

Reading and Language Arts Program

Department of Literacy, Early Education, Bilingual & Special Education



Graduate Student Handbook

**Kremen School of Education and Human Development
California State University, Fresno**

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Department of Literacy, Early Education, Bilingual & Special Education
Reading/Language Arts Program
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PREFACE

The Department of Literacy, Early Education, Bilingual, and Special Education has comprised a graduate student handbook as a guide for prospective, entering, and continuing students seeking a program of study that leads to a) the degree of Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Reading/Language Arts; b) the California Reading Certificate; and c) the California Reading/Language Arts Specialists Credential. In this handbook, students will learn about the current policies of the program with regard to admission, course-load requirements, transfer of graduate course credit, program requirements, minimum standards for satisfactory progress toward the degree, and the available areas of study. Even though, the information herein reflects current policies, it is subject to change.

Current and prospective students are also encouraged to check the Division of Graduate Studies website <<http://www.csufresno.edu/gradstudies>> for more graduate student information. The Division of Graduate Studies is pivotal in providing graduate students with information about deadlines and expectations. Please visit their site on a regular basis to remain current. Specific questions and concerns regarding the program however, can be asked of the Program Coordinator; however, ultimately it is the responsibility of the graduate student to meet deadline, fulfill requirements, and complete their program of study and work.

Welcome to the Reading/Language Arts Program!

We are pleased that you selected us and we hope that while here you take advantage of everything at Fresno State, the discipline of Reading/Language Arts professionals, our faculty, and the Kremen School of Education and Human Development and the Division of Graduate Studies has to offer. In an age of increasing demands for a highly literate society, program faculty strive to prepare reading/language arts professionals who truly understand how to integrate contemporary theories of reading with sound pedagogical science. Our program is accredited by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the National Council for Accreditation of teacher Education.

Program Overview

Graduate study in the Department of Literacy, Early Education, Bilingual & Special Education is distinguished from undergraduate study in the depth of subject matter and its consideration of professional problems and issues. At the master's degree level, graduate study focuses upon the student's professional growth and development and advanced certification.

Programs Offered:

- **Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Reading/Language Arts (30 units)**
- **California Added Authorization (15 units)**
- **California Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialists Credential (24units)**

Program Description

The **MASTER OF ARTS in EDUCATION** with an emphasis in **Reading/Language Arts** can provide certified teachers advanced preparation as reading practitioners in three categories:

- the reading professional in the classroom (early-childhood teacher, elementary school teacher, middle and secondary school teacher);
- the specialized reading professional (school or district reading specialist, reading coordinator);
- the allied professional (related service professional).

Successful completion of the program may also qualify the candidate for California State **Added Authorization** and/or the **Reading and Literacy Leadership Specialists Credential**-- two parts of a continuum in providing services to students and teachers in the area of reading and language arts.

Graduate students may elect to work toward the M.A. degree with certification or the specialist credential, or they may pursue certification without the advanced degree. Thus, you may select one of the five approaches:

- 1) the M.A. only,
- 2) the M.A. with *Added Authorization*,
- 3) the M.A. with a *Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialist Credential*,
- 4) *Added Authorization (without a Master's Degree)*, or
- 5) *Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialists Credential (without a Master's Degree)*.

For the **M.A.**, the candidate must complete **(30 units)**:

- 6 units of core education coursework,
- 9 units of elective coursework in rdg, intervention, or related subject (with approval),
- 12 units of approved reading coursework, and
- 3 units of culmination work (project, thesis, or comprehensive exam).

For the **M.A. with Added Authorization**, the candidate must complete **(30 units)**:

- 6 units of core education coursework,
- 6 units of elective coursework in rdg, intervention, or related subject (with approval),
- 12 units of approved reading coursework,
- 3 units of intervention work, and
- 3 units of culmination work (project, thesis, or comprehensive exam).

