



Ed.M. LITERACY SPECIALIST

For those who hold an initial NY State teaching certificate in another area (certificate title) as a prerequisite for admission. This program leads to initial/professional Literacy (All Grades) certification (Birth-Grade 6 and Grades 5-12) in the State of New York. This certification is required for reading specialists in New York State.

Name: _____

Person Number: _____

INITIAL/PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/Ed.M. (Dual B-6/5-12)

	Date	Credit	Grade
MAJOR AREA REQUIREMENTS		24	
LAI 550 Literacy Acquisition & Instruction Pre-K/2		3	
LAI 551 Childhood Literacy Methods		3	
LAI 552 Middle Childhood/Adolescent Literacy Methods		3	
LAI 556 Classroom Literacy Assessment & Instruction		3	
LAI 557 Literacy Leadership, Coaching, & Assessment (fall only)		3	
LAI 560 Improving Instruction in Elem. Lang Arts		3	
LAI 563 Language, Literacy and Culture (synchronous)		3	
LAI 565 Literature for Children and Young People (synchronous) OR LAI 580 Literature for Young Adults		3	
PRACTICUM		9	
LAI 558 Clinical Practicum in Teaching Literacy (Prereq: LAI 556; spring only; synchronous)		6	
LAI 559 Classroom Practicum in Teaching Literacy (Prereq: LAI 556; Summer Only; synchronous)		3	
ELECTIVE - any 1 course pre-approved by advisor		3	
		3	
CAPSTONE		0	
Portfolio – completed during your final year or final semester			
Total credits (minimum)		36	

Special Notes Ed.M.: Literacy Specialist

1. Students who successfully complete the program will be awarded an Ed.M. degree from the University at Buffalo. Successful completion includes individual program course grades of B- or higher and an overall GPA of at least 3.0. Additionally, successful completion includes any applicable conditions of admission and/or any applicable conditions of continued enrollment. For the University at Buffalo to recommend to the New York State Education Department that you be issued teacher certificates in Literacy, your other certificate must continue to be valid at the point of program completion and application for this recommendation.
2. This program requires a Literacy Faculty advisor. Contact your advisor upon acceptance to the program.
3. Contact your faculty advisor to discuss electives. Electives must be pre-approved by advisor.

SUGGESTED LITERACY ELECTIVES

LAI 539	Science of Reading Instruction
LAI 565	Literature for Children & Young People
LAI 576	Literacy and Technology (Prereq: one of the following: LAI 550, LAI 551, LAI 552, OR 560)
LAI 580	Literacy for Young Adults
LAI 549	Child Development & Learning
	Effective Oral Language Practice in Mainstream and ELL Classroom Contexts
	Or Other Courses *Pre-Approved* by Advisor

4. Apply for Graduation via the HUB Student Center:

Notify the University of your expected conferral (graduation) date via the HUB Student Center. The “apply for graduation” link is on the “My Academics” tab. The deadlines listed below are firm. If you miss the deadline, you will need to apply for the next conferral (graduation) date.

Final Semester	File your application via the HUB by:	Degree Conferral
Fall	October 15	February 1
Spring	February 22	June 1
Summer	July 15	September 1

5. Transfer Credits:

No more than six credits of master’s-level literacy coursework may be transferred from another accredited college or university, and none of those transfer hours may be substituted for the Clinic-based or Classroom-based Practica. The student’s advisor must approve all transfer credits. Only classes with a grade of B or better can be transferred.

6. Capstone:

All Master’s-level literacy students complete a capstone. During your final year or final semester, you will put together a Portfolio demonstrating your learning and growth in the Literacy Specialist Program. You will use artifacts (assignments from classes) and create a 10-page reflection paper on how the program has strengthened your understanding of research, theories, and practices in K-12 literacy education.

7. Applying For Teacher Certification:

Program completion does not automatically lead to a University at Buffalo recommendation for the issuance of teacher certificates in Literacy and a University at Buffalo recommendation does not automatically lead to the issuance of these certificates. To apply for initial and/or professional teacher certificates in Literacy (birth-grade 6 and grades 5-12), you must meet the program requirements of the University at Buffalo (as specified within this document, as well as all applicable prerequisite distribution requirements and any other requirements specified at the point of admission or thereafter as a condition of continued enrollment) and the certification requirements of the New York State Education Department (such as the applicable New York State Teacher Certification Exams). For more information, contact the Office of Educator Preparation (716-645-2461, <https://ed.buffalo.edu/edprep.html>). Please note, completion of the Literacy Specialist program may only lead to a University at Buffalo recommendation for the issuance of teacher certificates in Literacy; if you are applying for teacher certificates in other areas of certification, you should contact the New York State Education Department and/or the certification officer at your local BOCES.

