

MASTER'S DEGREE IN LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

With Optional Credentials in:

- Professional Reading Specialist Certification
- Dual Credit in English Credential
- Developmental Literacy Graduate Certificate

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
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PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The Master's degree in Language & Literacy Education is a 36-hour, *online* program designed to prepare teachers to provide reading and literacy leadership in K-12 school districts and other educational settings.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND:

Reading and writing proficiency of K-12 students has been an ongoing nationwide concern in education. According to the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress report there is a downward trend in reading achievement. In 2019, the percentage of fourth and eighth grade public school students performing at or above the proficient level in reading was 35 and 34 percent respectively in the nation. These results are lower than the results in 2017. In Texas, the results are even lower. Fourth grade students scored lower than those in 27 states. In eighth grade, students scored lower than those in 37 states (see [The Nation's Report Card for details](#)). Consequently, there is a dire need for K-12 educators and literacy specialists in Texas who possess knowledge of scientifically-based reading research and apply that knowledge in implementing, modeling, and providing developmentally appropriate literacy instruction.

TRADEMARK OUTCOME and MILESTONES:

The Language & Literacy candidate will be a leader who possesses in-depth knowledge about literacy processes and demonstrates the ability to appropriately apply this knowledge to evaluate, design, and implement effective literacy instruction for diverse learners. The Language & Literacy candidate will also demonstrate the ability to sustain professional collaboration with a variety of educational stakeholders to foster ongoing growth as a literacy practitioner and increase student engagement and achievement with literacy tasks.

Benchmark 1: Graduate students in Language & Literacy will **demonstrate** the dispositions and knowledge necessary to make informed instructional decisions concerning literacy education.

Benchmark 2: Graduate students in Language & Literacy will **apply** dispositions, knowledge, and skills in literacy education by **designing** effective literacy instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Benchmark 3: Graduate students in Language & Literacy will **implement, monitor, and evaluate** a pedagogical innovation that is responsive to an individual learner's strengths, needs, and interests or conduct an action research project that solves an instructional problem in a real-world educational setting.

Benchmark 4: Graduates students in Language & Literacy will become literacy leaders by advocating for culturally and linguistically diverse learners through **collaborations with educational stakeholders** and taking a leadership role in designing, implementing, and evaluating professional learning experiences.

DEGREE IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The master's degree in Language & Literacy is guided by an understanding of literacy as a developmental process. Coursework in the degree reflects this view with a P-20 perspective of literacy pedagogy and alignment with Texas Education Agency's standards for Professional Reading Specialists (https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Reading%20Specialist%20Standards%20-%20EC%20Grade%2012_0.pdf) and the International Literacy Association's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals (<https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/resource-documents/standards-appendix-A.pdf>). Coursework has relevant application in a variety of educational settings (e.g., K-12 classrooms, post-secondary settings, developmental literacy programs, adult literacy). The degree emphasizes theories of literacy as a socio-cultural practice where student engagement with texts and literacy tasks are central to effective instruction. This philosophy and pedagogical approach translates into learning environments where students are encouraged to take intellectual risks, curriculum is built on student experience, texts are matched to student interests and aptitude with the goal of increasing complexity, and assessment represents a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of literacy development. Our faculty believe that an environment rich in opportunities to read, write, discuss, view, and navigate text fosters lifetime habits of learning, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and global sensitivities.

Consistent with university requirements, a minimum total of 36 graduate level credits is required for the degree in Language and Literacy.

While earning a degree in Language and Literacy, graduate students can also work toward earning an advanced certification from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to become a Professional Reading Specialist (PRS), earn a Developmental Literacy Graduate Certificate, or complete coursework required for teaching dual credit English.

ADVANCED CERTIFICATION AS A PROFESSIONAL READING SPECIALIST (PRS)

To qualify for professional reading specialist certification, graduate students must:

1. Complete a master's degree in a literacy program.
2. Have a valid teaching license in the state of Texas.
3. Have two years of teaching experience in a TEA accredited school by the completion of the master's degree.

Students must apply for admission to the PRS at the same time that they apply to the Master's in Language and Literacy. Please contact Brandi Stephens at brandi.stephens@ttu.edu for application details.