For the **M.A. with a Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialist Credential**, the candidate completes **(36 units)**:

- 12 units of approved reading coursework,
- 9 units of elective coursework in rdg, intervention, or related subject (with approval),
- 3 units of intervention work, and
- 6 units of supervised fieldwork.

For **Added Authorization without the M.A. degree**, the candidate must complete **(15 units)**:

- 12 units of approved reading coursework, and
- 3 units of intervention work.

For the **Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialists Credential without the M.A. degree**, the candidate must complete **(24 units)**:

- 12 units of approved reading coursework,
- 9 units of elective coursework in rdg, intervention, or related subject (with approval),
- 3 units of intervention work, and
- 6 units of supervised fieldwork.

READING/LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM COURSE SEQUENCE

Master OF Art's Degree

Reading Certificate

Reading Specialists Credential

Reading Certificate (ONLY)	Master's (ONLY)	Specialist Credential in Reading (ONLY)
	ERA 153 Ed Stat (Prereq for ERA220)	ERA 153 Ed Stat (Prereq for ERA220)
Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 1
LEE 278 Literacy Processes & Practices (3)	LEE 278 Literacy Processes & Practices (3)	LEE 278 Literacy Processes & Practices (3)
LEE 213 Tchg the Language Arts, K-12 (3)	LEE 213 Tchg the Language Arts, K-12 (3)	LEE 213 Tchg the Language Arts, K-12 (3)
Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 2
LEE 215 Language Issues in Reading (3)	LEE 215 Language Issues in Reading (3)	LEE 215 Language Issues in Reading (3)
LEE 224 Assessment and Development of Reading Abilities (3)	LEE 224 Assessment and Development of Reading Abilities (3) Master's Elective	LEE 224 Assessment and Development of Reading Abilities (3)
Semester 3	Semester 3	Semester 3
LEE 230 Supervised Teaching in Reading/Language Arts (3)	LEE 214 Literature for Children & Young Adults (3) Master's Elective	LEE 230 Supervised Teaching in Rdg/LA (3)
	ERA 220 Educational Research (3) (prerequisite to 244)	
	Semester 4	Semester 4
	LEE 244 Research for Reading Professionals (3)	LEE 244 Research for Reading Professionals (3)
	ERA288 Program Measurement & Eval (3) or ERA285 Advanced Ed Psyc	
	Semester 5	Semester 5
	LEE298/299 Project or Thesis (3) or *Exam (0+3)	
	LEE 230 Supervised Tch in Rdg/LA (3) Master's Elective	LEE234 Clinical Experience Assessment and Development of Reading Abilities (3)
	*Comp Exam requires a concurrent 3 unit course (LEE 254)	LEE254 Field Experiences in Reading (3)

Reading Certificate (15 units)

Master's (Required 22 + 9 Elect = 30 units)

Reading Specialists (24 units)

Admission Requirements

Prospective master's degree and advanced graduate study students must meet an assortment of admission requirements to the University and the Program to achieve Classified Standing (full admission). Consideration for admission requires the following:

1. *Completion of the University Graduate School Online Application.* To be considered for admission, applicants must submit the University Graduate School Online Application available at www.csumentor.edu.
2. Submittal of one official transcript from each college or university attended. If the last school attended was CSU, Fresno, no transcripts are required. Failure to provide official transcripts to CSU, Fresno admissions will delay program admission.
3. *A bachelor's degree from an approved institution.*
4. An undergraduate grade-point average of at least 2.5 (A=4.00) in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted and be in good academic standing at the last college or university attended.
5. Submit a non-refundable university application fee.

After applying to the university you will be directed to the program application forms.

6. Complete a Reading/Language Arts Program application. The Reading/Language program application can be downloaded from: <http://education.csufresno.edu>.
7. Submit to the program documentation of application or admission to CSU, Fresno along with a signed program application to Room ED 151.
8. Include three letters of recommendation and a statement of purpose.
9. Meet the program admission writing requirement by obtaining a score of 41+ on the CBEST or receive a minimum score of 114+ on the UDWE or earn a grade of "B" or better in ENGL 160W or ENGL 117W, or equivalent.

