

Best Online Master's in Education Programs 2021

Education is a rewarding field with a wide variety of opportunities. In the changing landscape of teaching and learning, majoring in education no longer only means lecturing in a classroom. Though this is an option, a person pursuing a master's degree in education may also be an education technologist, curriculum developer, ESL specialist, school counselor, or education administrator.

Essentialism and Humanism are core philosophies of education programs. Essentialism says that educators teach the skills that have been proven over time to be needed by society. Humanism is about developing each student to his or her fullest potential.

Many online master's degrees in education, such as those related to technology or administration, can be completed in as few as 16 to 18 months. M.Ed. programs related to counseling and social work may take 20 to 30 months. Some education programs require teaching certification, while others do not. The GPA minimum is usually 2.5, but may be higher at some schools. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/home.htm), starting salaries for holders of a master's degree in education can range from \$55,000 to \$70,000, depending on one's role and previous work experience. The job growth outlook for secondary teachers between 2019 and 2029 is 4%. For post-secondary teachers, it is 9%. This link provides more info: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/home.htm>.

FAQ

Questions	Answers
What can you do with a master's degree in education?	A master's degree in education may qualify you to work as a school counselor, special education expert, ESL specialist, school principal, or curriculum developer.
How long does it take to get a master's in education?	Master's degree in education programs may take as little as 16 months. However, 18 months is more typical. If you focus on counseling or social work, it may take 24 to 36 months.
What is the difference between a master of arts in teaching and a master of education?	A student pursuing a master of arts in teaching may be trying to gain expertise in lesson planning, instructions, and working directly with students. A student pursuing a master of education may be trying to advance their career outside the classroom, such as in administration or curriculum design.
How much does a master's in education cost?	A master's degree in education may be as low as \$6,500. However, \$10,000 for all students, whether in-state or out-of-state, is more typical. More expensive schools may charge \$15,000 for in-state students and up to \$40,000 for out-of-state.

What Can I Do with an Education Degree?

Education programs at the master's level are intended to empower educators to fill leadership, support, and specialist roles. While classroom teachers with bachelor's degrees may teach effectively, a master's in curriculum & instruction affords teachers even greater awareness of learning theories, design principles, and pedagogical approaches that *improve* their delivery of content. This, in turn, renders them suited to be lead instructors or curriculum specialists in their school or district.

Likewise, earning an M.Ed. in instructional design & technology lets educators combine their content expertise and foundational teaching knowledge with implementation of technology tools in the classroom and on learning management systems. This optimizes accessibility and allows for more engaging and dynamic delivery of courses, which in turn improves learning outcomes. Educators more interested in guiding students socially and emotionally may pursue an M.Ed. in school counseling. Only with this degree can a classroom teacher transition to a human development role that coordinates in-school and community services as part of student advocacy.

Accreditation for an Education Program

Accreditation is an important consideration when choosing an education program. National accreditation is not as prestigious or widely-recognized as regional accreditation. Credits you receive from a nationally accredited school may transfer only to other nationally-accredited schools, whereas credits from a regionally-accredited school are accepted by both regionally-and-nationally accredited schools.

A regionally accredited school has been reviewed by an agency that focuses on academics at schools that are state-owned or non-profit. There are six regional accrediting agencies in the U.S. that oversee institutions in their particular region. Nationally accredited schools are often for-profit colleges that accumulate revenue through enrollment or selling educational products. Their admissions standards are more relaxed, which in part accounts for why their accreditation is less prestigious.

When researching education degrees, you may notice these accrediting agencies: Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) and Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). Note, however, that they are associated with national accreditation and may not be recognized by all other schools for transfer credits. Many schools' online programs have regional accreditation that is the same as their in-person programs.

Use this link to search prospective schools' accreditation status:

<https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>.

What Are the Requirements for an Education Program?

Most master's degree in education programs have a GPA minimum of 2.5, but this may be higher for certain specializations. It also varies by school. Many programs no longer require a GRE score.

Some programs may require you to be currently employed in a K to 12 school, an institution of higher education, or in the learning & development department of a corporation. You may also be required to maintain a GPA minimum of 3.0 while enrolled in the program. Most programs

require a capstone course in which you are asked to synthesize your learning from all previous courses and write at length on the complexities of the field and your new insights as you move forward in your career path. Some education programs require comprehensive examinations at the end.

Courses in an Education Program

An education degree at the master's level is typically 30-36 credit hours, but can be up to 45 to 60 for some specializations. Many programs are now delivered such that you take one course at a time for durations of five to eight weeks. Others still follow the more traditional structure wherein you take 2 to 3 courses for the length of the fall, spring, or summer semester (10 to 16 weeks).

