candidates complete specialized courses aligned with their chosen concentration, along with field and clinical experiences designed to connect academic learning to real-world application.

One of the hallmarks of the M.Ed. program is the EDUC 698 Advanced Applied Product of Learning and Practicum course, where candidates complete a capstone experience known as the Leadership Collaboration Project (LCP). Submitted through Taskstream, the LCP challenges students to apply evidence-based practices, engage in collaborative professional reflection, and demonstrate leadership by sharing best practices within school or community-based settings.

In tandem with the capstone, M.Ed. candidates participate in a structured Field Experience, where they assume teaching roles or serve as instructional leaders such as Teacher Leaders or Instructional Coaches. These supervised experiences provide the opportunity to apply course concepts in authentic K–12 environments and support the completion of exit criteria, which include the development of an advanced professional webfolio and an action research project.

Through its integrative curriculum and strong emphasis on leadership, reflection, and applied research, the M.Ed. program at Fayetteville State University continues to prepare highly qualified educators who are equipped to improve teaching practices, influence school outcomes, and advance equity in education.

Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.)

During the 2024–2025 academic year, Fayetteville State University continued to offer its Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree program as a vital pathway for individuals seeking initial teacher licensure in North Carolina. The M.A.T. program remains an accessible and rigorous option for candidates interested in entering the teaching profession through a graduate-level, alternative licensure route.

The program supports licensure in a wide range of content areas, including Birth through Kindergarten, Elementary Education, Middle Grades Education (grades 6–9 in mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies), Secondary Education (grades 9–12 in biology, English, mathematics, and social studies), and Specialized Subjects (K–12 in art, health and physical education, music, and Spanish). This broad selection allows candidates from various academic backgrounds to find a pathway aligned with their expertise and professional goals.

Designed with flexibility in mind, the M.A.T. program typically consists of 30 to 33 semester hours. The curriculum is intentionally aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, including the Common Core and NC Essential Standards, to ensure that graduates are equipped with the content knowledge and instructional practices needed to meet the demands of today's classrooms. Upon completion, candidates are eligible to apply for a Class A initial professional educator license.

Admission into the program requires applicants to hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution or to be employed as a North Carolina Residency teacher. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.7 is required for consideration, although a 3.0 GPA is preferred. Alternatively, candidates who have completed 6 to 9 credit hours of approved graduate-level Professional Development coursework with a GPA of 3.0 or higher may also be considered for admission.

In addition to GPA requirements, applicants are expected to have completed 15 to 24 credit hours of prerequisite coursework in their intended licensure area. A thorough transcript review is conducted to determine whether the candidate meets the academic foundation for the desired content area. Candidates who lack required coursework may be asked to complete additional undergraduate content area classes or to pass specialty area licensure examinations as required by the North Carolina State Board of Education. All academic deficiencies must be addressed before candidates can begin graduate-level methods and clinical experience courses.

To further assess applicants' readiness and commitment to the teaching profession, three letters of recommendation are required. These letters offer insight into the candidate's academic potential, professional disposition, and overall suitability for graduate-level teacher preparation.

Overall, the M.A.T. program continues to play a critical role in preparing qualified and reflective educators who are capable of meeting the needs of diverse learners across the state of North Carolina.

Special Features of Master's Program

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the College of Education at Fayetteville State University continued to strengthen its Master of Education (M.Ed.) and Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree programs by offering innovative coursework, diverse delivery methods, and comprehensive field experiences. Both programs are designed to prepare highly effective educators and instructional leaders capable of meeting the evolving demands of today's PK–12 educational landscape.

A defining feature of the M.Ed. program is its comprehensive core, which is purposefully aligned with the *North Carolina Standards for Graduate Teacher Candidates* and the *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards*. This core focuses on cultivating the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary for advanced-level educators. Through this coursework, candidates examine critical issues in education such as instructional planning, learner diversity, curriculum development, culturally responsive teaching, research-based practices, technology integration, and human development theory.

The College of Education remains intentional in ensuring that its coursework reflects current trends and challenges in the field. For instance, core courses such as EDUC 610 – Planning and Implementing Instruction for Diverse Learners and EDUC 630 – Advanced Educational Psychology include assignments that focus on developing inclusive, culturally relevant curricula. These experiences emphasize the importance of understanding the lived experiences of students from military families and multilingual backgrounds. Candidates conduct case studies, explore human development theory in practice, and develop action plans to improve instructional practices or coaching strategies. Additional courses such as READ 552 – Teaching Literacy Across the Content Areas and READ 605 – Investigations in the Teaching of Reading integrate strategies for supporting bilingual, multilingual, and English Language Learners (ELLs), further enriching candidates' ability to meet the needs of diverse classrooms.

All licensure areas in both the M.Ed. and M.A.T. programs incorporate field and clinical experiences, allowing candidates to apply their learning in real-world school settings. These experiences not only support the development of practical teaching and leadership skills but also connect candidates to FSU's immediate and extended school district partnerships, reinforcing the university's role as a valuable community resource.

To meet the scheduling needs of working professionals and adult learners, the College of Education offers a diversified delivery system that includes face-to-face instruction, hybrid and online courses, web-based modules, hyflex synchronous learning options, and evening classes. This flexible structure ensures that candidates can successfully balance academic and professional responsibilities.

A key component of the M.Ed. program is the Leadership and Collaboration Project (LCP), completed as part of the EDUC 698 capstone course. Through this culminating experience, candidates engage in action research and case study analysis, present findings, and submit a curated portfolio of artifacts that demonstrate mastery of core and concentration-area

competencies. This capstone allows candidates to integrate theory and practice while reflecting on their leadership development and instructional impact.

Beginning in Fall 2023, the M.A.T. program transitioned to a fully online format, increasing accessibility for prospective students across North Carolina. This shift supports greater flexibility, particularly for Residency teachers seeking to pursue initial licensure while continuing to work in their school districts. The university was also selected as a partner institution for the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program, a prestigious initiative that provides forgivable loans of up to \$4,125 per semester to students who commit to teaching in high-need areas such as science, mathematics, special education and elementary education. This partnership strengthens the College of Education's efforts to recruit and retain high-quality teacher candidates, especially in critical shortage areas.

Further enhancing graduate education, the College of Education continues to benefit from the U.S. Department of Education Title VII-Part A HBCU Master's Degree Program Grant, awarded in October 2017. The HBCU STEM Scholars Program, supported by this grant, focuses on increasing access to graduate education for underrepresented and low-income students pursuing master's degrees in STEM teaching disciplines. The program offers academic support, research and conference opportunities, and scholarships to promote success and equity in STEM education.

Through these ongoing initiatives, innovative coursework, and targeted financial supports, the College of Education reaffirms its commitment to preparing educators who are responsive, reflective, and ready to meet the demands of 21st-century teaching and learning.