# ONLINE MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK (M.Ed.)

## School of Education

Effective for Admitted Students:
Summer 2025 to Spring 2026

augie.edu/graduate-programs

# WELCOME

I am excited to welcome you to the Master of Education (commonly referred through this Program Handbook as M.Ed.) Program at Augustana University. You are part of a cohort that has representatives from around the country, and in some cases, from around the globe! I am proud that you chose to pursue your graduate degree at Augustana.

This Program Handbook will acquaint all students about many aspects of Augustana University, as well as, specifics about the M.Ed. Program. In these pages, you will see descriptions of the supports and services available to students, as well as, our rules governing academic life, and our Code of Student Conduct. This code provides the model for student interactions and is central to Augustana's unique culture and community. I ask that you review these rules and the code and abide by them.

Augustana University offers exceptional opportunities to collaborate with colleagues as students progress through the program. The design of the program also allows teachers to explore a particular area of interest by choosing an area of concentration.

The program is very much aligned to the mission and core values of the university, as well as, the conceptual framework of the School of Education, and specific program goals and outcomes. Information about the mission, values, and conceptual framework have been provided in this Program Handbook.

As a graduate student, you are expected to work diligently and with a high degree of independence. At the same time, you will complete programs in the context of community. This community is in the form of small cohorts, with well-qualified and caring instructors, who seek to provide both high expectations and care as students engage in their work.

Thank you for choosing Augustana. I hope you find that your program is both challenging and fulfilling.

Respectfully,

*Laurie Daily*

Dean, School of Education
Director of the M.Ed. Programs

# INTRODUCTION



The Master of Education (M.Ed.) Program Handbook is the official resource that defines our expectations for student life.  These are the policies and practices that allow us to collaboratively work alongside each other, to respectfully respond to conflicts with one another, and to resolve violations of our Code of Student Conduct in ways that emphasize learning and personal accountability.

This important resource along with the **Academic Catalog** (see the blue menu for contents) contains important information that Augustana students are expected to be familiar with.  We hope that you will take many opportunities to become familiar with the contents of both publications.  It is important for you to know that the responsibility for understanding and following our policies and procedures whether it is the Code of Student Conduct or the requirements for graduation rests entirely with you, the student.

On behalf of our faculty and staff, we wish you a successful academic year, and we look forward to participating with you in the special events and programs that make Augustana a uniquely special learning community.

# THE UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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## PROGRAM POLICIES

**Class Attendance - In Person**

Class attendance is expected of all students. Instructors will outline their specific attendance policies during the opening meeting of the class. These attendance expectations are also to be included in the course syllabus. Students who find it necessary to be absent because of illness or other reasons should notify the instructor before the class period. Students missing class or arriving late assume responsibility for communicating with the instructor. Instructors may require students to provide verification of reasons for absence. Instructors have the right to request an unofficial withdrawal of a student from their course for non-attendance and lack of communication. Instructors are encouraged to make arrangements to accept coursework, administer examinations ahead of time or allow make-up work, but reserve the right not to do so.

**Class Attendance – Online**

Overall, student "attendance" in online courses will be defined as active participation and engagement in the course as described in each course syllabus. Online courses will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for student participation and engagement, which can be documented by any or all of the following methods: student tracking in the Learning Management System (Canvas); submission/completion of assignments; participating in synchronous and/or asynchronous course assignments (i.e., weekly discussion boards, forums and chats; and communications with the instructor).

Students who do not log on to the course within the 100% drop/add (census) period for the course will be considered a "no-show" and will be administratively withdrawn from the course without record. Drop/add and withdrawal dates are listed on the academic calendar, online in the Graduate Office program section, and on the course syllabus.

Students who fail to maintain active participation and engagement in an online course as defined in the course syllabus will be processed in accordance with the University's current attendance policy. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus.

Success in this online course is dependent on your active participation and engagement throughout the entire course. As such, you are required to complete all assignments by the due dates, and to actively participate in synchronous and/or asynchronous course requirements according to established timelines.

