

UNION GRADUATE COLLEGE

2009/2010

School of Education

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Union Graduate College The School of Education The Master of Arts in Teaching

Becoming a Teacher at Union Graduate College
The Master of Arts in Teaching

The profession: Beyond family and close friends, few people have as lasting an impact on our lives as effective teachers. Their power rarely fades. We remember their words of encouragement, their patience and caring as much as we do the subjects they taught. Many of us hold them up as role models, respecting their firm values and high standards. We appreciate their ability to balance their knowledge of subject matter with their understanding of individual personal needs. Becoming a teacher provides a rare opportunity to have a powerful influence on students' lives. Few professions offer a similar combination of personal and intellectual development with professional satisfaction.

Today is an exciting time to consider the teaching profession. In many schools teachers are assuming increased leadership roles as a result of a national school reform movement and more challenging standards for student and teacher performance. There is every indication that public schools may have to compete more openly with private schools in a more fluid educational marketplace where quality teachers will be important to school success. Along with the federal government, State Education Departments in New York and elsewhere are demanding that public schools restructure in order to offer teachers, students, administrators, and parents a greater say in the decision making process. The proposed restructuring of schools is likely to lead to the development of career ladders for classroom teachers, enabling them to specialize in curriculum development, staff development, and mentoring, as they develop more sophisticated professional skills. At the same time, the teaching profession is being enhanced by more rigorous standards for those entering the profession and by significant salary advances. National Board Certification offers a genuine standard for professionalism in the field of teaching. At no time since the formation of public schools has there been so many forces promoting changes in schools.

Options for becoming a teacher at Union: Students at Union can become certified to teach through a one-year (or longer, if part-time) graduate program leading to a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree, and a five-year, two-degree program. This publication describes the Master of Arts in Teaching.

The MAT degree: Recent reports including those issued by the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education, the New York State Commissioner of Education's Task Force on the Teaching Profession, and the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession recommend a broad liberal arts general education as well as a strong major in a specific discipline as the appropriate background for prospective teachers. The Master of Arts in Teaching is traditionally designed for those who already have a baccalaureate degree in a liberal arts subject, but have not taken the formal pedagogy required for state teacher certification. Unlike other teacher preparation programs, the MAT combines the in-depth study of a particular subject with the study of teaching and learning. An MAT also includes a practicum which is of longer duration than for other degrees; the Union MAT features a full-year teaching internship.

Certification Subjects:

Biology
French
Physics
Spanish

Chemistry
German
Social Studies
Technology

Earth Science
Latin
Greek

English
Mathematics

Certification grade levels: 7 - 12

Unique features of the UGC MAT:

- Courses are designed and taught by teams of practitioners in the secondary schools and liberal arts faculty.
- Students complete a year-long teaching internship.
- Course work is designed to develop reflective teachers who are effective problem solvers, able to connect theory with practice and confident of applying pedagogy through a particular content discipline (learned through content-specific methodology courses).
- Students complete graduate-level research with Union faculty in the discipline or in education.
- The program offers significant continuous interaction among program faculty, students, and secondary school practitioners.
- The MAT is designed as an integrated program, not just a collection of courses. The program encourages strong intern cooperation and peer and program support.
- The MAT program is closely aligned with National Board Certification, a national measure of accomplished teaching.

Initial Certification:

Students who complete a State-approved certification program are required to receive a qualifying score on three New York State Teacher Certification Examinations to be eligible for **Initial Certification**. Each candidate for Initial certification must pass the **Liberal Arts and Sciences Test (LAST)**, the **Content Specialty Test (CST)**, and the **Assessment of Teaching Skills, Written (ATS-W)** before Initial Certification will be approved by the State Education Department. This **Initial Certificate** will be valid for 5 years. The MAT also offers students the master's degree necessary to attain **Professional Certification**, which is renewable every five years.

Professional Certification:

Individuals who complete UGC's MAT will earn the master's degree required to earn Initial Certification. After two years of successful teaching, the MAT provides new teachers with the master's degree necessary for Professional Certification. Completing the Union MAT may also satisfy the required mentored experience in some districts.