Graduate students are required to take the following courses to fulfill the requirements of the Professional Reading Specialist.

Required Courses (18 hours)

- EDLL 5340 Literacy Acquisition Process and Pedagogy
(Students will complete a certificate in dyslexia training as part of this course).
- EDLL 5342 Classroom-based Literacy Assessment for Differentiated Instruction
(This course includes 40 hours of field experience)
- EDLL 5343 Practicum in Literacy
(This course includes 60 hours of field experience)
- EDLL 5393 Internship in Literacy Leadership
(This course includes 60 hours of field experience)

These courses involve field experiences (totaling 160 hours). In these field experiences, graduate students will apply their knowledge of literacy practices in a K-12 school setting. Observations documented by the instructor in these courses will go toward the TEA requirements for PRS certification.

- EDLL 5345 Emergent and Early Literacy Development and Pedagogy
- EDLL 5346 Increasing Reading Proficiency for All Readers

Required Specialization Courses (9 hours)

The courses are not in the PRS certification plan but are required for the master's in Language and Literacy. These courses contain modules required by TEA that must be included in the PRS certification.

- EDLL 5355 Creating Writing Centered Classrooms
- EDLL 5356 Trends and Issues in Adolescent Literacy
- EDIT 5318 Technology in Educational Settings.

ELECTIVES (9 hours)

Graduate students must choose three of the following courses.

Note: Student have the option to transfer up to 6 credit hours of electives from a previous institution. However, to pursue the PRS, students must take all required courses listed above.

- EDLL 5341 Developing Academic Literacies in the Disciplines for Adolescents
- EDLL 5344 Content Area and Disciplinary Literacies
- EDLL 5350 Developing Traditional and New Literacies in Elementary Settings
- EDLL 5351 Children's Literature in the School Curriculum

- EDLL 5353 Studies in Gender, Literacies, and Adolescence
EDBL 5333 Teaching the Multicultural and Multilingual student (Possible study abroad option)
EDCI 5380 Action Research 1 (Note students must take this course if they are interested in developing a thesis)
EDLL 6000 Thesis. Students must take 6 hours of EDLL 6000 (two consecutive courses) if they are interested in pursuing a thesis (see information below).

DEVELOPMENTAL LITERACY GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

This certificate focuses on post-secondary teaching contexts. It can be completed as part of the master's degree plan or serve as a stand alone Graduate Certificate

Required Courses (15 Hours)

- EDLL 5342 Classroom Based Literacy Assessment for Differentiated Instruction
EDLL 5341 Developing Academic Literacy in the Disciplines for Adolescents
EDLL 5355 Creating Writing Centered Classrooms
EDLL 5356 Trends and Issues in Adolescent Literacy
EDLL 5366 Teaching Developmental Readers Adolescent to Adult

MASTER'S DEGREE in LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Graduate Students who are not pursuing the PRS or Graduate Certificate in Developmental Literacy will be required to take the following courses:

Required Core Coursework (9 hours)

- EDLL 5342 Classroom-based Literacy Assessment for Differentiated Instruction
EDLL 5346 Increasing Reading Proficiency for All Readers
EDLL 5355 Creating Writing Centered Classrooms

Required Specialization Courses (9 hours)

Graduate students choose three courses from the following:

- EDLL 5340 Literacy Acquisition Process and Pedagogy
EDLL 5341 Developing Academic Literacies in the Disciplines for Adolescents
EDLL 5343 Practicum in Literacy
EDLL 5356 Trends and Issues in Adolescent Literacy
EDLL 5366 Teaching Developmental Readers Adolescent to Adult
EDLL 5393 Internship in Literacy Leadership

Electives (18 hours)

Graduate students choose six courses from the following:

- EDLL 5344 Content Area and Disciplinary Literacies
EDLL 5345 Emergent and Early Literacy Development and Pedagogy
EDLL 5350 Developing Traditional and New Literacies in Elementary Settings
EDLL 5351 Children's Literature in the School Curriculum

EDLL 5353 Studies in Gender, Literacies, and Adolescence
EDBL 5333 Teaching the Multicultural and Multilingual student (Possible study abroad option)
EDCI 5380 Action Research 1 (Note students must take this course if they are interested in developing a thesis)
EDLL 6000 Thesis. Students must take 6 hours of EDLL 6000 (two consecutive courses) if they are interested in pursuing a thesis (see information below).