Often, you will be able to choose an area of emphasis within your program. For instance, if your education degree is in curriculum & instruction, you may choose to focus on literacy, gifted education, or English as a second language.

Courses you take may include Models of Teaching, Affective Instruction, Adult Learning, and Curriculum Theory. Those focusing on administration and supervision may take Leadership for Equity in Diverse Schools, Finance and School Based Budgeting, or Law & Policy for School Leaders. If you are in an Education Technology program, your courses may include Designing Online Learning, Digital Learning in Local and Global Contexts, and Assessing Digital Learning.

In all of these courses, students will practice research and analysis skills, as they are asked to seek out information, reflect, and write about past, current, and emerging theories on best practices for teaching, learning, and leading.

Creating Significant Learning Environments

Students in this course will explore theories of constructivist epistemology used to create student-centered learning environments. Learners create active and engaging learning environments that use technology to enhance learning, increase motivation for learning, and engage the learner. Aspiring educators are taught to leverage technology in their classrooms, or advise other educators to do so, in ways that meet the needs of 21st century students.

Academic Advising

If you are pursuing an education degree in higher education administration, you may take academic advising. This course teaches students about current philosophies of academic advising, broad categories of 21st century college students, the various complexities and intersecting identities therein, and best practices in working with diverse student populations. Your coursework may include a lot of scenario-based learning in which you are given feedback on responses in different situations.

Foundations of Education

This course introduces master's students to foundational knowledge about the teaching profession in the current educational context, as well as the historical and cultural influences on P-12 education in the U.S. It addresses important topics, including state standards-based curriculum, legal and ethical requirements, and professionalism. Students may be asked to take

this course close to the beginning of their program, as it sets the stage for an educator's role in society.

Child and Adolescent Counseling

You may take a course in child & adolescent counseling. You will learn to assess behavior and incorporate developmentally, ethically, legally, and gender appropriate strategies and techniques to meet the emotional and social needs of young people. You will examine various theoretical, behavioral, and play-therapy techniques to understand and help children and adolescents. Schools need competent and sensitive school counselors, as the experiences of young people are now more challenging and complex than ever.

Designing Online Learning

In the wake of COVID-19, more and more educators are developing themselves professionally to deliver digital content to students in an effective and engaging way. This course teaches master's students to innovate as they create online and blended learning classes. Educators learn how to use intentional design strategies to ensure technology enhances learning rather than simply controls activities. Delivering classes digitally using a variety of tools and methods is crucial for educators at all levels as competency-based learning grows in demand and popularity.

Professional Organizations for Education Students

Professional organizations for educators provide support, resources, and knowledge related to effective teaching, continued development, and employment rights. In addition, professional organizations link educators to job prospects, mentoring programs, and networking opportunities. Once you become established in education, it would serve you well to become affiliated as a member of at least one or two to ensure that you stay abreast of current trends and policy changes.

[The Association of American Educators](#) is the largest national, non-union professional educators' organization. It advances the profession by offering a modern approach to teacher representation and educational advocacy. It promotes professionalism, collaboration, and excellence without a partisan agenda. Membership -- open to any employee of an educational entity -- costs \$16.50 per month or \$198 annually. Student teachers, retired educators, and associate members may join at a reduced rate of \$25 annually.

[National Education Association](#) is one of the largest organizations in the field of education. One of its main goals is to ensure that as many Americans as possible have access to quality education. It also serves as an advocate for teachers all over the nation. It helps educators fight for fair pay and benefits, inclusive work spaces, and bargaining. A core belief of the association is in taking collective action to ensure the collective good. The organization currently has 3 million members and continues to grow strong. Teachers and para-professionals may join as members. Friends, parents, and community members may join as allies.

[Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development](#) is a non-profit organization that represents approximately 150,000 educators around the world. Its members include teachers, administrators and other professionals. Membership affords people a variety of benefits and professional development opportunities. Members also get a subscription to *Educational*

Leadership, a magazine that reports on facts, techniques, and information regarding educating students. Options for membership are \$59 for one year, \$99 for two years, and \$139 for three years.

[National Association for the Education of Young Children](#) is a professional organization that promotes high-quality learning and development for all young children, from birth to age 8.. The NAEYC advances diversity and dynamism in teaching society's youngest learners. It currently has 60,000 individual members and 52 affiliates. Their website encourages participation in online communities to engage in rich conversation. Specialized forum topics include Asian Interest, Black Caucus Interest, Men in Education Network, and Tribal & Indigenous Early Childhood Network.