Applicants seeking a **Reading Certificate and/or Reading Specialists Credential ONLY** must complete the above plus:

10. Possess a Basic Teaching Credential.
11. Provide evidence of passing CBEST

Students cleared as credential candidates by the Department and the Kremen School of Education and Human Development are not automatically accepted into the department's graduate program.

Program Prerequisite

A basic teaching credential is **not required** for admission. However, if you wish to receive a Masters of Arts in Education with a Reading/Language Arts emphasis in order to teach at the Community College level or in a business, a teaching certificate is recommended but not necessarily required.

Reading Specialists Credential Prerequisite

Three years of teaching experience is required for awarding the Reading Specialists Credential; however, it is not necessary to have three years of experience when entering the program.

Pre-Program Advising for Students seeking a Master's Degree only

ERA 153 (Educational Statistics) is a prerequisite to ERA 220 (Research in Education). ERA 220 is an approved master's degree core course. Graduate students must successfully complete ERA 153 with a grade "C" or better or its CSUF approved equivalent as verified on student transcripts. Approved courses include PSYCH 144, PSCY 143, SWRK 176, DS 123, OR HS 102. Coursework from other institutions must be reviewed prior. This step is separate from the admission application. More information can be obtained from the School's Graduate Admission Technician.

Possible Application Outcomes

Admittance for master's degree and advanced graduate study involves acceptance by the program, review by the school, and concurrence of the Division Graduate Studies Office. The process can result in several possible outcomes, as follows:

1. *Admit with "Classified" (full) Standing.* This category is granted to those students who fully meet all university and program admission requirements.
2. *Admit as "Conditional" Classified Standing.* Admission file is incomplete, or student needs to meet an academic program condition in order to attain classified. Students who have been granted conditionally classified admission to a graduate program are required to complete all conditions for achieving classified status (full admission) to the program by the semester in which a maximum of 9 units to be used toward the master's degree is completed. Failure to attain classified graduate standing in a timely manner as outlined in the catalog may result in the loss of units to be applied toward the degree since units in excess of 9 prior to classification may not be listed on the Petition of Advancement to Candidacy.

3. *Refuse admission.* An applicant may be refused admission for any of a variety of reasons including but not limited to: low grades, poor writing, low test scores, low facility in English, academic deficiencies, lack of space in the intended area of focus, and intended focus incompatible with the mission of the program, lack of student funds. Any applicant, who is refused admission, will be informed, by letter or email, of the reasons for refusal.

A student is expected to attain “*classified*” graduate standing either at admission or during the first semester of studies. Candidates for classification are expected to possess a minimum 3.0 post-baccalaureate cumulative grade point average. It is your responsibility to meet the conditions specified in your letter of admission into the graduate program. As soon as you have met the conditions, please see the Graduate School Program Coordinator to initiate the request for classification.

Graduate Students' Orientation

All newly admitted graduate students are required to attend a mandatory orientation meeting held each semester during the week before or when classes start. Often the orientation is the first class session of LEE 278. This applies to all graduate students.

Graduate Student Standing

Graduate students are expected to petition for *Advancement of Candidacy* at the end of the second semester of graduate studies. If you are planning to do a *thesis* or a *project* as a culminating experience, it is essential that you be advanced to candidacy no later than the fourth semester of graduate studies. The “*Petition of Advancement to Candidacy*” form serves as a guideline for progress toward and completion of the degree. It must be typed, signed, and submitted to the Reading/Language Arts Program Coordinator. The petition is available online via the “forms” link on the Division of Graduate Studies Web site.

Graduate-Level Writing Competence

California State University, Fresno requires that students have graduate-level writing abilities before being advanced to candidacy for the master's degree. Students can demonstrate these abilities by completing a research paper according to the APA format in LEE 213. The research paper is an extensive assignment, prepared with in-depth research.

