UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI

Clinical Services and Certification
Lovinger Building – Room 2130

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO CERTIFICATION

INFORMATION HANDBOOK 2026

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ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

Alternative Pathways to Certification is designed to prepare the candidate for a teaching position and provide educational support that will lead to certification in the state of Missouri.

□ Complete an online application for admission to UCM Graduate Studies, www.ucmo.edu/graduate

- If you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in addition to the Alternative program, you need to first apply as a degree-seeking student. The program coordinator will contact you when you've been admitted to the degree program and will assign a graduate advisor to you. After you have been admitted to the degree program, please contact the certification office so you can then be considered for the Alternative program.

- If you are only interested in seeking certification, please fill out the certificate application and choose the Alternative Certification program.

□ Arrange for all official transcripts to be sent to UCM Graduate Studies. The mailing address is Graduate Studies, WDE 1900, University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, MO 64093.

- Note: Official transcripts from all academic institutions attended are required for admission to UCM. If you send official transcripts to Clinical Services and Certification staff for your transcript evaluation, the transcripts will be forwarded to Graduate Studies staff.

□ Complete the background check or upload a copy of a substitute certificate within your application.

□ Create an Educator Profile through DESE Web Applications linked here.

□ Information about financial assistance is available at www.ucmo.edu/sfs.

□ After your transcripts have been evaluated and a certification plan has been created, the certification plan will be shared with you via Google.

□ Once admitted, you are eligible for enrollment. You should receive an email from the Technology Support Center containing your 700 number, also known as your student ID number. A separate email from the Technology Support Center will contain a link to retrieve your temporary MyCentral password. When you first log in to MyCentral, you will be asked to enter a new password.

□ Enrollment is completed through MyCentral, which can be accessed from www.ucmo.edu by selecting "Campus Links" in the upper right corner of the page.

Note: If you are not able to self-enroll through MyCentral, contact Mrs. Cavanah, cavanah@ucmo.edu, for enrollment assistance. An email message including your first and last name, your 700 number, and requesting enrollment in the class(es), the digit CRN for the class(es) would be best.

□ Mrs. Cavanah will serve as your advisor for questions about certification or your certification requirements. You will also work with an assigned faculty advisor regarding the courses on your certification plan.

Contact Information

Dr. Troy Marnholtz

Director of Clinical Services and Certification/ Certification Officer
Phone: 660-543-8441
Email: tmarnholtz@ucmo.edu

Mrs. Sarah Cavanah
Alternative Certification Coordinator and Advisor
Phone: 660-543-4884
Email: cavanah@ucmo.edu

Clinical Services and Certification
Main Office: 660-543-8441
Email: certification@ucmo.edu

Office Hours
Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Mailing Address
Clinical Services and Certification
Lovinger 2130
University of Central Missouri
Warrensburg, MO 64093

UCM Email Account
The university considers communications sent to student email accounts to be official and hold exactly the same status and importance as paper documents. **Students are expected to check their UCM email accounts regularly for official communications.**

Information about Graduate Scholarships and Graduate Assistantships
https://www.ucmo.edu/offices/graduate-education-and-research/index.php

UCM's Scholarship Finder
https://www.ucmo.edu/scholarships
Students may apply for multiple scholarships with a single online application. Most applications must be submitted by March 1 for the upcoming academic year.

Financial Aid
Student Financial Services
www.ucmo.edu/sfs
Phone 660-543-8266
Email: Select "Contact Student Financial Services" at www.ucmo.edu/sfs

Tuition Cost Calculator
www.ucmo.edu/costs

UCM GPA Calculators
www.ucmo.edu/calcs

Office of Technology
For all your technology needs or issues
https://www.ucmo.edu/ot/

Career and Life Design Center
Information about resumes, cover letters, interviewing tips, and employment opportunities
www.ucmo.edu/career
Phone 660-543-4985
Email: careers@ucmo.edu

Common Abbreviations and Terms
Advanced Degree – a master's or higher degree
Alt Cert – Alternative Pathways to Certification
Clinical Experience – can be the same as student teaching
DESE – Missouri Department of Secondary and Elementary Education
IPC – Initial Professional Certificate
MAT – Master of Arts in Teaching degree
MSE – Master of Science in Education degree
MS – Master of Science degree
MS in CTE – Master of Science in Career and Technical Education degree
Methods – the methods of teaching class for a specific certification area
MEES – Missouri Educator Evaluation System
Praxis – certification exam used in Missouri
MLIS – Master of Science in Library Science and Information Services
Provisional Certificate – also called an academic contract
TAC – Temporary Authorization Certificate

UCM Policy – Graduate Student Load Per Semester
The normal load per semester for a graduate student is 9 to 12 semester credit hours. A graduate student may enroll in a maximum of 16 credit hours per fall or spring semester and a maximum of 12 credit hours during the entire summer semester, including both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

UCM Policy – Full-Time Graduate Student
A full-time graduate student is one enrolled in six or more credit hours per fall and spring semesters or six semester hours in the summer session.

