



Educator Preparation Program Guide for Students

SECONDARY TEACHER EDUCATION

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Brief Program Description

The Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies offers licensure pathways at the middle and high school level in the areas of English, History, Political Science/Political Philosophy, Mathematics, Science or Modern Foreign Languages. The Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) includes licensure pathways that prepare prospective teachers and work with experienced teachers who are seeking a Master's Degree or a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS). The program represents a collaborative effort among School of Education and Arts and Sciences faculty, public school teachers and administrators, and the students of the program. We emphasize a strong background in subject matter, an interest in teaching all students, and thoughtfulness about the social context of education.

Who May Apply

Our pathways for prospective teachers lead to Initial Licensure and is open to candidates who are:

1. undergraduates from UMass Amherst or the Five-College Collaborative;
2. candidates who are holders of a B.A. or B.S. from an accredited university or college who are seeking Initial Licensure, but not a degree;
3. candidates who hold a B.A. or B.S. and want to pursue licensure and a Master's degree; and
4. graduate students in other academic programs in the university who are seeking licensure.

We also offer an area of study leading to a Master's or Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) for experienced teachers who have had at least three years of teaching experience. In this area of study candidates may take additional work in their content area and in the School of Education.

Getting Started

Students seeking admission to STEP should prepare themselves by:

1. developing a strong background in English, History, Political Science/Political Philosophy, Mathematics, Science or Modern Foreign Languages;
2. demonstrating a commitment to learning;
3. engaging in work or related educational experiences with middle and high school age youth;
4. taking courses, engaging in extracurricular activities, volunteer work, paid employment and scholarly or creative work which demonstrates interest in and respect for diversity and willingness to work for an equitable society;

5. participating in positions of leadership, taking initiative and responsibility for processes or outcomes;
6. clearly defining goals for entering the teaching profession;
7. taking and receiving a passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills test of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL).

Admission Process and Criteria

Admission to STEP is competitive and is based on the following criteria:

- a strong background in a subject field;
- a commitment to learning;
- an interest in and respect for diversity and willingness to work for an equitable society through the profession of education;
- potential for leadership through teaching, compatibility of applicant's goals with STEP goals and resources; and
- a passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills test of the MTEL (Recommended for all students. Required for undergraduates.)

The application consists of a personal statement, copies of transcripts, and two letters of recommendation. Undergraduates must submit a copy of a passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills portion of the MTEL. We also encourage submission of a résumé and any other material that demonstrates a student's potential as a middle or high school teacher. For Master's degree candidates these materials are submitted as part of the official application to the University of Massachusetts Graduate School. All admissions decisions are made by an admissions committee based on a review of the submitted application materials and, in some cases, interviews.

Graduate and Undergraduate admissions occur only once a year for the fall semester.

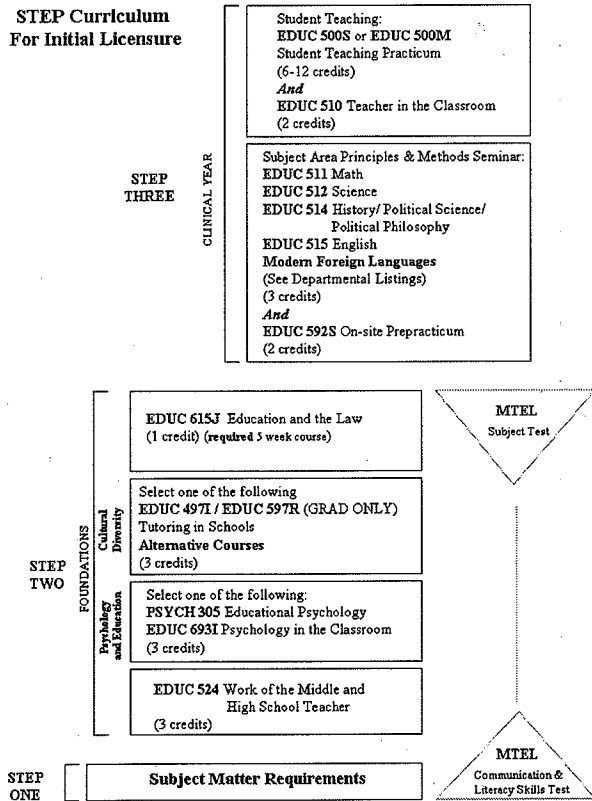
- Graduate application deadline date is **January 15**.
- Undergraduate and Post-BA application deadline date is **March 1**.
- Post-BA application deadline date for the spring semester is **October 1**. Post-BA admissions may be considered for the spring semester on a space-available basis.

