

The University of Texas at San Antonio Master of Arts Degree in Reading and Literacy with Reading Specialist Certification

The Graduate Degree in Reading and Literacy with Reading Specialist Certification is a 36 semester-hour (non-thesis), field-based program intended for individuals who wish to be recommended to take the Texas reading specialist certification examination as part of their Master's degree. State rules require that candidates must hold a state teaching certificate or be eligible for a teaching certificate for admission to the program and provide evidence of two creditable years of classroom teaching experience **prior to the completion** of the program in order to be recommended for this certificate.

Students are admitted to the Reading Specialist Certification program twice a year. Deadlines for applying for admission to the program are as follows:

- For the Fall semester: February 15
- For the Spring semester: October 15

Application materials must be submitted by the deadline to qualify for review to:

Ms. Kimberly Perez
IDED Advising Center-Reading Specialist Certification
University of Texas San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, Texas 78249
Questions regarding the Reading Specialist Certification should be directed to:
Kimberly.Perez1@utsa.edu, (210) 458-6287

Questions regarding admission to the MA in Education, Literacy concentration should be directed to:
Elizabeth.Narvez@utsa.edu, (210)458-7443

Effective Sept. 1, 2017, a \$55 TEA fee will be charged to the teacher/professional candidate's account. This fee is absorbed by the Texas Education Agency and is not used by the University of Texas at San Antonio. It is a one-time, non-refundable fee that will be charged at time of admission.

Overview of the Graduate Teacher Certification

Program Requirements

Admission Deadlines

- For the Fall semester: February 15
- For the Spring semester: October 15

Admission Requirements for the Reading Specialist Certification Program

Clear admission to the UTSA Graduate School (This does not automatically presume admission into the Reading Specialist Program. Admission to the RSPA is a separate application and admission process).

A Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.

Full and clear admission into the MA in Reading and Literacy degree program in the Department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching. Students admitted with deficiencies will not be eligible to participate in the Reading Specialist Program.

Clear criminal background check.

Minimum of a 3.0 GPA on the last 60 hours of a Baccalaureate degree.

Holds or will hold a classroom teacher certification with two years of creditable classroom teaching experience prior to issuance of the Reading Specialist Certificate. Evidence must be submitted that the candidate is a certified teacher or will be a certified teacher before the program's end.

Program Requirements

Once admitted in the fall or spring semesters, candidates will be assigned a program advisor. Candidates must meet with their program advisor prior to the first semester of their program to create their program of study.

Once admitted in the fall or spring semesters, candidates may take a minimum of 3 hours of graduate course work per semester following a recommended course sequence by their UTSA advisor.

The candidate is required to complete **160 clock hours of supervised** practicum work. Thirty hours will occur in the context of the following required practicum courses: LTED 6763 (previously C&I 5763) and LTED 5743 (previously C&I 5743) and/or LTED 5823 (previously C&I 5823). The remaining 130 hours will occur in a school in the last semester of the program in LTED 6943 (previously C&I 6943). If the candidate is already a practicing teacher, this requirement may be completed in the teacher's classroom and school. Other candidates who are not currently classroom teachers will be assigned a school for practicum hours. **Candidates need to meet with their advisor or their program coordinator in the semester before they are ready to do their** practicum so that arrangements can be made for the candidate's completion of this requirement. Failure to do so will push the candidate back one semester for completion of this requirement.

Candidates will be assigned a UTSA supervisor and a campus mentor who will provide on- going support and supervision during the practicum semester.

Eligibility Requirements for Reading Specialist Certification

Candidates must take and pass the state Reading Specialist Certificate exam in order to be certified as a Reading Specialist.

In order to be recommended for this certificate, a student must have completed the following:

- all coursework for the Reading Specialist Certification.
- 160 clock hours of supervised practicum.
- all coursework and program requirements for the Master of Arts in Reading and Literacy degree including a comprehensive exam.
- Passing scores on the Reading Specialist Certification state exam.
- two years of creditable classroom teaching experience prior to issuance of Reading Specialist Certificate.

Application Procedures for the UTSA Reading Specialist Certification

Students who are interested in obtaining a Masters of Arts in Reading and Literacy degree with Reading Specialist Certification must complete and submit the following application materials by the deadlines indicated. Materials submitted after the deadlines will not be reviewed.

Application deadlines for the Reading Specialist Certification program:

- For the Fall semester: February 15
- For the Spring semester: October 15

Students must have applied and been accepted to the graduate program for the degree before applying for the Reading Specialist Certification program.