Semester Enrollment
Enrollment must be a minimum four graduate hours or six undergraduate hours or a combination of graduate and undergraduate hours totaling six hours in classes listed on your certification plan to be eligible for financial aid. Please contact Student Financial Services for information about financial aid.

Note: Financial aid will only apply to classes required for certification as listed on your certification plan or required for your master's degree.

Class Schedule/Enrollment
The class schedule for each semester can be viewed by accessing www.ucmo.edu, selecting the Academics tab, and looking for the Schedule of Courses link.

MyCentral
MyCentral can be accessed from any UCM website by selecting "Campus Links" in the top right of the page. MyCentral provides access to class schedules, enrollment, financial services, payment center, and other student-related information.

Brightspace
Brightspace can be accessed from any UCM website by selecting "Campus Links" in the top right of the page. Brightspace is used by most classes offered through UCM.

Enrollment Validation Policy
The Enrollment Validation Policy takes place every semester. It impacts both undergraduate and graduate-level students and classes. It applies to all full-semester classes (16-week classes), all regularly scheduled first-half and second-half classes (eight-week classes), and each of the five

summer sessions. It applies to face-to-face, online, and hybrid classes.

Therefore, it is critically important that students frequently check their **student e-mail account** and MyCentral for announcements during the week before classes begin and during the first several weeks of the semester or summer session.

Records Retention
The Office of Clinical Services and Certification staff will keep your Alternative Pathways file as long as you are pursuing classes required for certification at University of Central Missouri. If no classes required for certification are completed at the University of Central Missouri 10 years from the issue date of the official certification plan for the candidate, the candidate's file will be shredded.

If you have not enrolled in classes at the University of Central Missouri within the past year, your status will become "inactive," and a hold will be placed on your student account. The only way to remove this hold is to reapply. There is no application fee to reapply.

Classes at other Universities or Community Colleges
If you would like to take a class required for certification at another university or community college, you must receive permission from Clinical Services and Certification staff before enrolling in the class(es). Please send the class prefix, class title, and academic institution to Clinical Services and Certification staff for approval. Classes taken without prior approval may not be accepted toward certification.

Through UCM's Course Transfer Equivalencies, https://www.ucmo.edu/corequiv/, you can search by the UCM course/prefix number or by the transferring institution's course/prefix number.

Alternative Pathways to Certification and Advanced Degree Programs
Please note that all certification plans for Alternative Certification are subject to change if the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) makes changes to certification requirements.

You do not have to pursue a master's degree in order to pursue Alternative Pathways to Certification. An advanced degree would be beneficial to you as a teacher and would increase your teacher salary. If you currently possess a master's degree, you have the opportunity to pursue an education specialist degree in Career and Technical Education.

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Degree
The majority of the graduate-level professional education classes listed on your certification plan are also requirements for the MAT degree. Those professional education classes will apply towards your chosen certification area and towards the MAT degree. Additional information about the MAT degree is accessible at www.ucmo.edu/mat

Master of Science (MS) in Career and Technical Education (CTE)
The MS in CTE is designed for those seeking certification in Agriculture Education 9-12, Business 9-12, FACS K-12 or Engineering and Technology 9-12. You'll meet with your graduate advisor to determine how many of the professional education classes listed on your certification plan can also apply towards the MS in CTE degree. Additional information for the MS in CTE can be found here.

Master of Science in Education (MSE) in Early Childhood – Teaching Option

If pursuing Early Childhood Education B-3 certification, you should consider our Master of Science in Early Childhood Education degree program. Like the other degrees listed here, majority of the Master of Science in Education in Early Childhood coursework overlaps with what is required for certification if taken at the graduate level. Additional information about the MSE in Early Childhood degree is accessible here.

Master of Science (MS) in Library Science and Information Services

Alternative Pathways to Certification will fulfill the professional education courses and test requirements for certification as a library media specialist. Most of the classes required for the MS in Library Science and Information Services fulfill the content area course requirements for certification as a Library Media Specialist. Additional information for the MS in Library Science and Information Services degree is accessible here.

Master of Science in Education (MSE) in Special Education K-12

If pursuing Special Education certification, you should consider our MSE in Special Education K-12 degree program. Like the other degrees listed here, the majority of the MSE in Special Education coursework overlaps with what is required for certification if taken at the graduate level. Additional information about the MSE in Special Education degree can be found here.

Clinical Experience Requirement for Certification

An eight-hour clinical experience in your content area is required for certification in the state of Missouri. The clinical experience is a culminating experience which should be completed during your last semester. The clinical experience can be completed only during a fall semester or during a spring semester.

Candidates pursuing the MS in Library Science and Information Services degree and certification as a Library Media Specialist will complete LIS 6830, Internship in School Libraries, eight hours, as the clinical experience. Contact Dr. Lauren Hays, program coordinator, by email to lauhays@ucmo.edu for information about the internship.