Undergraduate candidates and Post-Baccalaureate (Post-BA) candidates may obtain applications from the Educator Information Office in 121 Furcolo Hall, (413) 545-2002; Graduate candidates can print out the graduate application or

apply directly online at the Graduate School website:
www.umass.edu/gradschool.

Program of Study

There are three phases in the process of earning Initial Licensure:



Undergraduates may not be able to complete all University requirements, academic major requirements, and licensure requirements in fewer than nine semesters. Undergraduates should focus on general education requirements, the MTEL, and the academic major before concentrating on the educator licensure program. Undergraduates may elect to extend their studies an extra semester (or more) or they may graduate and complete their licensure program through the Post-BA Educator Licensure Pathway.

Post-BA students who are seeking licensure only and who have satisfied Step I (see above) may be able to complete the program in two semesters. Master's degree students who have satisfied Step I, and who are seeking Initial Licensure, may be able to complete the program in three semesters and one summer. The length of the program for other graduate students will vary depending on their background in their subject matter area.

Academic Advising

The application process is similar for Undergraduates, Post-BA, and Master's students, although there are minor differences. If you are considering applying for admission to STEP, you should seek initial information and an application from the Educator Information Office in Room 121 Furcolo Hall. You also may telephone (413) 545-2002 or email: eio@educ.umass.edu.

Once admitted to the program, students meet with subject matter faculty who provide program advising and direction.

Career Opportunities and Job Placement

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, like other states, is entering a phase of teacher shortages. Secondary teacher openings are numerous and our collaborations with school districts often help our students secure positions. Superintendents and principals in school districts across the Massachusetts find STEP graduates to be well prepared and seek them to fill open positions. Students who become licensed in Massachusetts through STEP are eligible, through an interstate compact with 46 other states, including all of those in the northeastern United States, for comparable licenses. Graduates will, however, have to pass each state's licensure test, as other states do not recognize the MTEL.

Program Specific Information

STEP offers three pathways to a Master's degree and Initial Licensure.

University-to-Schools involves on-campus professional and subject matter course work, pre-student teaching experience in schools, and student teaching at the middle or high school level for one semester. This path offers the opportunity to take additional graduate level subject matter course work and access to all University resources.

The second and third pathways serve as alternative routes to licensure and an M.Ed. through partnerships among STEP, the University of Massachusetts and local school districts.

180 Days in Springfield is a one-year immersion pathway with an urban initiative located at four schools in Springfield, Massachusetts: Central High School, Chestnut Accelerated Middle School, Duggan Middle School, and the Springfield Expeditionary Learning School. 180 Days teachers work in an energetic diverse environment and develop Legacy Projects outside of the school day. Contact Kathy Gagne for more information: p180days@educ.umass.edu.

Bridges to the Future is a one-year, rurally-based immersion pathway located in Greenfield, Orange, and Turners Falls with an emphasis on Community Service Learning. Email for more information: bridges@educ.umass.edu.

For more information, please contact:

Educator Information Office
School of Education
121 Furcolo Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
(413) 545-2002
eio@educ.umass.edu

**LICENSURE INFORMATION AND
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL): The MTEL is required for licensure by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The test has two parts: the Communication and Literacy Skills (C&LS) test and the Subject area test(s). The University's policy is that:

- Undergraduates must achieve a passing score on the C&LS test as a pre-requisite for admission.
- Post-baccalaureate and graduate students must achieve a passing score on the C&LS test in their first semester of study.
- All students must pass the Subject test(s) (if one has been developed for that licensure field) before enrolling in the practicum.

Licensure Application Process: The Educator Licensure Office (ELO) in the School of Education coordinates the licensure application process for all University Educator Preparation program students who have completed all licensing requirements. The ELO provides information to guide students in using the Electronic Licensure and Recruitment system (ELAR), a system in which students apply for educator licenses online. The ELAR system requires a student to apply for his/her license online (including the payment of license fees) and send an official copy of his/her transcript to the ELO in Room 130 Furcolo Hall (being sure that the transcript includes the "Institutional Recommendation for Educator Licensure"). After individuals have applied online, the ELO endorses/recommends candidates for licensure via ELAR. The University Licensure Officer also assists students in completing applications for licensure in other states, as necessary.

Career and Job Search Assistance: The School of Education, in collaboration with Career Services, sponsors a Job Fair for prospective educators. The Job Fair draws school districts from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont and New Hampshire. In addition, Career Services provides information and registration for the Massachusetts Educational Recruiting Consortium (MERC), a recruitment fair attended by school districts from across the nation.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual preference, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical handicap, political belief or affiliation, membership or non-membership in any organization, or veteran status, in any aspect of the admission or treatment of students or in employment.