

# Master of Science in Education in Reading



The Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Western Illinois University offers coursework leading to a Master of Science in Education degree with a major in Reading. Within this major, elementary and secondary teachers gain a comprehensive perspective on literacy development. Both the Reading Specialist and the Reading Teacher emphases are designed for teachers who wish to increase their knowledge and skills in delivering reading instruction for students in grades K-12. The Reading Specialist emphasis is designed for those who wish to become leaders in improving reading instruction by providing technical assistance or professional development in their school districts.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission to the Western Illinois University Master of Science in Education (MSEd) degree program, with a major in Reading, must have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, hold an appropriate teaching license and be accepted by the WIU School of Graduate Studies, with a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of at least 2.75, or 3.0 in the last two years.

## Degree Requirements

The MSEd degree in Reading requires a minimum of 33 semester hours (SH) of coursework. Fifteen of the 33 SH include the following core requirements: Literature and the Reader, Integrating Literacy Instruction in the Elementary Curriculum, Psychology of Reading, Leadership in Reading, and Methods of Research. In addition to the core courses, candidates select from one of the following areas: Reading Specialist emphasis or Reading Teacher emphasis.

## K-12 Reading Specialist Emphasis

The K-12 Reading Specialist emphasis is designed for professionals who wish to pursue advanced preparation and experience in literacy instruction, leadership and diagnosis and assessment, with a special emphasis in preparing candidates for leadership roles. This emphasis is designed to meet the requirements established by the State of Illinois for licensure as a K-12 Reading Specialist Teacher. After the core curriculum, candidates complete coursework in reading development, reading difficulties and interventions for diverse learners, use of research to inform instruction, literacy coaching, as well as practicum placements.

## K-12 Reading Teacher Emphasis

The Reading Teacher emphasis is designed for individuals who wish to enhance their knowledge of literacy so they are more effective classroom teachers. After the 15-SH core curriculum, candidates take 9 SH sequence courses in an area of concentration that includes practicum placements and an additional 9 SH of approved elective courses.

## Requirements for the Iowa Reading Specialist Endorsement

- Master's degree
- Teaching license in Iowa
- One year of teaching experience, which includes the teaching of reading as a significant responsibility

## Career Opportunities

Graduates of the MSEd program are prepared for a variety of professional positions: as effective elementary and secondary classroom teachers, as reading specialists endorsed to teach in specialized reading programs such as Title I at either the elementary or secondary level and as K-12 reading specialists and literacy coaches.

## Faculty Expertise

The faculty members in the WIU Department of Curriculum and Instruction have a strong interest in helping teachers enhance their effectiveness and their ability to promote student learning.

All faculty have practical experience in public schools. All professors in the department have a doctorate in their field. Faculty are actively involved in a variety of professional organizations; provide continuing education workshops for

## Program Location:

Macomb, Quad Cities, Online

## Contact Information

### Questions about the program:

Department of Curriculum  
and Instruction  
Melissa Stinnett, graduate coordinator  
(309) 298-1961  
M-Stinnett@wiu.edu  
wiu.edu/curriculum

### General admission questions:

School of Graduate Studies  
(309) 298-1806 or (877) WIU GRAD  
Grad-Office@wiu.edu  
wiu.edu/grad

## Higher Values in Higher Education

Academic Excellence  
Educational Opportunity  
Personal Growth  
Social Responsibility



**WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY**

teachers and publish books and articles in state, national and international journals.

## Assistantship Opportunities

Graduate assistantships are available for those pursuing an MEd degree, with a major in Reading. This position offers the opportunity for graduate students to provide instructional, research and clerical support for faculty. A graduate assistant completes at least 9 SH of coursework each semester and works with one or more faculty members for 20 hours each week. Graduate assistants do not pay tuition for these courses, and receive a monthly stipend. Assistantships are awarded for a single year, but may be renewed for one additional year. Positions are available on both the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses.

*Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability and veteran status.*

## Distinctive Features

Teachers completing this program and appropriate coursework are eligible to apply for a Reading Specialist or Reading Teacher Endorsement in Illinois or Iowa. The MEd degree in Reading combines the rigor of an outstanding academic program with the personal attention of caring departmental faculty. Most courses are offered online.

The Reading Specialist emphasis prepares candidates to work with all students to develop literacy skills and to develop leadership skills that include attention to diversity and a culturally responsive learning environment. Candidates will complete an elementary and a middle/high school reading methods course and a literature course.

The Reading Teacher emphasis prepares candidates to work with their desired age group of struggling readers in the elementary school or in the middle/high schools. Coursework will focus on the grade-level span chosen by the candidate.

## Accreditation

The Graduate Reading program is accredited through the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the International Literacy Association. This program has been approved by the Illinois State Board of Education. Western Illinois University's certification officer is authorized to verify coursework for those individuals seeking the Iowa Reading Specialist and Reading Teacher Endorsements.



*"I am very glad I chose WIU's Reading Program. The faculty members are wonderful, and all of my classes prepared me for teaching reading."*

*— Sarah Youngblood, MEd '07*