When children learn to read, they build the academic foundation for the rest of their lives. You have the power to be a teacher who can provide transformational tools to children throughout our M.S.Ed. in Literacy Education with a focus on Reading. Our unique program will advance your competency in pedagogy that is culturally responsive, and transformative; in literature for children and young adults; and in digital literacies and technology. Completion of our 33-semester-hour program leads to the K-12 Reading Specialist endorsement (or the 24-semester-hour Reading Teacher endorsement) being added to your Professional Educator License. You will meet or exceed expectations set by the Illinois State Board of Education and the International Literacy Association.

Our Framework

We believe that literacy enlightens, informs and emancipates. Literacy is the mirror that can reflect a lived experience back to us – or the door or window through which we peek at someone else’s lived experiences. You’ll master four main competencies of highly qualified reading professionals:

- Knowledge and self-awareness of one’s positionality in multi-faceted systems of power.
- Critical recognition of power structures and systems of oppression.
- Creation of inclusive environments.
- Advocacy for students, their families and other marginalized school personnel.

Real-world Learning

Our Jerry L. Johns Literacy Clinic provides reading support services for K-12 students, continuing education and professional development opportunities for reading specialists and excellent practicum experiences for you.

Admission Requirements

You can apply to the NIU Graduate School as a degree-seeking student or as a Student-at-Large, which allows you to take a course while waiting for official admission to the program. Your complete application packet will require:

- Two letters of recommendation.
- Your career goal statement.
- Your college transcripts and test scores (GRE or MAT).
M.S. ED. IN LITERACY EDUCATION WITH A FOCUS ON READING

Innovative Experiences

We prepare students to become leaders in their chosen professions through programs of study grounded in engaged learning experiences. In our competency-based master’s degree, each course builds on the previous work. All are aligned with the standards for reading professionals developed by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the International Literacy Association, which has nationally recognized our program as exemplary. Cohorts are offered at NIU campuses in DeKalb, Naperville and Hoffman Estates, as well as online and in schools within the NIU service area.

Coursework

**Phase I. Foundations in Literacy** (15 credits)
- LTRE 500 Improvement of Reading in the Elementary School (3)
- LTRE 505 Teaching Reading in the Middle School (3)
- LTRE 511 Content Area Reading (3)
- LTIC 515 Bilingualism and Reading (3)
- LTLA 543 Writing Instruction (3)

**Phase II. Diagnosis and Remediation** (9 credits)
- LTRE 520 Diagnosis and Treatment of Reading Difficulties (3)
- LTRE 530 Practicum in Diagnosis of Reading Difficulties (3)
- LTRE 531 Practicum in Problems of Teaching Reading (3)

**Phase III. Leadership in Literacy** (6 credits)
- LTRE 701 Supervisory Problems in Reading (3)
- LTCY 586 Internship (can be completed while teaching full-time)

**Core Course**
- LTCY 536 Literacy Research (3)

**Certification vs. Endorsement**

The certification is for professional educators who already hold a master’s degree and have completed an approved K-12 reading specialist preparation program. The endorsement is for teachers who teach reading in a setting other than a self-contained classroom.

Teachers in both categories have a deep understanding of reading and reading instruction; understand how to diagnose reading disabilities and how to teach and support the education of students with reading disabilities; participate in curriculum design and implementation; and communicate and work with the public and other professionals.

Those who earn the certification also understand how to interpret and use reading research; provide leadership in curriculum design and implementation as well as staff development; and can secure and manage instructional resources.

College of Education,
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Nick Slicer, Graduate Counselor
Phone: 815-753-7948
Email: nslicer@niu.edu
cedu.niu.edu/leed

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