CONCENTRATION IN DUAL CREDIT ENGLISH CREDENTIAL

Students who are interested in earning credentials that will make them eligible to teach dual credit English at the high school level should work with faculty overseeing the general concentration in C&I.

Students who are interested in earning credentials that will make them eligible to teach dual credit English can take the following course sequence:

Required Core Coursework (9 Hours):

EDLL 5342 Classroom-based Literacy Assessment for Differentiated
EDLL 5346 Increasing Reading Proficiency for All Readers
EDLL 5355 Creating Writing-Centered Classrooms

Required Language & Literacy Coursework (Select 9 Hours):

EDLL 5340 Literacy Acquisition Process and Pedagogy
EDLL 5343 Practicum in Literacy
EDLL 5393 Internship in Literacy Leadership
EDLL 5341 Developing Academic Literacies in the Disciplines for Adolescents
EDLL 5356 Trends and Issues in Adolescent Literacy
EDLL 5366 Teaching Developmental Readers Adolescent to *Adult*

Concentration in Dual Credit Credential in English Courses (Select 18 Hours with Advisor Consultation)

ENGL 5360: History and Theories of College Composition
ENGL 5392: Teaching College Literature
Any British Literature course: 5303, 04, 05, 06, 07, 09, 13, 15
Any American Literature course: 5320, 23,24, 25, 27
Any Global Literature course: 5317, 43, 49, 55
Any Linguistics course (we offer one of these per semester, two if History of the English language being taught) 5334 (History of the English Language, taught every other spring plus sometimes in the summer), 5335, 37, 38, 39

Please see the [Graduate Student Catalog](#) for course descriptions.

TRANSFER CREDITS and LEVELING COURSES

If the graduate student's bachelor's degree is not in the area that he/she intends to pursue, the student may be required to take up to 6 credit hours of leveling courses which will be selected at the discretion of the advisor before taking master's level courses.

If the student's bachelor's degree is older than seven years, the student may be required to take up to 6 credit hours of leveling courses which will be selected at the discretion of the advisor before taking master's level courses.

Only 6 approved semester hours of coursework may be transferred from another accredited university. Required coursework for the Professional Reading Specialization or Developmental Literacy Graduate Certificate cannot be transferred. No courses over six years old at the time the degree is completed may be transferred into the degree plan.

Course Sequence/Course Rotation

Courses are offered on a two-year rotation. Please consult the following charts for planning purposes.

#	Course Number	Course Title	When the course is offered			When the course is recommended to be taken/Note
			Fall	Spring	Summer	
Required Courses:						
1	EDLL 5340	Acquisition	X			Year 1
2	EDLL 5342	Classroom based literacy assessment for differentiated instruction.		X		Year 2
3	EDLL 5343	Practicum in Literacy	X			Year 2
4	EDLL 5344	Content Area and Disciplinary Literacy			X Summer I	Year 1 or 2

5	EDLL 5345	Emergent and Early Literacy Development and Pedagogy		X		Year 1
6	EDLL 5346	Increasing reading proficiency for all readers	X			Year 1 (To be taken with EDLL 5340)
7	EDLL 5355	Creating writing centered classrooms			X Summer II	Year 1 or 2
8	EDLL 5356	Trends and Issues in Adolescent Literacy			Summer I	Year 1 or 2
9	EDLL 5366	Teaching Developmental readers Adolescent to Adult			X Summer II	Year 1 or 2
10	EDLL 5393	Internship in Literacy Leadership		X		Year 2
Elective Courses (6 hours):						
1	EDBL 5333	Teaching the multicultural and multilingual student.			X Summer I	Year 1 or 2 (Study abroad option)
2	EDLL 5353	Studies in Gender, Literacies, and Adolescence	X	X		Year 1 or 2
3	EDLL 5351	Children's Literature in the school curriculum	X	X		Year 1 or 2
5	EDLL 5350	Developing Traditional and New Literacies in Elementary Settings	X	X		Year 1 or 2
6	EDCI 5380	Action Research I	X	X		Year 1 or 2 Students must take this course if they are interested in developing a Thesis.

