

Chapter 9: Graduate Discipline Spotlight

Each year, the Assessment Almanac contains one chapter dedicated to spotlighting the assessment practices of a specific undergraduate discipline. Periodically this practice is expanded to include a chapter within the Almanac dedicated to the assessment practices within a specific graduate program. This year's graduate spotlight will take a more holistic look at assessment across the various disciplines as it pertains to the Masters of Arts in Education program.

MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION (MAE)

The Education Department at Truman State University offers the Master of Arts in Education, a professional teaching degree. All prospective teachers enrolling in the professional program must complete a strong liberal arts and sciences baccalaureate degree. (Truman does not offer an undergraduate degree in education.) The basic components of the professional teacher preparation program are 1) graduate pedagogical coursework, 2) advanced content in the teaching specialty, 3) the teaching internship experience, and 4) research. Many of the courses required for Missouri certification can be met by careful planning of the Liberal Studies Program or through electives

The process of developing the professional program is marked by strong cooperation with the K-12 community and based on established education research and essential knowledge of sound professional practice. The program exemplifies an integrated approach to liberal education, professional studies, and specialty studies as Joseph Baldwin's original school did. In fall 2016, the MAE at Truman received national accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) which advances excellent educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning. When an institution is accredited, it has demonstrated that it meets standards set by organizations representing the academic community, professionals, and other stakeholders.

Over the past five years state mandated changes have been implemented by the Education Department for the MAE to be in compliance with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) accreditation and certification requirements.

1. Curriculum Matrices were revised to align with Missouri state requirements and new certification requirements. The Missouri Standards for the Preparation of Educators (MoSPE) articulates the State's expectations for teacher preparation programs. The six MoSPE standards put forth institutional goals for the College of Education [Truman State University Education Department] itself. The Missouri Teacher Standards convey the expectations for performance for professional teachers in Missouri. The nine Missouri Teacher Standards contain the quality indicators that comprise the professional goals for students in the College of Education. The effective date for the revised programs was August 2, 2017.

DESE has approved seventeen teacher education certification areas for Truman State University's MAE (Master of Arts in Education) program. There are thirteen areas for initial certification – Biology 9-12, Chemistry 9-12, Elementary 1-6, English 9-12, French K-12, Mathematics 9-12, Mild to Moderate Cross Categorical Special Education K-12, Instrumental and Vocal Music K-12, Physics 9-12, Physical Education K-12, Social Science 9-12, and Spanish K-12. Four areas – English Language Learners K-12, Gifted Education K-12, Health K-12, and Special Reading K-12 – were approved for add-on certification.

2. **GPA requirement** changes for initial teacher certification went into effect on August 1, 2017. The new requirements include a 2.75 GPA (overall – undergrad/grad combined), a 3.00 GPA – content courses for specific certification areas per the curriculum matrices (undergrad/grad combined), and a 3.00 GPA in profession education courses at both the undergrad and graduate levels.

3. **MEGA (Missouri Educator Gateway Assessments)** are required by DESE for all students pursuing certification as a teacher, counselor, administrator or Library Media Specialist and the Missouri Educator Evaluation System.

There are four MEGA Assessments:

- **Missouri Educator Profile (MEP)** – This online career assessment is taken by all teacher, counselor and administrator candidates prior to admission to their program.

The MEP is an assessment of work style preferences used to support the development of effective educator work habits. There are no right or wrong answers, so it is important that candidates answer the questions honestly. The MEP does not measure knowledge, instead it measures work-relevant attitudes and behaviors that contribute to or impede job performance in a school setting.

There are six “Drivers of Performance” measured in the MEP: Achievement, Social Influence, Interpersonal, Self-adjustment, Conscientiousness, and Practical Intelligences.

Test results are presented in a Development Report so that candidates can better understand how their current work habits compare to those of effective educators and what they can do to develop work habits further. Students are encouraged to review the results with their academic advisor and to create a plan for your professional development.