If you find that you cannot meet the class's minimum discussion requirements due to such a circumstance, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

**Course Time Commitment**

Accreditation standards dictate the number of hours expected for the completion of graduate courses. Since the standard expectation is 45 hours of work for each credit, a three credit graduate course requires approximately 135 hours of work. This translates to approximately 15-20 hours of work per week in a 7-week course. Itemized engaged time for each course is listed specifically on each course syllabus.

(*Note: EDUC/SPED 6900 Research Synthesis Project course is a 14-week class during a fall and spring semester; 7-week class during the summer term; and the time requirements will vary based on student's proficiency in scholarly writing.)

**Unofficial Withdrawal**
If the Registrar's Office receives confirmation from all of a student's faculty that a student has ceased attending all courses without explanation, the Registrar will withdraw that student from all courses.

**Grading System**
The grade point average (GPA) at Augustana University is computed on a 4.0 point scale and determined on the basis of the scale below for the program. Specific grading requirements for each course may vary and the letter grades cannot be defined here other than as generally stated below. The grading scale cuts off below a "C", due to the stated policy in the Graduate Catalog (Grading Policies). Only grades of C or better may be applied to the program. No credit toward the degree will be allowed for grades below "C".

All courses applied to the program must be completed with an overall GPA 3.00 and no course for which a final grade below "C" is assigned may be used to satisfy this requirement.

The following grades are used in the evaluation of academic achievement:

| Percentage | Grade | Grade Points |
|---|---|---|
| 96 to 100 | A | 4.0 |
| 92 to 95 | A- | 3.7 |
| 88 to 91 | B+ | 3.3 |
| 84 to 87 | B | 3.0 |
| 80 to 83 | B- | 2.7 |
| 76 to 79 | C+ | 2.3 |
| 72 to 75 | C | 2.0 |
| 71 or below | F | - |

- S/U: Satisfactory; Unsatisfactory; no quality points (not used in calculation of GPA)
- I: Incomplete
- IP: Course in Progress
- The grades of F, U, earn neither credit hours nor quality points
- All repeated courses remain on the transcript with only the highest grade used in calculating the grade point average

## PROGRAM SPECIFIC POLICY INFORMATION

**Academic Probation and Dismissal Procedures**
Academic progress is monitored by the Education Program Coordinator, to ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the plan of study for the degree. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 throughout the degree program with all grades earned for courses at C or better. If a student's overall GPA is below a 3.0, that student is given two semesters to increase the GPA to a 3.0. The student is monitored after the first semester, and dismissed after the second semester. Students may retake courses within the program to increase the GPA; however, they may only retake a course twice to remain eligible to earn the degree.

**Petition Processes:**
Write an email to the Program Director to petition for an exception to the academic policy identifying which policy you would like to be considered for an exception, as well as a clear justification why the exception is being requested. The Program Director may consult with the Dean of the School of Education for a final decision on the request.

**Withdrawal and Readmission**
Students who believe they should withdraw from the M.Ed. or M.Ed. in SPED program must confer with the Program Director and/or the Education Program Coordinator relative to 1) the implications and advisability of leaving the program; 2) the procedures to be followed, and 3) the process for returning to Augustana at some future time if appropriate. A student who exits the University and bypasses the procedures listed above will receive grades of F and will be ineligible for the customary adjustment on education fees. For information about Augustana's refund policy, see the financial information section of this handbook. An individual who has previously attended Augustana's M.Ed. or M.Ed. in SPED Program and desires readmission may contact the Education Program Coordinator for more information.

# ADMISSIONS:

# MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM

**General Requirements**

A student holding a bachelor's degree and interested in working toward a graduate degree first obtains, completes and files an official application with the Office of Graduate Education. The following documents must be submitted:

- official application (program-specific*)

- official transcripts from each university or university attended sent directly to the Augustana Graduate Education Office

- two recommendation forms testifying to the applicant's character and ability to do graduate work (at least one reference should be from a principal/supervisor)

- a 400-500 word essay is required; specific instructions are included in the application

- non-refundable application fee of $60 (Students enrolled as fulltime undergraduate students at Augustana at the time of application to the program are exempt from paying this fee.)

