

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN Literacy Coaching

### **OFFERED BY:**

*Education*

### **PARENT DEPARTMENT AND DEGREE:**

*Education Department*

*Standalone certificate*

**INTENDED AUDIENCE:** ☒\_Main Campus Students ☒\_Distance Students ☒\_Hybrid (Check all that apply)

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

Literacy specialists or coaches work with students who are struggling with reading and writing. They serve a variety of roles in schools, including implementing interventions with students, working with teachers on reading instruction, creating literacy success plans, and examining literacy data to inform professional development. This graduate certificate does require an internship course where students apply their skills with children and teachers in school settings.

To receive the K-12 Literacy Specialist add on certification in Missouri, students must complete all coursework, pass the required assessment (Praxis exam 5302 Reading Specialist), and submit an application and transcript to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **PURPOSE:**

Across the nation, reading scores are dropping to below pre-pandemic levels. The state of Missouri has an increasing emphasis on teaching reading, especially at the lower grade levels. The state has recognized a need for coaches to support teachers and schools in implementing research-based practices. Every early elementary student in Missouri who is below grade level in reading needs a literacy success plan. Literacy specialists assist in creating and implementing those plans.

DESE has revised the requirements for literacy specialist advanced certification; they will go into effect in late Fall 2025. After approval, we hope to submit this program for national recognition by the International Literacy Association. The alignment to the DESE competencies are attached to this document.

More information about ILA national recognition can be found here:

<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-involved/awards-recognition/national-recognition/reading-literacy-specialist-programs>

### **ADMISSION:**

The literacy specialist graduate certificate is open to all persons holding a bachelor's degree and a current teaching certificate in early childhood, elementary, special education, or a related field. Once

admitted to the program, the student must take the designated courses (provided in the curriculum section). In order to receive a Graduate Certificate, the student must have an average cumulative grade point of 3.0 or better in the certificate courses. Once admitted to the program, a student will be given six years to complete the program.

Students admitted to the Literacy Specialist Certificate Program will have non-degree graduate status, however, they will earn graduate credit for the course they complete. Students who do not have all of the prerequisite courses necessary to begin the courses in the Literacy Specialist Certificate Program will be allowed to take "bridge" courses at either the graduate or undergraduate level to prepare for the formal certificate courses.

### **GATEWAY FOR ADMISSION TO MASTER'S DEGREE**

Not applicable until masters degree approved for Education. This certificate on its own will result in an add on educator certification in literacy specialist.

### **CONTRIBUTING FACULTY:**

Beth Kania-Gosche  
Julie Alexander  
Mary Gillis  
Jami Swindell

### **CURRICULUM:**

*(Please also list co-listed courses if they can also be used for the graduate certificate)*

The courses listed here are aligned with the new Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education professional requirements for literacy specialist. The minimum number of graduate credit hours for this certificate is 12, the maximum is 15. Students may need EDUC 5500: Evidence-Based Practices For Literacy Instruction if they have not had equivalent training or coursework.

The following courses are required:

EDUC 6581 Literacy Specialist Internship I (1 credit hour)  
EDUC 6582 Literacy Specialist Internship II (1 credit hour)  
EDUC 6583 Literacy Specialist Internship III (1 credit hour)  
EDUC 5565: Comprehensive Literacy Program Development  
EDUC 6560: Teacher Development in Literacy Instruction  
EDUC 6570 Literacy Assessments

The following course is a prerequisite for students who do not have graduate level literacy coursework.

EDUC 5500: Evidence-Based Practices For Literacy Instruction

Any course transfers used for literacy specialist certification must be approved by the education department and by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. No substitutions are allowed if the student is pursuing literacy specialist certification in Missouri.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**

*(Please include the delivery method and prerequisites for each course, as well as how often the course will be offered (ie. every fall, spring, summer))*

These courses are all new. The exact schedule will depend on enrollment of a cohort or grant funding. DESE does not accept special topics courses for certification, so these all need to be in the catalog, not as experimental courses. We intend to submit these courses for online review, but if a school district would like a cohort of graduate students in a face-to-face option, we will offer in that format.

The three internship courses will all be crosslisted and offered every semester. The state requires 100 hours of internship with specific tasks. Dividing this into three, one hour courses will make this more manageable for teachers.

#### **EDUC 6581 Literacy Specialist Internship I (1 credit hour)**

Learners must work with both elementary and middle/secondary students, as well as their peers, in school-based settings. This work will include individuals and small groups, development of literacy intervention plans, creation of supportive literacy environments, and assessment. Internship hours must be appropriately documented and meet the state clock hour requirement for licensure. Faculty will visit or virtually observe learners applying program content in their internship.

Prerequisite: department permission required for internship placement

Offered: Summer, Fall, and Spring

Delivery method: online with face-to-face internship at assigned placement

#### **EDUC 6582 Literacy Specialist Internship II (1 credit hour)**

This course is a continuation of Literacy Specialist Internship I. This course may be taken concurrently with the other Literacy Specialist internship courses.

Prerequisite: department permission required for internship placement

Offered: Summer, Fall, and Spring

Delivery method: online with face-to-face internship at assigned placement

#### **EDUC 6583 Literacy Specialist Internship III (1 credit hour)**

This course is a continuation of Literacy Specialist Internship I and II. This course may be taken concurrently with the other Literacy Specialist internship courses. All three internship courses must be successfully completed with the appropriate balance of activities for Missouri certification.

Prerequisite: department permission required for internship placement

Offered: Summer, Fall, and Spring

Delivery method: online with face-to-face internship at assigned placement

#### **EDUC 5565: Comprehensive Literacy Program Development**

Teachers will design, implement, and evaluate comprehensive literacy programs in alignment with the Missouri Literacy Specialist competencies. Learners will engage in advanced study of literacy foundations, curriculum design, assessment systems, and professional leadership to support diverse PreK–12 learners. Emphasis is placed on evidence-based instructional practices—including the Science of Reading—culturally responsive pedagogy, differentiated interventions for students

experiencing difficulty (including dyslexia), and enrichment for gifted learners. Learners will develop plans for building partnerships with families and communities to enhance program impact.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing

Offered: spring

Delivery method: online asynchronous

#### [EDUC 6560: Teacher Development in Literacy Instruction](#)

Learners will explore principles of adult learning through effective peer coaching and mentorship models. Effective strategies for fostering a growth mindset and designing targeted professional learning experiences in literacy will be discussed. Learners will study techniques for creating and sustaining professional learning communities for teacher development aligned with school-wide literacy goals.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing

Offered: fall

Delivery method: online asynchronous

#### EDUC 6570 Literacy Assessments

Learners will gain familiarity with evidence-based literacy assessments through exploration of comprehensive literacy and language assessment systems and tools aligned with state and national standards. Learners will engage in collaboration and application activities to practice administration, interpretation, reporting, and communication of assessment outcomes in educational settings.

Students will demonstrate understanding of the use of literacy and language assessments in instructional planning and data-based decision making in educational programs.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing

Offered: fall

Delivery method: online asynchronous

The following course is a prerequisite for the program.

#### EDUC 5500: Evidence-Based Practices For Literacy Instruction

This course will address in depth the foundational concepts of literacy instruction: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and written language. Learners will examine the research supporting effective literacy instruction.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing or education degree declared

Delivery method: online asynchronous

Offered: fall, spring, summer as needed

A cover letter signed by the respective college dean *must* be included with the proposal.

If you have any questions about this form, please contact Graduate Education, 573-341-4141.