Year One					Year Two			
	Spring (Odd Years)	Sum I	Sum II	Fall	Spring (Even Years)	Sum I	Sum II	Fall
EDLL Courses	5340 5342	5355	5341	5345 5351 5346	5343 5348 5356	5344 5353	5366	5350 5393

	EDLL 6000	Thesis 1		X	X		Students must notify their advisor early on in their program their interest in a thesis
	EDLL 6000	Thesis 2		X	X		Students must notify their advisor early on in their program their interest in a thesis

ADMISSION PROCEDURE AND REQUIREMENTS

The Master's Degree in Language and Literacy requires a completed bachelor's degree in the field of education or cognate areas of study from an accredited higher education institution in the United States or equivalent higher education institution in another country.

Step 1

Visit our website at https://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/graduate/curriculum-and-instruction/language_and_literacy.php and click on the Apply Now button. It will take you to the *Texas Tech Graduate Admissions* page (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/admissions/howtoapply.php>) Please read all the instructions before applying.

Candidates will need the following to complete their application

a. *\$65 initial Application Fee.*

b. *Unofficial transcripts* from all degree awarding institutions.

(If the degree is not complete when the application is made, six semesters or three years of course work are required. Please note: If admitted, you will be required to submit final official transcripts from all degree awarding institutions by the twelfth class day of the semester to which you were admitted.)

c. *Resume*

(Resume should contain contact information; education; professional experience; honors and awards; publications/presentations (if any); professional organization membership; consulting or advisory activities).

d. Applicant Statement

The applicant statement should be 1-2 pages long (double spaced).

It should be a detailed and comprehensive statement to include the following:

- (1) applicant's professional accomplishments and activities,
- (2) applicant's professional and academic goals,
- (3) reflections about what led the applicant to choose graduate study in Language and Literacy Education.

e. Three letters of recommendation. (As you complete your application, you will be given web addresses, which you pass to each of your recommenders to submit their recommendation for you).

f. Two Writing Samples that demonstrate your ability with academic writing.

Step 2

When you are ready to apply, please create an account through the application portal at <https://ttugradschool.force.com/admissions/ApplicationLogin> and follow the instructions.

Once you create an account you can track your application.

Note: You must apply to both the Masters in Language and Literacy and the Professional Reading Specialist Certification.

When all of the application requirements have been met, an admission committee of Language, Diversity, and Literacy Studies (LDLS) faculty will review the application materials and make a recommendation for admission. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance status through an email issued from the College of Education. Applications are reviewed on a continuing basis.

The Graduate School has two admission statuses. These categories are: (1) Full admission to the master's program in Language & Literacy Education and Graduate Temporary (GTMP) admission. Students may enroll as a Graduate Temporary (GTMP) student for one semester while awaiting GRE results. Twelve semester earned hours are the maximum allowable with GTMP status.

APPEAL PROCESS:

Applicants who are not accepted into the Master's of Education program in Language & Literacy Education may appeal the program faculty's decision. The first level of appeal is to reapply to the program, addressing the program faculty's reasons for rejection as delineated in the notification of rejection letter. If an

applicant is still rejected by the Language & Literacy Education Program faculty, the next level of appeal is the College of Education Graduate Academic Affairs Committee. In making an appeal to the Graduate Studies committee, the applicant must address the Language & Literacy Education Program faculty's reasons for rejection as defined in the two previous letters. If the applicant's appeal is denied by the College of Education Graduate Studies Committee, there is no further recourse for admission.

ADVISEMENT PROCEDURES:

Following admission to the Language & Literacy Education program, graduate students will be assigned an initial advisor (Dr. Mellinee Lesley) to help them enroll in coursework. The student is responsible for following the degree plan. Modifications to the degree plan require course substitution documentation and need to be made in consultation with Dr. Mellinee Lesley (mellinee.lesley@ttu.edu).

If graduate students are interested in completing a thesis, they need to choose a master's committee chair before completing 12 credit hours (See Program Expectations: Thesis).

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS:

During the last semester of coursework, students are required to complete a thesis or a comprehensive portfolio to graduate.