1. Apply to the graduate program

- a. Online application available at <http://www.graduateschool.utsa.edu>
- b. Submit official copies of ALL transcripts from every college and university you have attended. When requesting transcripts from other institutions, make sure that you specify that transcripts are sent to the UTSA Graduate School. The official address is:

UTSA – The Graduate School
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249

2. Complete the Reading Specialist Certification Program application and return the packet by mail to:

Ms. Kimberly Perez
IDED Advising Center-Reading Specialist Certification
University of Texas San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, Texas 78249

Note: e-mail applications will not be accepted. Incomplete packets will not be reviewed.

3. Application packet should include the following:

- Reading Specialist Program Application Form
- Copies of transcripts of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. If you would like to use the transcripts and condition sheet in the department's file, please contact the ILT Student Development Specialist requesting a copy be sent as part of your reading specialist program application.
- Evidence of full and clear admission into the MA in Reading and Literacy degree program in the Department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching. Students admitted with deficiencies will not be eligible to participate in the Reading Specialist Program.
- Affidavit that student has completed and received a clear criminal background check.
- Copy of a teaching certificate or evidence of participation in a state approved teacher education program to be completed with certification prior to the completion of the Reading Specialist Program.
- Evidence of two years of classroom teaching experience if already completed. (Two years of teaching is required by the state for this certificate.) If not submitted at this time, this evidence will be required before the candidate will be recommended to the state for this certificate.

4. TEA Mandated Admission Fee

Effective Sept. 1, 2017, a \$55 TEA fee will be charged to the teacher/professional candidate's account. This fee is absorbed by the Texas Education Agency and is not used by the University of Texas at San Antonio. It is a one-time, non-refundable fee that will be charged at time of admission.

Please Print Clearly

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Please submit this form either by February 15 or October 15

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____

Email address: _____

Repeat email address: _____

1. Education: List all schools attended. Attach unofficial copy of transcripts. College/University Major Graduation Date Degree

2. Certified Teachers:

- If you are already a certified teacher attach a copy of your teaching certificate:
- If you are currently an employed teacher, or have the requisite 2 years of teaching, please fill out the following information:

3. Not a Certified Teacher:

If you are not a certified teacher, provide information about your teacher preparation program and anticipated date of completion. Please note that the **state requires two years of classroom teaching experience** for recommendation for the Reading Specialist Certificate.

Teacher Preparation Program

Entity: _____ Anticipated date of completion: _____

Phone: _____ Phone: _____
State/zip _____

4. District where you work(ed) Name of School Grade Level # Years Teaching

5. Copy of your acceptance into the UTSA graduate school.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED FOR APPLICATION:

I understand that I must abide by all state and program requirements in order to complete the UTSA Graduate Reading Specialist Certification Program. I understand that if my GPA falls below a 3.0 at any time during the program, I will be ineligible to continue in the certification program. I also understand that if for any reason I am removed from the program (if I become ineligible or choose to leave the program), I must complete all conditions of admission as stated on my Dean's condition sheet, including but not limited to background coursework.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Statement of Agreement to Complete Practicum Field Hours

SIGNATURE REQUIRED FOR APPLICATION:

By state rule, the RSC requires 160 hours of practicum field work in classrooms in the schools. This experience requires RSC candidates to spend time during the day in a school classroom for at least one semester. The UTSA Coordinator of Field Placements will assign schools and classrooms for non-certified or non-employed teachers. Employed teachers will be able to complete their practicum hours in their place of employment. Schedules for classroom observations will be determined by the RSC student in dialogue with the assigned UTSA supervisor. Non-certified or non-employed certified teacher RSC Candidates must have time available during the day on a weekly basis to meet this program requirement.

My signature below indicates that I understand the requirement for 160 hours of practicum field work during my program and that attests to the fact that I will be able to meet this requirement. Furthermore, I understand that failure to complete this requirement will be cause for dismissal from the program.

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Criminal Background Check Affidavit

In accordance with Texas Education Code 22.083, an examination of each teacher candidate's criminal history will be conducted prior to participation in any field-based course work, including practicums. Criminal history record information, which includes both conviction and arrest records is obtained either through the district where the student will be doing practicum work, or by the individual student before any fieldwork can be started. An ISD or other school field-based entity may deny placement of students with a criminal background. The student's clearance for fieldwork is the prerogative of the ISD or participating entity and not UTSA. If a student is unable to obtain a field-based placement due to their criminal history, he/she will not meet UTSA's requirements for recommendation for the Reading Specialist certification. If a student cannot complete the required 160 hours of fieldwork because of their criminal history, the student will be required to withdraw from the program.

Signature required before admission to the program.

My signature below indicates I understand that I must have a clear criminal history in order to complete the 160 hours of fieldwork required for the Reading Specialist Certificate program. My signature indicates that to the best of my knowledge, I will have no issues or problems working in a public school when my criminal history background check is conducted by the ISD where I will be placed, and that I can be dismissed from the program should such issues arise that prevent me from completing the required practicum hours.

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____