- a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better.

- sufficient undergraduate work in the proposed field of study to satisfy specific program admission requirements and graduate credit course prerequisites (See admission requirements for specific programs. For example, applicants for the M.Ed. hold or are eligible for licensure.)

*Refer to specific program prerequisites for additional requirements.*

If you have questions, please contact the **Office of Graduate Education** at:

Office of Graduate Education
Augustana University
2001 S Summit Ave
Sioux Falls, SD 57197

605.274.4043
Fax: 605.274.4450
graduate@augie.edu

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Augustana University is located at 2001 South Summit Avenue in the south-central part of Sioux Falls.  University administrative offices observe regular working hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday except for major holidays.  After 5:00 p.m. general information is available at the Morrison Commons Information Desk which is open until 10:00 p.m. every night.

For general information about Augustana:
Augustana University
2001 South Summit Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57197
Phone: 605.274.0770
Toll Free: 800.727.2844
Home Page: augie.edu

For information about the graduate program:
Office of Graduate Education
Phone: 605.274.4043
Fax: 605.274.4450
Email: graduate@augie.edu
Home Page: augie.edu/graduate

Graduate Program
Master of Education Programs: 605.274.4629

Academic Affairs: 605.274.5417
Academic policies, curriculum, Summer courses, Interim, Graduate Education

Student Academic Support Services: 605.274.5503
Resources for students with disabilities

Business Office: 605.274.4109
Business and financial matters

Financial Aid Office: 605.274.5216
Scholarships and financial aid

Library: 605.274.4921
Library services, instructional media

University Events: 605.274.4546
Events scheduled on campus

Registrar's Office: 605.274.4121
Transcripts, schedules, registration

Dean of Students Office: 605.274.4124
General information and student support

Center for Campus Life: 605.274.5215
Student housing, food service, student organizations

# MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM

**INTRODUCTION**

The Augustana University graduate programs reflect the church-related liberal arts character of the University by including courses especially designed to help candidates explore the central ideas and methodologies of different disciplines, and wrestle with questions of meaning and value. The mission of the graduate program is to stimulate the intellectual capacities of candidates in order to make their lives more satisfying and rewarding. More specifically, it seeks, through advanced study, to expand candidates' knowledge and to strengthen skills important to career, personal fulfillment, and community service.

In recent years there have been significant changes in the field of education. More is expected of teachers and P-12 students in today's classrooms. We are asked to be more intentional in our approach to assessment and in our approach to facilitating student learning. In response to these demands, the School of Education at Augustana University has developed its Graduate Programs in Education to integrate the worlds of theory and practice. In just 13 to 16 months, you can earn a M.Ed. The program focuses on excellence in classroom teaching and P-12 student learning. You will become part of a cohort of candidates with coursework specifically designed to meet your personal and professional goals.

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

The School of Education offers an online graduate degree via a cohort model. Cohorts are offered on a rotational basis beginning summer, fall and spring terms. Augustana, a university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, offers to students of varying backgrounds, interests and ages a unique opportunity to achieve academic excellence and individual development in a Christian context. With its supportive community atmosphere, Augustana assists students in preparing for a life of career, service and continuing enrichment by blending the broad learning experiences of the liberal arts with the candidate's individual professional goals and in relating Christian faith to learning. The university serves the region and the larger society primarily through its undergraduate programs and through other programs designed to meet special community needs.

# SCHOOL OF EDUCATION'S MISSION

The mission of the School of Education is to empower candidates with the tools needed to create learning environments that ensure belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. This mission is grounded in a philosophy that integrates the best of Western educational thought with the wisdom of the indigenous Native American culture of the region and emerging research on positive youth development. This philosophy is reflected in publications of various Augustana faculty and is most extensively discussed in the book Reclaiming Youth at Risk Our Hope for the Future. There are four overarching values embodied in the model of positive youth development called the Circle of Courage.