The New York State Teacher Certification Examinations: The New York State Teacher Certification Examination (NYTSCE) is a series of tests prepared by National Evaluation Systems, Inc. The tests are similar in format to the SATs, GREs, and other standardized assessments. The NYSTCE consists of three parts: 1) the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test (LAST), 2) the Assessment of Teaching Skills, Written (ATS-W), and 3) the Content Specialty Test (CST), a test of content knowledge in the certificate title. The School of Education strongly recommends that MAT students take the LAST after they graduate with a baccalaureate, or in the fall of the internship experience; the ATS-W in the late fall or winter of the internship year; and the CST in the winter or spring of the internship year. Since the inception of the NYSTCE students prepared in Union Graduate College's teacher education programs have performed at a very high level on these examinations.

Number and Percent of UGC Candidates Who Took and Passed the NYSTCE Examinations, 2002-2006:

| | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| LAST | 42/100% | 18/100% | 34/100% | 26/100% | 38/100% |
| ATS/W | 44/100% | 36/100% | 36/100% | 17/100% | 38/100% |
| CST | 44/100% | 43/100% | 34/100% | 40/100% | 24/100% |

Other requirements for certification:

In addition to completing program courses and completing the major, each student must also complete one year of college level study of a language other than English or its equivalent. For five-year Union College students, it is recommended that they satisfy this requirement by electing the Foreign Language Track (i.e. complete any sequence of two courses in a classical or modern language). Students who come to the College with a substantial background in a language other than English may be allowed to have the requirement waived through an acceptable placement test (College, state, national, or international) or through a review of secondary transcript records. Entering MAT students should consult the School of Education program office to determine the best means of satisfying this requirement.

Certification in a state other than New York: Many other states have reciprocity agreements with New York, recognizing its certification.

Teaching in a private school:

The majority of private schools do not require their teachers to be state-certified. However, many private schools encourage their teachers to take professional course work and/or to become certified. Becoming certified allows a teacher to pursue employment either in a private or a public school.

Program courses:

The MAT program requires at least 16 graduate level courses: 10 -12 in pedagogy and 3 -6 in the subject area for which certification is sought. Foundational requirements for Initial Certification are: three Field Experiences (EDS 500A, B, and C; one course credit for all of those experiences); Psychology of Teaching and Psychology of Teaching Laboratory (PSY 540, and PSY 540 L; one course unit); Curriculum and Methods in Teaching (EDS 511-516 English, Languages, Mathematics, Modern Language, Science, Social Studies, or Technology; one course unit); two courses in Teaching Literacy in Secondary Schools (EDS 541 and EDS 544); and three Seminars in Instruction and Evaluation (EDS 550 A, EDS 550 B and EDS 550C; one course unit each). The program also requires either Master's research by a thesis in the discipline (two course units) or an MAT project (one course unit). A teaching internship is also required (3 course units for a full-year internship, EDS 551, 552 and 553). Three of the foundational courses, Psychology of Teaching (EDS 540), Curriculum and Methods of Teaching (EDS 511-16), and Literacy for Secondary Teachers (EDS 541) are completed during a special 8-week summer session.

The Special Summer Session:

During the summer prior to the teaching internship, students are required to spend an **intensive** 8-week summer session at the College. This summer session generally begins three days after graduation (usually the second or third week in June) and continues until the second week in August. During this summer session, students take a course in Psychology of Teaching, a course in Curriculum and Methods of Teaching the subject area, and a state required literary course. These courses meet daily and have a combined laboratory which meets each afternoon. In the laboratory, students begin their teaching experiences with short video-taped presentations and will gradually work into longer, more complex presentations by the end of the summer. The summer is designed to prepare students to begin teaching at a local secondary school the first week in September. **Since the summer is extremely rigorous, it is strongly recommended that students not attempt to work during the 8-week session.**

Program courses are described below:

1. Psychology of Teaching. (EDS 540) Theories of learning and memory applied to instruction; models and research on teaching in secondary schools. This course is coordinated closely with the curriculum and methods courses in the individual subject disciplines and includes a coordinated laboratory component which involves microteaching experiences. The course is taken in the summer preceding the internship. A grade of B or better is required in this course for entry into the teaching internship.