- **Missouri General Education Assessment (MoGEA)** – This test replaced the former C-Base exam and is required for all BSED and BME teacher education candidates. MoGEA must be passed prior to admission to Teacher Education. **(Students in the MAE are not required to take the MoGEA assessment because Truman certifies teacher candidates only at the master’s level.)**

The MoGEA measures student's current knowledge in the following 5 areas: English, Writing, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

- **Missouri Content Assessments (MoCA)** – Content Assessments are tests taken by all candidates for a teaching or student services or administrative certifications toward the end of their program. Candidates must pass the appropriate Missouri Content Assessment in order to be recommended for certification. The MoCA exams replace the Praxis II exams

Once a candidate is certified to teach in any area, other certificates can be added by passing the appropriate Missouri Content Assessment in that area.

- **Missouri Performance Assessment (MoPTA)** – The Missouri Performance Assessment is the culminating experience is required for all Teacher, Counselor, Principal or School Librarian candidates and will be completed during the student teaching/Internship semester. The assessment is aligned with Missouri's Teacher Standards and Quality Indicators and assesses instructional capability prior to receiving a license.

The MoPTA consists of four tasks — one formative and three summative — requiring written commentary and the submission of artifacts.

Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment

In this formative task, completed during the first weeks of student teaching, candidates demonstrate the knowledge and skills pertaining to their understanding of the assigned classroom. Candidates provide evidence in regard to the students, the school and the community and to identify implications of these factors on instruction and student learning. It is important to take the time to understand the school culture to avoid unintended biases or stereotyping when responding to the prompts in this exercise.

Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning

In this summative task, candidates demonstrate understanding, analysis and application of assessment and data collection to measure and inform student learning.

Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning

In this summative task, candidates demonstrate the ability to develop instruction, including the use of technology, to facilitate student learning.

Task 4: Planning, Implementing, Analyzing, and Adjusting Instruction to Promote Student Learning

In this summative task, candidates demonstrate ability to plan and implement a lesson using research-based instruction. Candidates also show how they are able to adjust instruction for the whole class as well as for individual students within the class. Finally, they demonstrate an understanding of reflective practice. Task 4 differs between the MoPTA-Video and the MoPTA Non-Video with task requirements and rubric documents.

4. The Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) focuses on the improvement of effective educational practices and the professional development of teachers, principals and school superintendents. The model evaluation system was developed by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in partnership with educators, school district officials, education organizations, and teacher education programs at the state's colleges and universities.

Missouri law requires all school districts in the state to evaluate educators employed by the district.

The seven Essential Principles of Effective Evaluation include:

- Using research-based and proven practices to measure educator performance.
- Establishing performance indicators for educators based on their level of performance.
- Aligning the evaluation process with an educator's probationary period to provide for an appropriate accumulation of performance data.

- Using student learning, based on a variety of performance measures, in the evaluation process.
- Assessing educator performance on a regular basis and providing feedback to teachers and administrators that they can use to improve their performance throughout their career.
- Ensuring evaluators are highly trained so that evaluation ratings are fair, accurate and reliable.
- Using the evaluation process to guide school district policies that impact the development of educators and student learning.

There were 104 graduates from the MAE during the 2016-2017 academic year (fall, spring, summer). All graduates completed the required assessments and earned an average GPA in the following required areas: overall combined undergrad and graduate levels - 3.598, professional education courses (undergraduate and graduate levels) - 3.908, and certification content courses (undergraduate and graduate levels) – 3.689.

The average score across all programs for the MoCA content test was 258.71. DESE requires a passing score of 220 for each of the content areas in order for a candidate to be endorsed for teacher certification.

The average MoPTA score for Truman graduates was 43.93. The passing score for the MoPTA is set at the overall assessment level. Passing status is not determined at the individual task level. Effective with the fall 2016 submission window, test takers must receive a minimum score of 37 to pass the assessment.