The central premise of this model is that a set of shared values must undergird a community of learners, including public education and teacher training institutions. Those shared values include belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery. While the four dimensions of the Circle of Courage can be described individually, they must be viewed as one. The belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity dimensions are imbued throughout the Augustana Master of Arts in Program and complement the Augustana Core of Liberal Arts Studies.

Graduates of the M.Ed. Program are taught to use these values in creating positive learning cultures that maintain high expectations for all learners.



The Unit's conceptual framework, the Circle of Courage, describes how Augustana University's Education Programs have been influenced and informed by current and historical research in education and by current best practice and reform research. The conceptual framework articulates the Education Program's beliefs and provides justification and rationale for its existence and purpose. It is meant to be a vehicle through which the Unit shares with the professional community its way of seeing, thinking, and being.

A brief summary of each of the four core values follows.

- **Belonging** is an integral part of the Augustana environment. Candidates need to attach to caring adults in order to begin the process of learning and incorporate basic social values. The university encourages candidates' sense of belonging through small interactive classes. Belonging is facilitated through consensus building, inclusive learning climates, and cooperation. Faculty structure the learning environment to create a community of learners.

- **Mastery**, the second value in the Circle of Courage Model, promotes the belief that candidates need to develop social, intellectual, and academic competence if they are to become capable and responsible citizens. Mastery is ensured both through graduate program requirements to ensure that candidates are disposed to become "master" teachers.

- **Independence** is the third value promoted within the Circle of Courage model. To develop positive autonomy and interdependence, candidates must be secure in the guidance of caring adults and believe they have some power over their world. The graduate cohort programs in education promote problem solving, leadership, respect for diversity, collaboration, assertiveness and responsibility.

- **Generosity** is incorporated into the graduate cohort program through faculty's efforts to display empathy and concern for others. The curriculum within the cohort is designed to assist candidates in making the connection between their chosen career and a commitment to society. A positive learning environment must be characterized by a climate of caring so that all involved support one another and cooperate in making their social and academic experiences meaningful.

# MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM MISSION / GOALS / OUTCOMES

The graduate degree programs in the School of Education provides in-depth knowledge and application of educational research to classroom practice. The Integrative Studies component of the master's degree program enables students to interface a liberal arts perspective with rigorous, professional education training.

*Overarching Program Goals*
The M.Ed. Program candidates will:
- Assume the role of teacher-scholar

- Exhibit strong communication skills-Including writing with a variety of purposes/audiences in mind

- Demonstrate reflective, professional dispositions in both work, and interactions

*Master of Education Outcomes:*
- Explore historical and current global/national/local trends, practices, and issues in education

- Analyze, synthesize, and apply research to inform professional practice

- Develop multicultural competence increasing self-awareness related to diversity issues, as well as ability to plan for differentiation

- Use technology to support learning and productivity

- Demonstrate abilities in scholarly writing

- Demonstrate understanding of both the core values of Augustana University, and the conceptual model of the School of Education

# COHORT MODEL

The School of Education offers the M.Ed. degree via a cohort model that focuses on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for mastery teaching in today's P-12 classrooms.  The course of study is designed to build on your professional education experience by aligning to the current best classroom practices in education based upon educational standards, scholarly research and scholarly literature, etc.

Candidates seeking M.Ed. degree must meet the general requirements for all graduate degrees and this degree does not lead to licensure.  The M.Ed. program is designed for those candidates that completed a bachelor's degree in a teacher education program and are eligible for licensure.

Cohort applications for this 13-16 months, non-thesis program will be reviewed when complete applications have been received, with a rolling admission process and the following deadlines:

- **Summer Cohorts**
- **Fall Cohorts**

Applications will be reviewed when completed applications have been received, rolling admissions.

Augustana University accepts applications for the M.Ed. program from residents of all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

Augustana University also accepts applications from other countries.

# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES

- Minimum of 30 credit hours with at least 21 taken at Augustana University
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0, no grades below C will be allowed
- Proficiency in written English as demonstrated in graduate coursework
- Completion of all work within a seven-year period

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS** Minimum of thirty (30) credit hours

| COURSES | CREDITS |
|---|---|
| **Integrative Studies Core — 9 required credits** | |
| EDUC 6010: Introduction to Graduate Research | 3 |
| EDUC 6600: History and Philosophy of Education | 3 |
| EDUC 6620: Issues in Education | 3 |
| **Education Studies Core – 12 required credits** | |
| EDUC 6610: Foundations and Principles of Curriculum | 3 |
| EDUC 6630: Differentiation and Diversity | 3 |
| EDUC 6640: Technology in Education | 3 |
| EDUC 6900: Research Synthesis Project | 3 |
| **Electives Courses – 9 required credits** | |
| ***Electives: Learner-Designed Option –*** <br>        ***See Below for more information*** <br><br> Please seek approval from the Program Director for courses in related areas to count as electives. Note that these are required **prior** to beginning core courses. | 9 |

## Registration / Drop/Add and Withdrawal Dates

M.Ed. student's registration is maintained and processed by the Education Program Coordinator in conjunction with the Financial Aid Office. The Education Program Coordinator will monitor your plan of study and will register students accordingly as deemed by the student's plan of study. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Education Program Coordinator if he/she needs to drop or withdrawal from their courses. Courses may be dropped with 100% refund or withdrawn by the published dates accordingly. These dates can be found for your courses each semester on:

- your Registration Email Confirmation for that given semester/session that is emailed to you by the Coordinator;
- the Master of Education website: www.augie.edu/med; and on
- your course syllabus.

# LEARNER-DESGINED OPTION

**Selected:**

Pre-approved certificates from:
- [Teaching Channel with Learners Edge.](#)

Pre-approved courses from our [Continuing Education Partners](#), i.e.
- [Teaching Channel with Learners Edge](#)
- [CE Credits Online](#)
- [South Dakota Education Association](#)
- [VESi](#)
- [Educational Resources](#)

**Created:**

Applicants will identify courses completed and must provide official transcripts and a justification for the self-designed area to be approved by the Program Director.

**Getting started:**
- Already completed a certificate through one of our [Continuing Education Partners](#), and Augustana? Select this pre-approved area on your application.

- Already completed 9 graduate credits in a single area through another partner of Augustana? These pre-approved courses can be included in a self-designed area of concentration. You must:
  - Provide transcripts with your application
  - Indicate courses completed for graduate credit on your application

**Not yet completed 9 credits in a content area to date? We recommend:**
- Completing an approved certificate, or
- Completing other pre-approved courses through one of Augustana's continuing education partners

NOTE: Please seek approval from the Program Director for courses in related areas to count as electives. Note that these are required **prior** to beginning core courses.

# CORE COURSES DESCRIPTIONS

**INTEGRATIVE STUDIES CORE – 9 REQUIRED CREDITS**
**EDUC 6010: Introduction to Graduate Research (3 credits)**
This course is designed to introduce students to research, including action research, as well as users of research information. The user of research information needs this knowledge base in order to evaluate critically the research of others and to be able to translate available research into plans of action that can be carried out in schools and other professional settings. The course will aid professionals in their abilities to locate research studies, interpret and understand them, and to decipher their symbols and terminology.

**EDUC 6600: History and Philosophy of Education (3 credits)**
This course provides a historical review and philosophical analysis of the basic theories of education.  Major emphasis will be on the educational philosophies underlying present practices, curriculum and pedagogy and their implication and application in schools. Historical patterns and events as they relate to education and curricular practices today are covered in this course. The last part of the course is spent analyzing and evaluating the historical and philosophical implications of the topics and ideas covered and determining how they relate to best practice in K-12 classrooms today.

**EDUC 6620: Issues in Education (3 credits)**
Does merit pay for teachers improve their students' performance?  Are charter schools more effective than their public school counterparts?  Do rewards and punishments facilitate learning?  Should a struggling student be held back a grade?  Teachers face all of these questions.  This course will study these "hot topics" in the field of education.  We will separate the truth from the myths and work to answer these and several other thought provoking questions.  By studying the latest research in the field of education we will aim to bring clarity to topics that are commonly blurred by heated debates.