2. Psychology of Teaching Laboratory. (EDS 540L) Students prepare and present several 5-30 minute lessons using a variety of instructional modes and models. Lessons are videotaped and critiqued by peer-coaches and laboratory faculty. This laboratory must be taken concurrently with either PSY 540 or a course in Curriculum and Methods in Teaching (EDS 511-515).

3. Curriculum and Methods in Teaching _____. (English, Languages, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, or Technology) (EDS 511-516) Curricular planning and instruction with an emphasis on instructional techniques and strategies for the particular discipline under study. These courses integrate and emphasize content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge.

Each student takes a methods course taught by secondary school practitioners. The courses have been developed by larger teams of college faculty and secondary school teachers in consultation with specialists in each discipline. **A grade of B or better is required in each of these courses for entry into the teaching internship.**

4. Two courses on Literacy (EDS 541 & EDS 544). New York State requires every secondary school teacher to complete 6 units of literacy education. The basic literacy course (EDS 541) at UGC is integrated into the intensive summer program. The second literacy course is taken during the winter term (EDS 544). Literacy in the Content Classroom is designed to develop each teacher's capacity to use writing in their subject matter to develop student literacy skills.

5. The Teaching Internship. Most MAT students complete a year-long, half-day internship in a secondary school setting, co-teaching two classes with a mentor teacher. The internship serves as a laboratory for EDS 550 A, B, and C. Students are expected to interview at the site(s) where they hope to intern. Each student must also serve a second internship during the year. It will be at the site where the student is not serving his/her primary internship (either the middle school/junior high school or the high school). That internship must be a minimum of 6 weeks in duration. The second internship is most commonly arranged for the period of time between the end of Thanksgiving vacation and the first two weeks in January.

6. Seminar in Instruction and Evaluation. (EDS 550A, EDS 550B, EDS 550C) This seminar is designed to complement and extend previous course work in educational and instructional theory and relate these theories and models to each intern's classroom experience. Designed to develop classroom problem solving skills, this course emphasizes different aspects of teaching during each of the three terms:

EDS 550A: Special Needs Populations, Including Drug Abuse/Child Abuse
EDS 550B: Discipline, Assessment, and Motivation
EDS 550C: Teacher as Change Agent

These courses are taken each of the three terms during the year-long internship and generally meet for 3 1/2 contact hours per week. In addition to these seminars, special **required Internship** meetings are scheduled for each term. Topics for the internship meetings include internship issues, program questions and problems, course registration, teacher certification, and procedures for getting a job.

7. Master's Research and Thesis/MAT Project

Thesis

The thesis requirement generally comprises two of the 3-6 courses in the academic discipline and is generally completed during the Fall and Winter terms. An approved topic and the name of the thesis advisor from the appropriate department must be submitted to the Registrar's office prior to Fall registration. Students who are completing the program on a part-time basis are encouraged to begin their thesis research early in their program. An oral presentation of the thesis is required.

MAT Project

Students who do not complete a two-term thesis in their subject area may opt to complete a one-term research project and take one additional content elective to fulfill their 16 course program. The MAT project consists of individual or group projects relating to the classroom teaching of a particular discipline. Typical projects have included the following: classroom action research, addressing curricular or instructional questions within one's teaching area; systematic application of an instructional model to a major segment of curriculum in one's teaching subject area; and school- or curriculum-related questions or issues.

8. Academic Course Work. Graduate courses in the subject area of certification are offered in the late afternoon and evenings of the academic year and in the summers. Three of those electives are needed in the 16-course academic program (or 4 for students completing the MAT project option). Course offerings for the current academic year are given in Union Graduate College's catalog. With the approval of the Dean of the School of Education, up to two graduate-level courses may be transferred into the MAT

When to begin the program:

Students may begin the program during any term of the year and may take up to three program electives before matriculating. No matter when a student begins the program, completion of the intensive summer program is a prerequisite to enrollment in the Internship and the three seminars that accompany the year-long teaching internship.