A student who fails to meet the research paper component of the graduate writing evaluation also will have two additional opportunities to revise and resubmit their proposal. The professor will provide written comments about the students' papers.

The students can revise their papers and resubmit them, usually within a previously agreed upon time period but no later than the end of the first month after classes start in the following semester.

Graduate Writing Skills Appeal Process

If a student decides to appeal any graduate matters pertaining to the program, including the graduate writing evaluation, the student should submit an appeal in writing to the Reading/Language Arts Program Coordinator. After reviewing the recommendations of the program coordinator, the department chair will make the final recommendation on the appeal.

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to Candidacy: Eligibility

Eligibility requirements for advancement to candidacy include the following:

1. A student should be classified by the semester in which a maximum of 9 units to be used toward the master's degree are completed. Not more than 9 units (including transfer and post-baccalaureate credit) completed before achieving full classified graduate standing at California State University, Fresno may be listed on the Petition of Advancement to Candidacy. Courses taken during the semester in which the student is classified may also be listed on the Petition of Advancement to Candidacy.
2. Completion of any additional prerequisites which the adviser specifies in writing.
3. A minimum program grade point average of 3.0 in all courses listed on the advancement petition. Those enrolling in coursework not related to the graduate degree are encouraged to request CR/NC grading.
4. Completion in graduate standing at California State University, Fresno of at least 9 units of the proposed program with a 3.0 grade point average on all completed work appearing on the Petition of Advancement to Candidacy.
5. All graduate students must demonstrate their competence in written English prior to advancement to candidacy. Early completion of this requirement is recommended. The date the student met the graduate writing requirement must be noted on the Petition of Advancement to Candidacy form.

The graduate student is responsible for adhering to deadlines established by the Division of Graduate Studies for the submission of advancement forms. Forms received after the deadlines are considered late and will be processed as time allows. *Students cannot be advanced to candidacy and graduate in the same semester.*

Advancement to Candidacy: Policies

The approved degree program for the master's degree is a coherent pattern of (1) specific requirements for the program and (2) additional courses selected to meet the student's particular needs. It consists of 30 units which must be completed within 5 years just preceding the granting of the master's degree. Only graduate courses (200 series) and such upper-division courses (100 series) as are recommended by the colleges, schools, or departments and approved by the University Graduate Committee are acceptable on the unit requirement. Other courses are counted in calculating the student's study load and cumulative post-baccalaureate GPA, but cannot be counted toward the unit requirement for the master's degree. Courses that were used to satisfy the requirements of a previous degree may not be used on the program. The approved program must be consistent with the following policies:

1. At least 21 units of a 30-unit program must be residence credit (courses taken through regular enrollment at California State University, Fresno). No more than 9 units of transfer and/or California State University, Fresno Extension credit may be included in the 30-unit program.
2. Transfer credit may be used toward a California State University, Fresno master's degree only if the institution offering the work is accredited (A-rated) and would accept it for a comparable master's degree program. The off-campus institution must also have listed the units as post-baccalaureate graduate units on the student's transcript. Credit at California State University, Fresno will be granted if it is judged by appropriate university authorities to be particularly relevant to the individual student's program. The student must present appropriate documentation, including official transcripts of work completed and copies from the catalog of the institution where the transfer work was taken, as follows: the relevant course description(s), evidence that the course(s) may be used toward a graduate degree at that institution, the course numbering and grading systems, and information clarifying whether the institution used the semester or quarter system.
3. Courses taken through Continuing and Global Education (Extension and/or Open University) are not normally used to fulfill the requirements toward a master's degree. Students intending to take a course through the Division Continuing and Global Education must request special permission from their program coordinator to use the course toward their program. If approved, a maximum of 9 transfer (including California State University, Fresno Extension and/or Open University) units may be used on a 30-unit program. Students may not enroll through Open University in order to bypass the university fee structure.
4. Courses used to fulfill G.E. curriculum (Capstone, Integration, or Multicultural/International), undergraduate writing W courses, lower-division

courses, and professional (300-level) courses may not be used in fulfillment of the program requirements of the master's degree.

