

**NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Teaching, Leadership, and Counseling**  
**Alternate Certification Programs**

Revised Spring 2018

Thank you for your interest in NSU's alternate certification programs. We are committed to preparing individuals who want to positively impact children's success in the classroom. These programs lead to teaching certification in the state of Louisiana and are offered exclusively online.

**STEPS FOR ADMISSION**

1. Apply for admission to the NSU Graduate School (<https://graduateschool.nsula.edu/applying-for-admission-to-the-graduate-school/>).
2. Send official transcripts from all universities attended to TEACHNorthwestern@nsula.edu and to the NSU Graduate School.
3. Register for and earn passing scores on Praxis Core Reading, Writing, and Mathematics through Educational Testing Service (ETS) (<https://www.ets.org/praxis>).
4. Remember: The Praxis Core exams are waived if you hold a master's degree, have an ACT composite score of at least 22, or an SAT combined reading and math score of at least 1030.
5. Register for and earn passing scores on a Praxis content test for your teaching area/grade level through ETS (<https://www.ets.org/praxis>).

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Office of Teacher Certification  
Teacher Education Center  
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## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PROGRAMS**

- Baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited university
- Minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA
- Passing scores on the Praxis Core Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
  - Praxis I PPST will be accepted if passed prior to September 1, 2014.
  - An earned master's degree, an ACT composite score of at least 22, or a SAT combined reading and math score of at least 1030 will substitute for Praxis Core.
- Passing scores on the Praxis content specific examinations in the certification area pursued
  - Early Childhood PK-3: Elementary Education: Content Knowledge exam (5001)
  - Elementary 1-5: Elementary Education: Content Knowledge exam (5001)
  - Middle Level 4-8: Varies by subject area
  - Secondary 6-12: Varies by subject area
- General/Special Education Mild/Moderate
  - Elementary 1-5: Elementary Education: Content Knowledge exam (5001)
  - Middle Level 4-8: Varies by subject area
  - Secondary 6-12: Varies by subject area

NOTE: The Praxis Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications test (#5543) is not accepted for admission to the Integrated General/Special Education (Mild/Moderate) program.

## **INTERNSHIP/RESIDENCY**

Candidates in all alternate certification programs are responsible for securing a full-time teaching position in their certification areas in order to enroll in the two-semester internship/residency. In order to enroll in an internship/residency, a candidate must secure and provide evidence of a full-time, one-year teaching contract in the certification area he/she declared upon admission to the program. The full-time teaching position must be in a Louisiana-based school approved by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and the intern must be the teacher of record in the subject area he/she is seeking certification for at least 50% of each instructional day.

### **Pre-Internship/Residency Practice Requirements**

Effective for admission beginning summer 2018, the Louisiana Department of Education (Bulletin 996) requires alternate certification candidates to complete 80 hours of practice experience in P12 classrooms prior to beginning the one-year internship/residency/residency required for completion of the program. This could include prior experience as a classroom teacher, long-term or day-to-day substitute teacher, or a paraprofessional during the regular school year or summer school.

If a candidate has not engaged in 80 hours of experience prior to the residency, he/she must meet with an alternate certification program advisor to discuss options for completing the hours.

Documentation of practice experience must be provided by the school/district in which it was completed and must include details of the experience. A form for documenting the experience will be provided to eligible applicants.

## **Attendance Policy**

For each semester of the internship/residency, the candidate must maintain full-time employment status as teacher of record in his/her certification area, and satisfactorily perform all duties required by the employing district and school.

Attendance for each internship/residency semester is based on the NSU academic calendar for that particular semester. The internship/residency requires the candidate to be in attendance in the classroom for each of the two 15-week semesters.

NSU policy allows for absences not in excess of 10% of the total class meetings (7.5 days). Extended personal or medical leave of more than 2 weeks during a semester will require delaying or repeating the internship/residency.

## **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Certification through any alternate certification program requires that all program admission requirements be met, all coursework (including the internship/residency) passed with a grade of C or better, a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50, and passage of the Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) test and any other Praxis exams not required at admission for the certification being sought.

Upon successful completion of all courses, internship/residency, and Praxis requirements, a candidate will be eligible for a Level 1 teaching certificate. Otherwise, a practitioner license can be renewed twice.

## **PROGRAMS AVAILABLE**

### **Practitioner Teacher Program (PREP)**

Total Hours: 21

Certification Areas: Elementary 1-5; Middle 4-8; Secondary 6-12

PREP cohorts begin in the summer with 9 hours of coursework then enroll in internship/residency and teaching seminar courses the following fall and spring semesters. Up to 12 hours of PREP credits may apply toward a master's degree. Upon successful completion of the 9 hours of summer coursework, a candidate will be eligible for a Practitioner License 1.

***Because PREP is a practitioner program, each candidate must have a written letter of intent to employ/guarantee of a teaching position in his/her certification area/grade level for the school year immediately following summer classes in order to enroll in internship/residency courses.***

PREP candidates must pass the appropriate Praxis PLT test before being recommended for teacher certification.

## **Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)**

Total Hours: 33-39

Certification Areas: Early Childhood PK-3; Elementary 1-5; Middle 4-8; Secondary 6-12; Integrated General/Special Education Mild/Moderate Elementary 1-5, Middle 4-8, or Secondary 6-12

NOTE: The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required for enrollment in any MAT program; a passing score on the Praxis content test is accepted in lieu of the GRE.

Eligible candidates receive a "Prescription of Study" and course rotation and may begin coursework either in fall, spring, or summer semesters. Each candidate will be assigned an academic advisor who will assist with scheduling the required courses.

Once admitted to the MAT program, a candidate is eligible for employment by a public school district in Louisiana and may teach on a Practitioner License 3 for a total of 4 years, if yearly renewal requirements are met (completion of 9 hours of MAT coursework per year).

MAT candidates must pass all required Praxis tests before enrolling in the first semester of internship/residency.

## **Non-Master's**

Total Hours: 24-33

Certification Area: Music K-12

NOTE: A one-year internship/residency where the candidate is the teacher of record in an approved school is required for completion of all programs.

NOTE: The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required for enrollment in the MAT; a passing score on the Praxis content test is accepted in lieu of the GRE.

Eligible candidates receive a "Prescription of Study" and may begin coursework either in Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters. You will be assigned an academic advisor who will assist with scheduling the required courses.

Once admitted to the program, candidates are eligible for employment in a public school district in Louisiana and may teach on a Practitioner License 2 for a total of 3 years, if yearly renewal requirements are met (completion of 9 hours of certification coursework per year).

Non-master's music education candidates must pass all required Praxis tests before enrolling in the first semester of internship/residency.

## **PRAXIS INFORMATION**

### **Preparing for Praxis Tests**

Praxis test preparation resources are available at <http://www.ets.org>, from a number of printed resources available at bookstores, and from a number of online sources that may be located through Web searches.

Praxis Core workshops are offered on the NSU campus. Dates and times are available at <http://tlc.nsula.edu>.

The list of current Praxis tests required for program admission and certification may be found at <https://www.teachlouisiana.net/teachers.aspx?PageID=5605>.

### **Registering for Praxis Tests**

List NSU (code 6492) and the Louisiana Department of Education (code 7330) as score recipients.

Be sure to put your SSN on your Praxis registration form/s so you will be “matched” at the Louisiana Department of Education.

Save the electronic copy of the test scores that you receive, as these are official scores.