Two possible sequences out of several possible options for completing the program are outlined below:

Minimum Time Model

Prior to the Intensive Summer:

Foreign Language Requirement
Educational Psychology Requirement
Field Experience Requirement (EDS 500A & 500B)

Summer Term:

EDS 540
EDS 51__
EDS 540 LAB
EDS 541

Fall Term:

EDS 550A
Elective
Internship (EDS 551)
Elective or Thesis Research
EDS 544

Part-time Model

Prior to Application:

Foreign Language

Fall Term:

Elective or Thesis Research
EDS 500A

Winter Term:

Elective or Thesis Completion
Elective or ED PSY (PSY 246)
EDS 500B

Winter Term:
 EDS 550B
 Internship (EDS 552)
 MAT Project or Thesis Completion
 Elective

Spring Term :
 Elective and/or ED. PSY 246
 Elective

Spring Term
 EDS 550C
 Internship (EDS 553)
 EDS 500C
 Elective

Summer Term:
 EDS 540
 EDS 540 LAB
 EDS 51__
 EDS 541

Fall Term:
 EDS 550A
 Internship (EDS 551)
 EDS 544

Winter Term:
 EDS 550B
 Internship (EDS 552)

Spring Term:
 EDS 550C
 Internship (EDS 553)
 EDS 500C

PLANNING SHEET

| Course | Number | Term(s) | Year |
|---|--------------------------|------------|-------|
| Units | | | |
| Core Courses: | | | |
| 1) Psychology of Teaching | EDS 540 | Summer | _____ |
| 2) Curriculum and Methods of Teaching | EDS 51_ | Summer | _____ |
| 3) Literacy for the Secondary Teacher | EDS 541 | Summer | _____ |
| 4-6) Internship - 1/2 day teaching in local school (minimum 2 classes) | EDS 551-53 | F + W + Sp | _____ |
| 7-9) Seminar in Instruction and Evaluation Includes Child Abuse/Drug Abuse | EDS 550 (A, B, and C) | F + W + Sp | _____ |

| Course | Number | Term(s) | Year |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Units | | | |
| Core Courses: | | | |
| 10) Literacy for Secondary Teachers | EDS 544 | F or W | _____ |
| 11-12) Thesis Research or 11) MAT Project | EDS 598 and EDS 599 EDS 580 | F and W Winter | _____ _____ |
| 12 or 13) Field Experiences | EDS 500 (A, B, and C) | | _____ |

Electives + Thesis:

- (14) _____
- (15) _____
- (16) _____

Electives + Project:

- (13) _____
- (14) _____
- (15) _____
- (16) _____

Prerequisites:

Educational Psychology (Knowledge of the Teacher/Learner) PSY 246 or EDS Test or Course elsewhere or CLEP

Foreign Language Completed: _____ Institution: _____

Requirements:

- Technology
- Multiculturalism

Application to the program:

Graduate application forms are available in the School of Education Program office (Lamont House) and at Union Graduate College Admissions office. The application process includes completing an application form, submitting a minimum of three (3) references, all previous academic transcripts, and completion of a 1-2 page essay describing the decision-making process the student went through in considering a teaching career and applying for the program, including any factors and past experience that influenced that decision.

Applicants to the program must have completed a B.S. or B.A. from an accredited institution with the equivalent of at least 30 semester hours in the liberal arts major area (English, social studies, languages, mathematics, science, or technology) for which they seek certification. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 in undergraduate or previous graduate work in the teaching area is normally expected. (Applicants with somewhat lower GPAs will strengthen their candidacy with the submission of acceptable scores from an appropriate G.R.E. advanced achievement test or by their achievement in a Union Graduate College course on a non-matriculated basis.) An interview, an essay, and at least two academic references are required. Evidence of intellectual achievement, motivation, and an aptitude for teaching are necessary for admission. Students expecting to begin the program in the summer must submit application materials by **March 1st** of the preceding spring. However, since the program has a rolling admissions procedure, it is to a student's advantage to apply early in the year to ensure (upon acceptance) placement in the summer program and the next graduating class. Students who plan to complete the course work and internship over a two- or three-year period (or longer) may apply at any time in the academic year, but must apply prior to March 1st of the year they anticipate completing the intensive summer program. Interested students must see a program advisor before registering and may register only for elective courses before matriculation.

Other prerequisites for the program:

In addition to the admission requirements above, students are expected, **before the special admission summer term of the program**, to have completed...

