



## **ACADEMIC ALERT #2005-7**

**DATE:** February 2005  
**DECISION:** National College of Education (NCE)

### **New Admission and Cluster Eligibility Criteria for M.A.T. Secondary Education Degree Program**

#### **Rationale**

The state of Illinois has changed its teacher certification rules and students must now pass the Content Area Test before they begin their student teaching experience.

National-Louis currently does not require students to pass the Content Area test prior to admission into the cluster program. As the admission requirements currently stand, secondary education faculty feel they are doing a disservice to their students, the Clinical Placement Office and the schools where their students are placed for student teaching assignments. Students who are admitted with content area coursework deficiencies are attempting to take content area coursework at the same time that they are enrolled in the rigorous, fast-paced, demanding Cluster Program. At the same time, they must take and pass the Content Area Test before they have finished their content coursework.

Passage of the Content Area test is required before Clinical Placement can begin to place them for student teaching. Twenty-four percent of M.A.T. Secondary Education students do not pass the content area test the first time they take it. This means that Clinical Placement has to put a hold on their placement which results, in many cases, a postponement of student teaching to a later quarter. At the same time, schools that receive their student teachers who have content deficiencies are hesitant to take their students because of those deficiencies. If, in fact, they do accept students with content deficiencies, these students often experience difficulties in student teaching because of those deficiencies. This results in negative feelings about National-Louis University and its Secondary Education program.

**Senate Academic Planning Committee Approval: January 20, 2005**

#### **Current Program Authorizations**

The university currently has authorization to offer the M.A.T. Secondary Education Program in the following Illinois regions: Chicago; North Suburban; West Suburban; South Metropolitan; Fox Valley; Western; Central; and Prairie.

**IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Immediately**

**CONTACT: Connie Kieffer, Interim Secondary Education Department Chair, ext. 5613**

#### **SIGNATURE**

**Carol R. Melnick, Ph.D.**  
**Vice Provost**

## Admission Requirements

- **New admission requirements are in bold:**

### **Criteria for admission to the MAT in Secondary Education include:**

1. Baccalaureate degree from a Regionally Accredited Institution
2. Written statement of academic and professional goals
3. Millers Analogies Test (MAT) or the General Aptitude section of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)
4. Passing score on the Illinois Basic Skills Test
5. Three professional or academic references
6. **The applicant must have completed *appropriate 26 of the 32 required semester hours with no grade less than a C in an area of specialization on an official transcript(s).***
7. Grade point average of 2.5 or better in area of certification\*\*
8. **Grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 in last 60 hours of coursework for full admission. GPA's between 2.5 and 2.9 will be considered for provisional admission on an individual basis.**
9. **Students wishing foreign language certification are required to take and pass the state foreign language exam and an oral proficiency exam, the ACTFL. Due to the communicative nature of the program, students taking the ACTFL must receive a grade that falls in the Advanced category. Scores are returned in 4 weeks.**

**\*\*A transcript analysis is required to determine if these criteria are met.**

## Registration Requirements

Criteria to be eligible to register for the Secondary Education Cluster program:

1. Proof of completion of all 32 required semester hours with no grade less than a C
2. A passing grade on the State Content Area Test\*

\*Students should register for a Content Area exam in the same way they register for the Basic Skills test. It is recommended that students take a Content Area test on the test date following successful passage of the Basic Skills test and after completion of all 32 required semester hours of content coursework. All students in the Cluster program must have a passing score report for the Content Test for their specific certification on file with the Clinical Placement Office before Clinical Placement can begin student teacher placement proceedings. For addition information on state tests: ISBE 1-800 845-8749 or Web site: [http:// www.icts.nesinc.com](http://www.icts.nesinc.com).

For students who are admitted to the university, but not yet eligible to register for the cluster, the following will take place: When a student's transcripts are evaluated (this will be done electronically soon) content area deficiencies will be identified. An electronic form will identify these deficiencies. The form will also identify that the student has or has not taken and passed the content area test. This form will be forwarded to the Secondary Education faculty advisor who will meet with this student. Between the faculty advisor and the student, a contract will be developed that identifies what coursework needs to be completed and when it will be completed. In addition, a date to take the content area test will be identified and listed on the contract. The student, the faculty advisor and the appropriate enrollment representative will have a copy of this contract.

Once these deficiencies have been met, official transcripts will be submitted to the transcript evaluator(s) and evidence of a content area test passing score will be presented. At this time, students will be eligible to begin the Secondary Education Cluster program.

Students who are admitted to the university but not yet eligible to begin the cluster, can take any of the following:

- A. Content area courses to meet deficiencies (these can be taken at NLU and are a potential source of additional revenue for NLU)
- B. Any of the elective courses that are part of the Secondary Education MAT
  - 1. Two middle school courses
  - 2. Two Reading endorsement courses
  - 3. Two ESL courses
  - 4. Two Special Education courses
- C. Any of the outside of the cluster MAT courses
  - 1. Qualitative Research Course
  - 2. Quantitative Research Course
  - 3. Theories of Teaching and Learning

Note: Many students are currently taking courses from B and/or C before they begin the cluster.

### **Special Note**

All students who apply for Teaching Certification must pass the Assessment of Professional Training (APT) test prior to application for certification. The APT test framework, which describes the content covered on the test, test registration information, and the study guide may be found at: [www.icts.nesinc.com](http://www.icts.nesinc.com). **The APT requirement is in addition to the requirement for passing the basic skills and subject matter tests.**

### **Implementation**

Changes need to be made for the next catalog, 2005-2006. The catalog copy has to be written as soon as this academic alert is posted, and submitted to the Office of the Registrar and Office of the Provost.

Changes need to be made in Banner.

Secondary Education faculty, Offices of the Registrar, Admissions, and staff in Enrollment, Marketing, and Recruitment need to be knowledgeable about these changes and updates.