**EDUCATION STUDIES**
**EDUC 6610: Foundations and Principles of Curriculum (3 credits)**
This course provides for a broad study of foundations and principles of curriculum in today's PK-12 schools. Areas of focus include philosophical, historical, psychological and social foundations of curriculum as well as curriculum design, development, implementation and evaluation. Course includes a review of international curriculum trends and issues.

**EDUC 6630: Differentiation and Diversity (3 credits)**
This course explores race, ethnicity, and language in American education, along with the teaching theory of differentiated instruction. Additionally, the course intent is to increase student self-awareness related to diversity issues. Prejudices, stereotypes, discrimination, and privilege of diverse cultural groups in relation to schools are explored. Students examine differentiating instruction as a way of better helping students in diverse classrooms. Personal growth through increased awareness, sensitivity, and appreciation for diversity is facilitated.

**EDUC 6640: Technology in Education (3 credits)**
This course is designed to inspire educators to use instructional technologies that engage students in learning and that enrich teaching to improve student performance. Current and future technology trends in education will be explored. This course will examine practical technology application in learning.

**EDUC 6900: Research Synthesis Project (3 credits)**
This course requires the completion of a substantial research synthesis project planned and completed under the direction of a graduate faculty mentor. The project allows students to conduct an in depth study of a topic of professional interest related to the selected area of concentration in the Master of Education Program. The project allows students to integrate the theory and perspectives gained in previous courses. As the culminating project for the program, it should demonstrate competence in conducting an extensive research review, writing professionally and applying theory to future practice.

# PROGRAM PLAN OF STUDY

Augustana's Master of Education program is taken over a 13 to 16 months period, using a cohort model. Candidates proceed through the program in cohorts of 18 students, which lends support and offers varied perspectives and knowledge to the experience.

Below are three generic samples of a plan of study based on the term you begin the program for your particular sequence of courses.

Area of concentration courses must be completed prior to enrolling in the core courses for the program.

**Sequence of Courses for Summer Cohorts**

| Year One | Summer (June-July) | Fall (1st Half) | Fall (2nd Half) | Spring (1st Half) | Spring (2nd Half) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | EDUC 6010 | EDUC 6620 | EDUC 6610 | EDUC 6640 | EDUC 6630 |
| | EDUC 6600 | | | | |
| Year Two | Summer (June-July) | | | | |
| | EDUC 6900 | | | | |

**Sequence of Courses for Fall Cohorts**

| Year One | Fall (1st Half) | Fall (2nd Half) | Spring (1st Half) | Spring (2nd Half) | Summer (June-July) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | EDUC 6010 | EDUC 6600 | EDUC 6610 | EDUC 6620 | EDUC 6630 |
| | | | | | EDUC 6640 |
| Year Two | Fall (Full Semester) | | | | |
| | EDUC 6900 | | | | |

## Capstone Experience

All students in the program are required to complete and participate in a substantial research synthesis project (EDUC/SPED 6900) which is planned and completed under the direction of a graduate faculty member. The project allows students to conduct an in-depth study of a topic of professional interest related to the selected area of concentration in the program. The project allows students to integrate the theory and perspectives gained in previous courses. As the culminating project for the program, it should demonstrate competence in conducting an extensive research review, writing professionally and applying theory to future practice.

Students will have to complete all components of the research synthesis project as outlined in EDUC/SPED 6900 Research Synthesis Project Guidelines and Evaluation Rubric as stated in the course.

## Graduation

You will receive an email on your Augie email approximately one semester prior to completing EDUC/SPED 6900 with instructions on how you apply for graduation. This application must be completed before you will be able to graduate.

# THANK YOU

Thank you for reviewing this M.Ed. Program Handbook and orientation information. We hope that the information provided will serve as a resource as you begin your M.Ed. journey.

If you have questions regarding this M.Ed. Program Handbook, the M.Ed. Program and/or how to begin the applications process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your interest in the M.Ed. at Augustana University!

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This M.Ed. Program Handbook has been in effect starting June 1, 2025.

*This M.Ed. Program Handbook was last updated on June 18, 2025.