- 1) an undergraduate educational psychology course or its equivalent
- 2) two weeks of structured field experiences, one in a high school and one in a middle school, including one field experience in a high needs school as defined by the New York State Education Department.
- 3) one year of a college-level foreign language or its equivalent, as defined by Union College's Modern Languages Department.

The options available to students for meeting these prerequisites are outlined below.

Educational Psychology Prerequisite:

A prerequisite of Educational Psychology has been set for students entering the MAT program since background in this area will be necessary for the core course in the program, Psychology of Teaching (EDS 540). The prerequisite of a course in Educational Psychology can be met in a variety of ways and can be completed at any time **prior to** the intensive summer program:

1. Successful completion (with a grade of C or better) of the undergraduate course in Educational Psychology (PSY 246 at Union Graduate College). Evening and daytime sessions of PSY 246 are offered each year (usually during Winter or Spring Term). (Students admitted into the program may enroll at a reduced tuition cost for matriculated students.)
2. Successful completion (with a grade of C or better) of an undergraduate course in Educational Psychology at any other accredited college or university. Most institutions offer this course each year under this title.
3. Passing the Educational Psychology CLEP Examination offered by the Educational Testing Service. (Offered ten times per year at over 1000 sites throughout the US and Canada)

Contact: CLEP, www.collegeboard.com

4. Passing Union Graduate College Educational Psychology Competency Examination. Students may take the examination at Union Graduate College. Examinations may be taken at any time **prior to May 15th** of the program entry year. If a student chooses this option and does not pass the examination, he/she will not be eligible to begin study in the intensive summer program.

For information regarding Union Graduate College Educational Psychology Examination:

**Contact: The School of Education Program Director
Educational Psychology Examination
Lamont House, 807 Union Street
Schenectady, New York 12308**

Field Observation Prerequisites:

Students must arrange to spend two weeks in schools observing classes and meeting with secondary school teachers in the discipline for which they seek certification. The New York State Education Department requires a minimum of 100 hours of structured observations in school before a candidate receives his/her Initial Certification. At least one of these experiences should be at the middle school or junior high level and at least one should be at the high school level. One must be at a high needs school as defined by the New York State Education Department. Consult with the School of Education office for a definition of a high needs school. For the first 80 hours Union requires 5 days at each level. The remainder of the required hours is structured into the Internship experience of each candidate.

Field Experience packets which detail specific observation activities are available from the School of Education office. The packets outline the expected outcomes of the experiences as well as information regarding observational techniques and procedures. Typical experiences involve in-depth observation of one teacher and additional observations of a variety of teachers and classes with a variety of abilities and grade levels. Observers will be asked to consider physical environment, classroom climate, learners and learning styles, the curriculum, teacher planning, preparation and execution of lessons and classroom management. Observers will also be encouraged to become familiar with instructional materials and resources in your subject area.

Students are requested to submit a word-processed journal of their experiences which will be used in the Psychology of Teaching and the Curriculum and Methods of Teaching course. Graduate students need these observations to provide an appropriate context for program courses and valuable first-hand information about the teaching profession. Students must submit their journals no later than May 15 in the year they plan to enter the intensive summer program.

Visitations may be arranged either by individual students or through the School of Education program office. When a student submits a formal, structured field experience journal, s/he will be registered for the appropriate field experience course: EDS 500A or EDS 500B. The third field experience journal is due during the fall term of each student's internship. Each student will spend the first week or two of the internship completing structured field observations in the district where the student is serving his/her internship. That observation will be presented to the student's Internship Supervisor. The required contents of the third field experience will be assigned during the intensive summer program. When the three Field Observations have been completed, the student is credited with completing 1 graduate course (3.33 units) and will be charged **\$250 for EDS 500A, EDS 500B, and EDS 500C, each one of which bears 1/3 of a credit.** Field experience arrangement forms are available in the School of Education office or by writing to the program address below:

For Field Experience Packets or Field Experience Arrangements (please specify)

**Contact: School of Education Office
Lamont House, 807 Union Street
Schenectady, New York 12308-2371
(518) 388-6361**

Please note:

If the student is making his/her own arrangements for field experiences, a copy of the field experience packet should be sent to the host teacher at each site two weeks in advance of the observation. This packet and what is expected during the observation should be explained to the host teacher no later than two weeks before the observation begins. If the School of Education is making the arrangements for the field experiences for the student, we will need approximately three weeks to schedule appointments and to send the appropriate documentation to the school. A student who makes his/her own arrangements to visit a school is also responsible for sending a thank you note to the teacher and administrators who arranged the visit and making sure the school sends notification to the School of Education office that the visit has occurred.