Ed.M. Literacy Specialist Course Descriptions

LAI 550	Literacy Acquisition and Instruction PreK-2	This course focuses on inclusive teaching strategies for diverse literacy learners from birth to grade 2. Topics addressed include diverse language and literacy practices, observation and assessment, emergent literacy, oral language development, print concepts, and differentiated reading instruction addressing phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
LAI 551	Childhood Literacy Methods	This course focuses on research-based, culturally responsive literacy instruction for diverse learners in grades 1-6. Topics addressed include motivation and engagement, culturally informed text selection, family involvement, promoting translanguaging with multilingual learners, and differentiated literacy instruction addressing word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing.
LAI 552	Middle Childhood-Adolescent Literacy Methods	This course addresses instructional theory and practices focusing on building literacy for diverse learners in grades 5-12 and supporting equitable learning from texts across content areas. Topics covered include text complexity, assessment, motivation and engagement, vocabulary and background knowledge, comprehension strategies, discussion, text-based writing, and inquiry.
LAI 560	Improving Instruction in Elementary Language Arts	Instructional theory and practice focusing on developing familiarity with the major concepts and approaches of language arts education, focusing on written language development, with attention to critical connections between reading, writing, listening, and speaking; the teaching of phonics and spelling; and the development of generative and word specific vocabulary, both spoken and written. Topics dealing with instructional connections between classroom writing and spelling instruction and writing and spelling assessments, as well as stages of orthographic development, and vocabulary development are explored. Students will read course material and engage in activities throughout the semester to learn how to create student-friendly learning environments that affirm racial, linguistic, and cultural identities in a language arts classroom.
LAI 563	Language, Literacy, and Culture	The role of society and culture in language and literacy learning across the lifespan, with emphasis on K-12 teachers and students; explores the impact of society and culture in the literacy classroom, curriculum, methods, and definitions of achievement and equity; explores culturally sustaining and asset-based literacy, race and racism, class, poverty and other equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion aspects of literacy.
LAI 556	Classroom Literacy Assessment and Instruction	Available to students enrolled in a literacy Master's or Adv. Certificate program only. This course: (1) examines the nature of the reading process, (2) teaches how literacy assessments guide instructional decisions, (3) uses several informal literacy assessments to determine an individual's reading abilities, and (4) examines instructional strategies to improve literacy abilities. Students will consider how assessments can support an asset-focused instructional framework honoring cultural, racial, linguistic, and cognitive diversities.

LAI 557	Literacy Leadership, Coaching, & Assessment	This course will examine research and theoretical models of school-wide literacy assessments and programs with the intent to meet the needs of all learners. This will include evaluation of literacy assessments and instruction, as well as effective ways to communicate to stakeholders (i.e., administration, teachers, and families) and offer professional development to improve instructional outcomes. Class readings and assignments will engage literacy educators on how they can create inclusive literacy instruction and use assessment results to create asset-minded literacy instruction.
LAI 558	Clinical Practicum in Teaching Literacy	The role of the clinic-based practicum is to help individuals seeking a Master's as a Literacy Specialist become expert in designing, planning, implementing, assessing, evaluating, and revising reading instruction for a child experiencing reading and/or writing difficulties. Students collaborate and plan with the instructor and other clinicians to create developmentally- appropriate literacy instruction for an individual in K-12th grade. Students will engage in critical conversations during weekly seminars on how literacy teachers can adapt instructional strategies to meet diverse learning styles and create asset-minded literacy instruction.
LAI 559	Classroom Practicum in Teaching Literacy	Available to Literacy Specialist students only. Supervised, 5-week, classroom-based practicum teaching small groups of children reading and writing below grade level. Graduate students will co-plan and co-teach to provide asset-minded literacy instruction, as well as regularly use assessments and instructional reflections to guide instructional practices. Students will engage in critical conversations during weekly seminars on how literacy teachers can adapt instructional strategies to meet diverse learning styles and create asset-minded literacy instruction.
LAI 565 OR LAI 580	Literature for Children and Young People OR Literature for Young Adults	What we read, how we make sense with literature, and how we talk about books together, can shape the values of our classroom communities. The children's literature we include, and do not include, sends messages of who and what counts in our classroom community, and how people and ideas are to be considered. In this class we explore purposeful selection of individual and collections of texts. We read and talk about children's literature across genres and formats, and in relation to equity, justice, diversity and inclusion. OR Literature for young adults is designed as a multicultural literature course and centers on methods of literary response, including written and multimodal representations. A broader goal is to better enable pre- and in-service teachers to enhance their understanding about literary theory and practices regarding reader response and its contribution to adolescents' reading comprehension, multiliteracies, writing, multimodal composing, critical thinking, and their overall learning and academic achievement. Censorship issues, concerns, and queries, and the influence of challenge and banned books on pedagogy and learning is examined.