Scholarships for Education Students

Many people face financial barriers to acquiring higher education. Fortunately, scholarships are available for students in all fields of study. You just have to seek them out, fill out applications as required, and complete any and all requirements put forth. Scholarships often require writing an original essay describing how you plan to use an education degree in your career path and/or to give back to your community.

["Inspire Our Future" Scholarship](#) is from Teacher.org. It awards \$500 to help pay for tuition and related school expenses. It is for any teacher continuing his or her education, or a teacher candidate who has just begun. You must be 18 years of age or older to apply. A minimum GPA of 3.5 is required, and you must be currently enrolled at an accredited college or university. Applicants must write a 500 to 700-word response to a form question. The deadline for the 2021 recipient is April 21, 2021.

[STEM Teacher Graduate Scholarships](#) This scholarship is targeted at graduate students or those seeking licensure/certification at an accredited university. Your attendance must be on campus, and you must be a U.S. citizen with the intent to teach STEM in K-12 schools in the U.S. You must be enrolled in two courses at the time of application. Those seeking licensure/certification must have already completed a Bachelor of Science degree in a STEM field. The award is \$2,500.00. Application opens in January 2021 and has a deadline of May 21, 2021.

[George Bornoff Memorial Scholarship Fund](#) This scholarship offers three \$800 awards annually to teachers who are returning to graduate school for a master's degree in music education. Applicants must be current members of ASTA (American String Teachers Association) and be string teachers in the first five years of teaching. Candidates must submit a resume, two letters of recommendation, and a 250-word essay explaining career goals in music education. Deadline is December 7th.

Best Online Master's in Education Programs 2021

1.

University of the Cumberland

[University of the Cumberland](#) is a private, not-for-profit 4-year university that offers an online master's degree in education. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

The program gives licensed educators a chance to further develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions in order to enhance effectiveness in their particular role within education. Several specializations, including literacy specialist, school counseling, and teacher leader, are offered completely online. Students may take up to two (2) courses every eight (8) week term. A lapse in enrollment is allowed, but for no longer than one year from last course completed.

Incoming students may transfer a maximum of nine (9) hours of graduate credit from an accredited graduate education program, subject to approval by the registrar, department chair, and student advisor. Each student is assigned a student success coordinator and academic advisor who will oversee the student's pathway to timely course completions and graduation.

2. Concordia University Chicago

Located in River Forest, IL, [Concordia University-Chicago](#) is a private 4-year university that offers education degrees in online, on campus, and hybrid format. Note, however, that not all specializations are available in all three formats.

Master's degree in education program lengths are 12 to 24 months. Students can expect to complete 30 to 39 credit hours to earn their education degree. Students must maintain a grade of "C" or higher in all courses taken.

Possible areas of specialization include ESL, early childhood education, education specialist in the district, educational technology, and early childhood special education. Admissions for some specializations require a short essay describing your particular interest in the program, as well as a valid teaching license. Courses you take may include school age curriculum: ages 6 to 8, differentiation and learning theory, using technology to build learning communities, school finance and business management, teaching social studies, etc.

Concordia is nationally accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation and the Illinois State Board of Education.

3. Western New Mexico University

Most of [Western New Mexico University](#)'s education programs are online and delivered asynchronously. This allows students to access course assignments anytime, anywhere. You can get your master's degree in education in teaching, educational leadership, or school counseling.

A student pursuing an education degree at WNMU might take child and adolescent counseling, substance abuse counseling, history & philosophy of education, legal aspects of education, teaching of reading, theoretical models of reading, etc.

Admission to education programs at WNMU includes two parts: admission to the graduate division and admission to the program within the college of education. You will need to submit your transcripts from other schools, as well as your updated resume and a short statement of interest detailing why you are interested in the program for which you are applying.

The school is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Courses taken are eligible for U.S. Department of Education Title IV Financial Aid.

4. Wilmington University

A private, not-for-profit 4-year university located in New Castle, Delaware, [Wilmington University](#) prides itself on letting students advance their education from the comfort of their own home and on their own devices. WU's online students have access to the same support services as on-campus students, delivered in an accessible online format. These services include advising, tutoring, and library resources.

Options for a master's degree in education include education studies, education (licensure), and elementary & secondary school counseling. A graduate certificate in e-learning design & technology is also available. Courses are taught by expert faculty who are active practitioners in the field.

Wilmington is open admissions. This means, in most cases, that no standardized test scores or minimum GPA are required for admissions. Students may enroll to begin coursework at any one of six start dates per year: two in each spring, summer, and fall. WU's College of Education is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation under NCATE Standards (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education).

5. Lamar University

Lamar University is a public 4-year university accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Its [master's degree in education programs](#) are highly reputable as convenient to K to 12 educators who work full-time and wish to complete their master's in education degree at a pace and on a schedule convenient to them.

