

Certification Requirements for Reading Specialist

General Provisions:

The Graduate Reading Program was recently revised to include seven required courses which emphasize cutting-edge theory and practice, curriculum and content related to increasing diversity of language and cultural populations, authentic evaluation and administration and supervision of reading programs. All students are familiar with the TEKS as well as the recently revised and approved SBEC Reading Standards for Certification of Teachers, and are made aware of the SBEC Standards for Certification as a Reading Specialist in Texas.

With regard to meeting the needs of diverse and at-risk populations, all graduate students are required to complete a core course, EDPD 6304 "Multicultural Education." In addition, three courses in Reading are required: EDRD 6341 "Diagnosis and Remediation," EDRD 6344 "Multicultural Child and Adolescent Literature," and EDRD 6345 "Emergent Literacy in Family and Community Context."

Students currently enrolled in WTAMU's Graduate Reading Program are involved in a variety of professional pursuits and settings: public and private school teaching, tutoring and resource support staff, and/or graduate school. Recruitment of quality candidates has been through the collaborative efforts of Department Head, Master's Chair, and Reading Faculty at WTAMU as well as local collaboration with public school instructional leadership.

Admission Criteria:

All students entering the program will have a Bachelor's Degree and 18 hours of Education. Initial screening procedures include application to WTAMU Graduate School and meeting minimum requirements (combination of GRE scores and GPA in last 60 hours of undergraduate work); completion of application form listing references to Graduate Reading Program; criminal check for those not currently employed by public schools in Texas; and a personal interview with student's Master's Committee Chair.

Field-Based Experiences:

There are currently three courses which require field experience: EDRD 6341 "Diagnosis and Remediation," EDRD 6346 "Language and Literacy in the Classroom" and EDRD 6348 "Organization and Administration of Reading Programs." The number of field-based hours as well as details of local district collaboration, logistics and evaluation will be finalized by each instructor for the various courses.

Assessment and Evaluation:

Student performance is evaluated throughout the program as a regular function of evaluating performance in each course taken. Graduate student performance and progress in the program will be addressed in individual conferences at the completion of six hours of Reading Courses. Following the completion of all coursework in Reading, students will take the Comprehensive Exam for a Master's in Reading, and also participate in a Pre-test orientation and practice exam. For professional certification as a Reading Specialist, individuals must also complete two years of actual teaching experience and pass the Texas Exam for Reading Specialist. Visit the following web site for guidance:

<http://www.texas.nesinc.com>

Professional Conduct:

All students in the Graduate Reading Program are made aware of the SBEC Standards for Certification as a Reading Specialist in Texas as well as the recently revised and approved Reading Standards for Certification of Teachers. In addition, the "Code of Ethics" documents developed by the International Reading Association (IRA) and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) are used as appropriate in the various graduate courses and most specifically in the capstone course, EDRD 5548 "Organization and Administration of Reading Programs."

Proposed Benchmarks:

1. Admission to Graduate School, and schedule appointment with Dr. Hwang, OM 447.
2. GRE Exam to be scheduled and completed during the first semester of enrollment
3. Completion of degree plan check list
4. Submission of Plan of Study through Dr. Hwang to Graduate School (within first 12 credit hours)
5. Completion of all proposed coursework on Plan of Study
6. Comprehensive Exam--Master's Degree
7. Orientation and Pre-test for ExCET (see above web site)
8. ExCET for Reading Specialist.