Deficiencies of Required Minimum in Area of Certification: Applicants should have their transcript(s) evaluated by the Dean or an Associate Dean of the School of Education. Often, there are alternate methods of obtaining sufficient college credits including CLEP or Regents examinations. Generally, however, students whose undergraduate preparation does not include sufficient depth or breadth in the teaching field of interest will be required to take additional undergraduate course work before they can be accepted into the MAT program.

Engineering degree students: Students with engineering backgrounds often have sufficient undergraduate credits to qualify them for certification in physics, technology, and/or general science. On occasion they have the necessary credits to become certified in mathematics, physics, or technology. Engineers should have their transcripts reviewed by the Dean or Associate Dean of the School of Education to determine whether additional undergraduate course work may be necessary.

Elementary school certification: Those interested in pre-K or elementary certification should investigate other institutions. Union Graduate College's School of Education offers certification in secondary education only.

Part-time study: Although the degree may be completed in one calendar year of full-time study (June through June), students may plan to complete the course work and internship over a two- or three-year period (or longer). In fact, since the program of study is very rigorous, it may be in the student's best interest to take longer than one calendar year to complete the program.

Program costs: Courses are paid for on a per-course basis. The total cost of the program is affordable for most students.

Financial assistance: All students are eligible to apply for the federal Guaranteed Student loan program, the state TAP, and APTS programs. Nikki Gallucci, Financial Aid Associate Director, who is located on the 3rd floor of Lamont, can be reached at 518.388.8744 or galluccn@union.edu. Some teachers' organizations also have scholarships available. A limited number of program fellowships are also available from the Union Graduate College. Other students who qualify on the basis of financial need may receive some assistance in the form of tuition reduction through Union Graduate College. **Application forms for assistance are available from the School of Education Office in Lamont House Graduate Center, 807 Union Street, Schenectady, NY 12308. Applications for aid are due no later than June 1.**

Other Teaching Assistantships: Since the program is intensive and is comprised of a full-year, half-day teaching internship as well as graduate work in the discipline, it is generally difficult to work and complete the program on a full-time basis. Nonetheless, there are a limited number of fee remission assistantships available to students who possess skills required by the School of Education. **Applications for these positions are due in the School of Education office no later than June 1 of the Internship year.**

Advanced Degree holders in their area of certification: For some individuals already holding an advanced degree (masters or doctorate) in a discipline related to their prospective teaching area, it may be unnecessary to complete the entire MAT degree program. Selected students will be accepted into the Post-Graduate Degree Teaching CORE. The CORE consists of graduate courses in pedagogy and an internship. A document entitled Becoming a Teacher at Union - The Post-Master's Teaching CORE is available through the School of Education office.

Job Placement Record for Students who attend the MAT/MS for Teaching Programs: Teacher job placement in the Capital Region has been extremely competitive. It has not been unusual for there to be 50-300 applicants for each job opening. With the impending teacher shortage, however, openings may become more numerous, and each opening may draw fewer applicants for the foreseeable future. Throughout a tight job market, the placement of UGC graduates has been extremely high because of its highly regarded program and its exceptional teacher candidates.

ENROLLMENT/APPLICATION STATISTICS (1998 - 2008): *

MAT/MS for Teaching

| <u>Graduation Year</u> | <u>% Employed</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1999 | 100% |
| 2000 | 97% |
| 2001 | 98% |
| 2002 | 95% |
| 2003 | 94% |
| 2004 | 100% |
| 2005 | 92% |
| 2006 | 84% |
| 2007 | 95% |
| 2008 | 93% |

* The number of students employed reflects the percentage of students who completed their program who sought a position in teaching. Nationally, about 20% of all students who complete teacher education programs never seek a teaching position. Among Union's graduates, about 90-95% pursue a career in teaching. Some postpone their job search for personal reasons before beginning work. Those who are not actively seeking a job in teaching are not included in the percent of Union graduates employed.