Students may enroll in any of the following education programs: education administration, school counseling, digital learning and leading, special education, teacher leadership, teaching gifted and talented, etc. Most programs are 36 credit hours and can be completed in as few as 18 months. Some require current K to 12 teaching certification and 2 to 3 years of classroom teaching experience. Tuition is very reasonable -- as low as \$9,000 for some programs and up to \$18,000 for the few that require completion of 60 credit hours.

Sample courses in Lamar's education degrees are creating significant learning environments, applying disruptive innovation, school community relations, diverse learners, curriculum management, and instructional leadership.

6. Arizona State University

Arizona State University is a public, 4-year university accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Its [master's degree in education programs](#), delivered completely online, are well worth exploring. Education

degree options include early childhood education, educating multilingual learners, literacy education, educational leadership, global education, indigenous education, among other specializations.

Many of ASU's education programs require 30 credit hours with class lengths of 7.5 weeks. Educators interested in becoming principals or leaders in K to 12 schools may opt for the educational leadership degree, in which you may take courses such as American education system, school law, leadership in curriculum and assessment, etc.

When applying for ASU's education programs, you must fulfill requirements for both the graduate college and the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. You may be asked to submit the following materials: official transcripts, three letters of recommendation, personal statement, resume, and proof of English proficiency. You must maintain a minimum 3.00 cumulative GPA to be in good academic standing.

7. Brandman University

Brandman University is a private, not-for-profit 4-year university located in Irvine, California. It is accredited by the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission. Its [master's degree in education](#) programs are delivered in hybrid format or completely online with a focus on the non-traditional student.

Working adults in Brandman's education programs enjoy course content that they can work around employment responsibilities. At the same time, students have a great deal of interaction with classmates and faculty.

Brandman's education degrees teach students to evaluate, use, and generate research to move the field of education forward, as well as to apply pedagogical concepts to educational settings to meet the diverse needs of students. Students are also immersed in theories of learning and various approaches to curriculum design and decision-making.

Degree options include curriculum & instruction, instructional technology: teaching the 21st century learner, teaching & learning, and more. Estimated tuition is \$670 per credit. You may be asked to submit official transcripts, a letter of intent, a current resume, and two letters of recommendation along with your completed application.

8. St. Leo University

Some of the amazing courses you can take in St. Leo University's [education programs](#) are leadership in the development of reading programs, managing the learning environment, and principalship: theory and practice. Possible areas of specialization are instructional design, educational leadership, and exceptional student education.

Most programs at SLU require 36 to 42 graduate semester hours. You must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 with no more than two grades of "C" in required coursework. Students complete their education degree as a blended program that combines traditional in-person classes with a variety of delivery formats, including online options and video conferencing.

SLU is private and not-for-profit. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. It generally accepts transfer credit from regionally accredited institutions and on a case-by-case basis from non-regionally accredited schools. For the latter, the following are

considered about the learning experience: educational quality; nature, content, and level; and applicability in light of the student's goals.

9. Nova Southeastern University

Consider Nova's Fischler College of Education for your [master's in education degree](#). NSU is a private, not-for-profit, 4-year institution that offers numerous education program specializations. You can study curriculum, instruction & technology, elementary education, exceptional student education, Spanish language education, science education, and much more. Courses you take may include theories of learning, assessment of learning, teaching inquiry-based life science, strategies for teaching calculus, etc.

Students may attend part-time or full-time, online or in the classroom. To be admitted, you must submit a completed application, pay a \$50 non-refundable fee, and forward your original transcripts from all previously-attended post-secondary institutions. Applications for admission are accepted online and on a rolling basis.

Up to 6 semester hours of transfer credit are accepted if they were earned within the preceding five years from the first term of enrollment in the FCE program. Students must have earned a B or better in transfer courses, and they may not have been applied to a prior degree.

10. Gwynedd Mercy University

Gwynedd Mercy University is a private, not for profit school accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. It has [master's degree in education programs](#) that are delivered completely online and accelerated. Some of these accelerated education degrees are supervisor of curriculum & instruction, educational administration, and principal certification.

In GMU's education programs, you will learn about appropriate use of instructional materials; policy, statutes, and rules established by state and local agencies; how to think and plan strategically to create an organizational vision focused on student success; and much more.

Most programs require you to submit a completed application with fee, a current professional resume, and two letters of recommendation from a supervisor or professional contact. You must also have an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0. If your GPA was lower, you may still be considered for the program based on a personal interview or other factors. All courses are taught by a full-time or part-time GMU instructor; none are taught by teaching assistants.