

Seattle University – Master in Teaching

Essential Program Competencies

Introduction

The education of a teacher requires assimilation of subject knowledge, basic skills, and teaching knowledge (pedagogy) while developing appropriate professional, behavioral, and social attributes for successful teaching. The program has the responsibility to the public to assure that its graduates can become fully competent and caring teachers. Thus, it is important that persons admitted possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, and physical and emotional capacity necessary for teaching in K-12 classrooms.

This document clarifies the ways in which graduates of the Seattle University Master in Teaching (MIT) Program are required to demonstrate these essential competencies before entering the field of teaching.

Program Policies

The MIT Teacher Education Program endeavors to select applicants who have the ability to become highly competent teachers. As an accredited teacher education program, the curriculum adheres to the standards and guidelines of the preservice program outlined in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Within these guidelines, the Teacher Education faculty has the freedom and ultimate responsibility for the selection and evaluation of its students; the design, implementation, and evaluations of its curriculum; and the determination of who should be recommended for a degree and state certification. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on prior satisfactory academic achievement, but also on a range of factors that serve to insure that the candidate can demonstrate the essential competencies required in the MIT Program.

Program Competencies

A. Cognitive Abilities for Problem Solving and Effective Teaching

The teacher candidate must have the cognitive abilities necessary to master relevant content in subjects commonly taught in K-12 schools. This content includes pedagogical principles and their application in field settings at a level deemed appropriate for a beginning teacher. These cognitive abilities are described as the capacity to memorize, comprehend, apply, analyze, and synthesize material. Teacher candidates also must be able to develop effective reasoning and decision-making skills. Embedded within this context are the moral and ethical understandings that are fundamental to providing all learners with equitable opportunities for learning and academic achievement.

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Additionally the teacher candidate must be able to demonstrate the following knowledge and skill competencies:

1. Planning and content knowledge

- Plans focused and sequenced instruction aligned with curriculum standards and outcomes
- Uses knowledge of students' personal, socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics to inform instruction
- Uses knowledge of students' families and communities to inform instruction

2. Assessing learning

- Plans assessments to monitor and support student learning
- Analyzes student work related to standards and learning targets
- Uses a variety of assessments to inform instruction
- Provides students with feedback to guide further learning

3. Engaging students in learning

- Engages students in learning through a variety of culturally responsive and developmentally appropriate strategies
- Monitors and adjusts instruction to deepen students' learning
- Implements appropriate instruction and management practices to foster a safe, inclusive, positive, and productive learning environment
- Engages students in learning through the strategic use of developmentally appropriate technology

4. Applying culturally and linguistically responsive instruction

- Uses knowledge of students' lives to inform instruction
- Creates and nurtures with students a classroom culture of inclusion and advocacy
- Applies appropriate and varied instructional strategies
- Monitors students' progress and differentiates instruction accordingly
- Understands language demands and differentiates instruction accordingly
- Plans and implements strategies to expand students' academic language repertoire
- Collaborates with families and communities to facilitate student achievement

5. Reflecting on practice

- Analyzes student-based evidence of learning for instructional improvement
- Connects decisions to research and best practice
- Examines own perspectives and practices on student achievement

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6. Demonstrating a commitment to the ethical and professional dimensions of teaching

- Identifies and implements tenets of justice and diversity that are culturally responsive to facilitate student achievement
- Understands and appreciates the importance of actualizing goals of multicultural education and the benefits of a just and diverse world
- Demonstrates collaborative, professional growth-centered practices
- Demonstrates practices that are informed by a values position reflecting understanding of the political, ethical and moral complexities of schooling
- Prepares students to be responsible citizens for an environmentally sustainable, globally interconnected, and diverse democratic society
- Demonstrates knowledge of professional, legal, and ethical responsibilities and policies