

Master of Science- Instructional Specialist

Concentration: Reading Specialist and Dyslexia

Degree Plan- 30 Credit Hours total

Foundational Courses:

EL 751 Applications of Developmental Theories- 3 Credit Hours

This course is for students who are practitioners in any educational setting from pre-K through secondary school. Course covers the main theories currently used as the foundation for quality education, pre-K through late adolescence and young adults.

EL 810 Information Literacy- 3 Credit Hours

This course focuses on the process of becoming web literate or finding, understanding, and using information from the web. A foundation will be built from what we know about reading, learning, and effective teaching practices with print text in order to understand the benefits and challenges of reading on the web. Course projects will encourage participants to actively use models of inquiry with the web to pursue answers to their own questions and learn ways to guide students through the online inquiry process.

EL 725 Differentiating Instruction- 2 Credit Hours

This course provides descriptions and applications of methods and strategies for teaching diverse learners. Candidates will participate in a variety of activities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to meet the academic needs of all learners through application of the principles of universal design for learning, technology, and intensive intervention as individually appropriate across the content areas.

EL 854 Action Research in the Classroom- 3 Credit Hours

This course is designed to develop the educators' knowledge and skills in appropriate action research techniques with the participants developing an action research project that will be implemented in their school/classroom. Students will produce a research proposal and then complete a final paper that reports the outcome of the research.

Concentration Courses:

EL 721 Science of Reading I- 3 Credit Hours

This course focuses on reading instruction and its connection to language arts within the Science of Reading framework. Emphasis is on literacy acquisition, developmental progression, and evidence-based practices like phonics and fluency. Students will explore key theories, research, and ways to create literacy-rich environments.

EL 723 Science of Reading II- 3 Credit Hours

This course explores reading as an integrated part of the curriculum, covering structured literacy, multisensory instruction, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and spelling. It emphasizes evidence-based strategies, adapting instruction for diverse learners, and using technology and assessments to foster lifelong reading and learning.

EL 821 Literacy Practices & Dyslexia in the Classroom- 3 Credit Hours

This course equips teachers with skills to create literacy-rich environments that engage all students, focusing on standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It covers state literacy standards, dyslexia fundamentals, and explores language domains, literacy development, and the phonology-orthography connection in the science of reading, while valuing societal differences.

EL 823 Analysis of Reading Assessment & Instruction 3 Credit Hours

(Prerequisites, EL 721 and EL 723) This course is designed to provide the reading specialist or classroom teacher with the knowledge, skills, and processes to assess and analyze reading performance and provide effective research-based instruction for the primary, intermediate, and advance level readers (preK-12th grade levels).

EL 827 Assessing and Instructing Learners: Literacy Practicum- 3 Credit Hours

(Prerequisite EL 823 and Instructor Permission) Students will apply knowledge and skills from EL 823 by working with a reader with a reading disability. The student will gather materials, tutor and assess a student for a minimum of 25 hours, and write a diagnostic/prescriptive summary.

Capstone Courses:

EL 828 Instructional Leadership and Coaching- 2 Credit Hours

This course focuses on the theory and instruction of leadership and coaching across all disciplines. Course activities and assignments will allow students to broadly view effective roles of the coach/leader in the schools and apply the content to a specific subject area

(literacy, math, STEM, etc.). This course is a prerequisite for EL829, Literacy and Coaching Practicum.

EL 829 Leadership and Coaching Practicum – 2 Credit Hours

(Prerequisite: EL 828 and Instructor Permission) Each student will participate in practical experiences related to professional leadership and coaching roles in the selected field of study. The course serves as the capstone for the instructional specialist degree.