

Master of Education in Professional Development

The master of education in professional development degree has been designed to help licensed educators and working professionals upgrade their skills and meet the continuing demands on professionals in American education. A specific emphasis in library science and media education is available. A hybrid weekend and online cohort program with an established plan of study in pedagogy is also available.

Other emphases may be selected from combinations of the following more general categories: curriculum development techniques, instructional techniques and technology, human relations/communications, evaluation techniques, research techniques, and educational foundations. Opportunity also is provided to strengthen skills and understandings in a teaching subject specialty. This program is offered by the department of education studies.

The goals of the MEPD degree include the following:

- To help participants further develop their competencies in the education profession.
- To provide for the continuous service needs of educational personnel.

Course Work / Pre-Professional Courses

After admission to the program, the student must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate work in an approved course of study. A minimum of 15 of these credits must be at the 700 level. Additional credits may be required in specific cases where background and needs suggest further study. Along with the 30 semester credits, students must

complete ES 788, "Introduction to Educational Inquiry," and ES 740, "Introduction to Educational Research" if a thesis is chosen as a final project option.

Students also may complete a maximum of 12 credits in content area and a maximum of nine credits of independent study. A maximum of nine credits may be transferred from another accredited institution. Credits earned prior to admission to the program must be approved by the adviser at the time of admission in order to be credited to the program. Required credits in the program must be completed within seven years.

Program Options

The MEPD program offers four final project options:

- Standard written comprehensive examination
- Take-home examination
- Portfolio
- Scholarly or research paper
- Thesis
- All candidates must pass an oral examination prior to graduation.

The standard written comprehensive with oral exam is a four-hour written examination consisting of questions compiled by the chair of the program committee, the candidate and the other two members of the committee.

The purpose of the portfolio with oral exam is to provide an in-depth, long-term opportunity for student reflection, self-evaluation and synthesis of intellectual/professional development over the course of the master's program. The decision to compile a portfolio is made well before the students' final semester in the program and in consultation with the primary adviser.

The take-home and oral exam consists of two parts: a written open-book examination taken during an agreed-upon period and an oral follow-up of professional concerns and issues related to his/her course work. Specific questions, including information regarding the time period for completion and expected length, are submitted to the graduate studies program assistant when the questions are given to the student.

The student may write a thesis for one to six hours of credit or a research or scholarly paper for one to two credits. The thesis problem must be approved

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by the student's thesis committee. The thesis should be a study of a problem in education and professional development. The thesis should represent new evidence or new interpretation and not simply a chronicling or summary of previously published works.

The research or scholarly paper should be a problem or topic related to the candidate's goals in professional development. The student should show exploration of primary sources; secondary sources may be included.