5. Student teaching credit is not ordinarily used on master's degree programs. In unusual circumstances, if student teaching is demonstrably appropriate to a program, up to 3 units of such work may be approved by the University Graduate Committee.
6. Credit by Examination (CBE) may be used to fulfill prerequisites, but may not apply toward the master's degree program.
7. Graduate students may not elect to take a course for a CR grade to fulfill either prerequisite or major program requirements unless the course is only available for CR/NC grading as indicated by class note 14 in the Class Schedule. No CR/NC-graded courses to be counted toward fulfillment of the degree requirements.
8. Courses may not be included on the advancement to candidacy petition if they do not fall within the 5-year limit. A minimum of 70% of the courses in a student's program for the master's degree must be graduate-level courses numbered in the 200 series. Substitutions for regular departmental requirements must be approved by the program coordinator and noted on the front page of the Petition for Advancement to Candidacy

Criteria for Minimal Satisfactory Progress

An applicant who has been accepted by the Reading/Language Arts Program as a master's degree student is required to satisfy the minimum criteria listed below. The student who does not maintain minimal acceptable performance as defined by the criteria will be so informed and may have his/her enrollment terminated. Any student whose progress has been declared unsatisfactory can appeal to the Graduate Program Committee for reconsideration of his/her status.

1. Graduate students must maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) for graduate-level courses. If the student's grade-point average falls below 3.00, the student shall have the next term in which he or she is enrolled to raise the average to the minimum satisfactory level. If the GPA is not raised at least to 3.00 in that term, the student's progress will be considered unsatisfactory.
2. *Grades of Incomplete.* The Graduate School considers a student to be making unsatisfactory progress whenever an Incomplete has not been removed by the end of the next academic-year semester during which the student enrolls. If a graduate student in the program has 3 or more credits of

Incomplete that have not been removed in this time frame, the Division of Graduate Studies will block the student's future enrollment by placing a hold on registration. This Departmental hold on registration will be lifted when all of the Incompletes have been removed.

3. *Five-year time limit.* The time-limit for completion of all requirements for the master's degree is five years after graduate admission. A student who fails to complete the master's degree within this time limit is considered *inactive*. Inactive students may not take the final Master's Culminating Experience until their program has been reviewed by the Program Coordinator and the Graduate Program Coordinator. One potential outcome of this review is termination for failure to make satisfactory progress. Another potential outcome is a stipulation that the student's program be updated with additional courses.

Culminating Experience

A culminating experience is required for a Master's of Arts in Education with an emphasis in Reading/Language Arts. Acceptable culminating experiences include comprehensive examination, thesis (299), or project (298). Selection of the culminating experience preferably should be decided by the end of the first semester of graduate studies. Students who have enrolled in thesis or project units will not be permitted to change to another culminating experience during the semester in which they apply for the MA degree to be granted. Please note that if you change your culminating experience after you have enrolled in thesis (LEE 299) or project (LEE 298), the units are given a grade of *F* upon graduation.

Culminating Experience Eligibility

Graduate students must complete 21 units of course work, including the core courses and six units of research, and the MA Exit Survey (available through the Reading/Language Arts Forum in Blackboard under Graduation Information).

Culminating Experience Descriptions:

Comprehensive Examination. A comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student's ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination must evidence independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation.

Graduate Project. A project is a significant undertaking of a pursuit appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It must evidence originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It must be described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the

project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required.

Thesis. A thesis is the written product of the systematic study of a significant problem. It clearly identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product must evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, clarity of purpose, and accurate and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis will be required.

If you have decided to pursue thesis as a culminating experience, please download the thesis guidelines and template from the Division of Graduate Studies website. Also, you must attend the thesis workshop held by the Division of Graduate Studies (these are offered each semester). Please take a look at what makes a good thesis proposal. The department also has a cabinet full of theses conducted by previous students. You have full access to these documents.