Student teaching during a fall or spring semester

1. Your student teaching experience will be similar to an undergraduate student completing a semester of student teaching.
2. Complete the Request to Student Teach form here.
3. **The request must be submitted one year in advance (October 1st for fall semesters and April 1st for spring semesters)**.
4. You will receive information regarding dates for checklist meetings for all student teachers.
5. Attend one of the checklist meetings for student teaching during the semester prior to your planned student teaching semester.
6. Our office will enroll you in the appropriate number of student teaching credit hours.
    a. If you are pursuing the Master of Arts in Teaching degree, you will enroll in FLDX 5468, three hours of graduate credit, and Student Teaching staff will enroll you in a five-hour FLDX undergraduate student teaching course to fulfill clinical experience requirements.
    b. If you are pursuing the Master of Science in Career and Technology Education degree, you will enroll in CTE 5022, Teaching/Administration Internship, which is three hours of graduate credit, and Student Teaching staff will enroll you in a five-hour FLDX undergraduate student teaching course.
7. Alternative Pathways candidates will be responsible for the same requirements as undergraduate students during their student teaching semester.
8. You will be observed by your assigned University Supervisor. As part of the observations, you'll

complete an introductory assessment, three formative assessments, and one summative assessment.
9. You will complete student teacher artifacts or something similar, depending on current requirements.
10. The Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) will be completed during your student teaching semester.

Teaching on a provisional certificate during a fall or spring semester

1. You will remain in your own classroom while completing your clinical experience semester.
2. Complete the Request to Student Teach form here.
3. **The request must be submitted one year in advance (October 1st for fall semesters and April 1st for spring semesters)**.
4. Our office will enroll you in a total of eight credit hours if you have taught on the provisional for less than two school years.
    a. If you are pursuing the Master of Arts in Teaching degree, you will enroll in FLDX 5468, three hours of graduate credit, and Student Teaching staff will enroll you in a five-hour FLDX undergraduate student teaching course to fulfill clinical experience requirements.
    b. If you are pursuing the Master of Science in Career and Technology Education degree, you will enroll in CTE 5022, Teaching/Administration Internship, three hours of graduate credit, and Student Teaching staff will enroll you in a five-hour FLDX undergraduate student teaching course.
5. If you have taught on the provisional for at least two full school years, we can look at reducing the number of credit hours needed for student teaching.
6. If you have taught on a provisional basis for less than two school years, you will complete student teacher artifacts or something similar.
7. You will be observed in your own classroom by an assigned University Supervisor and the building principal or the building principal's designee.
8. The Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) will be completed during your clinical experience semester.

Praxis

Candidates seeking certification in Missouri are required to achieve a passing score on the appropriate Praxis exam for the specific area of certification. Information and registration for the content assessment can be accessed at praxis.ets.org. The exams are specific to each certification area.

The specific Praxis must be taken prior to the planned clinical experience semester: November 1st if the clinical experience is in the spring semester and April 1st if it is in the fall semester.

The Praxis for your specific certification area must be passed to be eligible for an initial teaching certificate.

Once you have completed your certification requirements and received an Initial Professional Certificate (IPC), you can add some certification areas by passing the specific Praxis for the additional area. After passing the content assessment for the additional area, submit the "additional" application to DESE through DESE Web Applications to add the additional area of certification. Not all certification areas can be added by passing the specific Praxis, as some areas do require additional coursework.

Note: Individuals holding a Missouri professional teaching certificate (IPC, CCPC) or lifetime teaching certificate in a secondary content area (Agriculture Education, Business Education, English, Industrial Technology, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, or Speech/Theatre) may add on middle school certification in the same content area by achieving a passing score on the Principles of Learning and

Teaching (PLT): Grades 5-9, test code 5623.

Employment Resources
University of Central Missouri Career Services – www.ucmo.edu/career
Handshake is an online recruiting resource managed by Career and Life Design. Candidates can access Handshake to search and apply for positions at regional school districts. Information regarding recruiting events hosted by the Career and Life Design can also be found online through Handshake.

Regional Education Application Placement Program (R.E.A.P) – www.moreap.net
This voluntary organization requires school districts to pay a membership fee to post vacant positions in the district. Applicants can view job vacancies in various school districts without completing the MoREAP application. If you want to apply for a position, you must complete the MoREAP application.

Missouri Teaching Jobs - www.moteachingjobs.com
Missouri Teaching Jobs lists vacant positions by region in Missouri. Each school district with vacancies is listed as part of the specific region. You can search for job vacancies without registering. You must register to apply for vacant positions.

Initial Professional Certificate (IPC)
This four-year teaching certificate is only valid in Missouri, but it can be transferred to other states.

Eligibility for an initial professional teaching certificate requires

1. Candidate must complete all courses required for certification, earning a grade of C or higher in each course.
2. Candidate must pass the Praxis specific to the chosen certification area.
3. Candidate must pass the MEES specific to the chosen certification area.
4. Candidate must have a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average in all professional education courses completed.
5. Candidate must have a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average in content area courses specific to the chosen certification area or obtain a passing score on the designated Praxis.

Clinical Services and Certification staff will send instructions for applying for an initial certificate to the candidate during the last semester of classes.

Career Continuous Professional Classification (CCPC)
After completing four years of DESE-approved teaching experience, you are eligible for the Career Continuous Professional Classification, valid for 99 years. Submit the “upgrade professional” application to DESE through DESE Web Applications, www.dese.mo.gov. There is a $35 application fee.