Thesis

The thesis option is for graduate students who are interested in research and are thinking about completing a doctorate in the future. The thesis option prepares students to engage in research to define and work through problems of practice in classrooms. With this option, graduate students are poised to publish articles and present at conferences.

Students who elect to complete a thesis must take the following courses:

- EDCI 5380 *Action Research*
- EDCI 6000 Master's Thesis (6 hours – two consecutive semesters).

Process of Thesis

Step 1: Choose a Chair and one other committee member.

- The Chair will be either Dr. Lesley, Dr. Saldaña, Dr. Smit, or Dr. Jung.
- The committee member can be another professor from Curriculum and Instruction.

Step 2: Work with your Chair to engage in research.

- Identify a problem of practice in your school context.
- Work with your Chair to design methods, data collection, and analysis.

Step 3: Present your findings to your committee.

- You will have a master's defense in which you will present your findings.
- Your committee will ask you questions and provide feedback.
- Send final project to the Graduate School.
- You can publish articles from your thesis.

Non-Thesis Option: The Comprehensive Portfolio

Graduate students, who do not choose the thesis option, are required to complete a portfolio in their last semester of coursework. Students must apply for this comprehensive evaluation and graduation with the College of Education in their last semester of coursework. Students need to be mindful of the application deadlines in their last semester.

The Portfolio is a documented account of how graduate students demonstrate mastery of the TEA Standards for Professional Reading Specialists put forth by the Texas Education Agency and the International Literacy Association Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals (2017).

Please see document L&L Portfolio for more details about the portfolio requirement.

APPLICANTS WITH A PRIOR MASTER'S DEGREE:

The TTU Graduate Catalog states that permission to work toward a second degree of the same level is granted only upon approval by the Curriculum & Instruction Department and review by the Graduate Dean. The applicant is subject to all requirements as a new student. While there is no guarantee that any work from the first master's degree may apply to the second, at least one full year (24 semester hours) must be taken specifically for the new degree program. Therefore, applicants with a prior master's degree are urged to investigate the Doctoral Program in Curriculum & Instruction.

CONTINUATION OF ENROLLMENT:

Graduate students who have been granted admission are expected to register in the term for which admission is granted. Any student who fails to register during any one-year period prior to graduation, and who does not have an official leave of absence from study granted by the Language & Literacy Education Program and the Graduate School may be required to apply for re-admission to the program according to the procedures in effect at the time of reconsideration.

Official Leave of Absence

Students may request a leave of absence from the continuous enrollment requirement in case of serious medical conditions and other exceptional reasons. Please contact Dr. Mellinee Lesley if you need a leave of absence. A request for a leave of absence must be approved by the Department Chair and the Associate Dean for Graduate Education in the College of Education. This approval, then, must be approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, prior to the student leaving the university. A leave of absence will not exceed one year and not extend the maximum time allowed for completion of the degree.

RESPONSIBLE ACADEMIC CONDUCT TRAINING:

Responsible Academic Conduct Training, formerly known as Responsible Scholarship Training, is an essential part of the graduate experience to raise the awareness of professional standards of research ethics, integrity, and safety, and of challenges that students may face throughout their careers. To supplement the effort provided by our exceptional Texas Tech faculty, the Graduate School in collaboration with the Office of Research and Innovation has developed a training that addresses academic practices such as data management, intellectual property, management of conflict of interest, ethical use of humans and animals in research, social responsibility of research, effective collaboration, and research misconduct.

All new students must complete training within their first semester and before they can apply for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval at the university for research with human subjects. The training is offered by CITI and involves certification in *Research with Human Subjects- Select Human Subjects TTU Social and Behavioral Investigators – Basic/Refresher*. Visit the TTU CITI webpage for instructions on how to register with CITI and complete the training. Step-by-step instructions are found here. Make sure to retain a PDF copy of your CITI certification and keep it in a safe place.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COURSE CONTENT AND INITIAL
ADVISING, CONTACT:**

Dr. Mellinee Lesley, at mellinee.lesley@ttu.edu

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT APPLICATION PROCEDURES,
CONTACT:**

Brandi Stephens, at brandi.stephens@ttu.edu

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES,
PLEASE VISIT THE [GRADUATE SCHOOL WEBSITE](#)**