Thesis or Project Research Involving Human and/or Animal Subjects.

Students conducting thesis or project research involving human subjects should not begin use of human subjects until written approval has been received from the departmental Human Subjects Committee and, where review demands, the University Committee on Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). Guidelines and forms for protocol can be obtained from the department office or the Office of the Vice President for Administration. Students should allow at least 2 weeks for a required CPHS review.

Policy for incomplete Projects, Thesis, or Examination

Incomplete Project. Students who have enrolled in the required number of project (298) units, but have not completed their project, must maintain continuous enrollment by enrolling in 298C (zero units) each semester until the awarding of the degree. Students may enroll twice in 298C with department approval. Additional registrations are not encouraged, and must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Permission and class numbers for 298C may be obtained from the department.

Incomplete Thesis. Students who have enrolled in the required number of thesis (299) units, but have not completed their thesis, must maintain continuous enrollment by enrolling in 299C (zero units) each semester until the awarding of the degree. Students may enroll twice in 299C with department approval. Additional registrations are not encouraged, and must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Permission and class numbers for 299C may be obtained from the department.

Comprehensive Examination. Students who will be taking or re-retaking the comprehensive examination and have enrolled in all courses toward the degree, and have no other courses to take, **must maintain continuous enrollment by enrolling in GS 299C (zero units)** each semester until the awarding of the degree. Students may enroll twice in GS 299C with department approval. Additional registrations are not encouraged, and must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. **Permission and class numbers for GS299C may be obtained from the Division of Graduate Studies Office**, Harold Haak Administrative Center (4th floor of the Henry Madden Library)

Graduation Information

Graduate students seeking to graduate must apply for graduation during the first two weeks of the semester in which graduation is planned. For complete, detailed information on graduate policies and procedures, refer to the “Graduate Studies” section of the university General Catalog. Graduation information is also available at the Division of Graduate Studies website. Their website address is: <http://www.csufresno.edu/gradstudies/forms/index.shtml>. Graduation deadlines can also be found at their site by entering the following website address: <http://www.csufresno.edu/gradstudies/deadlines.shtml>. Remember to make appropriate arrangements for your cap, gown, and hood rental in the campus bookstore. Commencement ceremonies take place once a year in May.

Advanced Credential Completion

COMPLETION OF THE ADDED AUTHORIZATION

Graduate Students seeking a Reading *Certificate* aka Added Authorization must submit the following items *once the grades for all the required courses have been posted*:

1. FS/CCTC Specialist Application Form
2. Reading *Certificate* aka Added Authorization Program Completion Form indicating that the student has completed 15 units.
3. Fresno State transcripts with ALL grades and bachelor's degree posted. Unofficial transcripts printed from my.fresnostate.edu account acceptable.
4. Copy of valid prerequisite Multiple Subject teaching credential
5. Employer letter verifying 1 year of teaching experience
6. \$25.00 money order/cashier's check payable to Fresno State (must include student ID on face)

COMPLETION OF THE READING/LITERACY LEADERSHIP CREDENTIAL

Graduate Students seeking a Reading/Literacy Leadership Specialist Certificate must submit the following items *once the grades for all the required courses have been posted*:

1. Complete and sign the certificate completion form
2. Complete and sign the Fresno State/CCTC Specialist application: Available at: <http://www.fresnostate.edu/kremen/documents/cred-app/SpecialistApp.pdf> (Links to an external site.)
3. Submit both application forms along with transcripts, copy of multiple or single subject credential, employer letter and the processing fee of \$25.00 to the current Reading/Language Arts Program Coordinator for signature and processing. The information can be dropped at in room ED 250 of the Education Building or it can be mailed at: Fresno State - Kremen School of Education and Human Development, 5005 North Maple Avenue, M/S ED 202, Fresno, CA 93740-8025.