

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING LEADERSHIP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Information

Is this program appropriate for experienced teachers and mentors, or just for beginning teachers?

This program is for ALL interested educators. Our learning communities bring together committed professional educators who desire to improve their teaching strategies, deepen their understanding and share their values and beliefs about education. Teachers with five or more years of experience may elect to proceed directly to Level 2 of the program by challenging the Level 1 coursework. See the section below for *Experienced Teachers* for more information on this option.

When and where do the seminars meet?

During the two years of **Level 1**, seminars are held on six Saturdays between October and May of each year. Each seminar meets from 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM and includes a continental breakfast and buffet lunch. Seminars are held at the Soda Center on the Saint Mary's College Moraga campus. For participants who elect to take the seminars for full academic credit, the Practicum seminars (EDTL 610 and EDTL 710) will be conducted in regional learning communities, facilitated by Practicum Advisors. These times will be variable, depending on the needs of the participants. Practicum seminars will meet a minimum of 3 times between January and May.

Level 2 are taught on Saturdays. There are two week-long summer intensive courses offered as an alternative to the Saturday option.

Do I have to purchase books?

All readings, articles and handouts are provided for Level 1 as part of the registration fee. Books will be required for Level 2 at the participant's expense.

Beginning Teachers (with fewer than five years' experience):

Where do I start?

Begin by registering for the Saturday Seminar Best Practices in Teaching Leadership series prior to the first seminar in late October. (Full series credit may still be earned if you attend all seminars beginning with the second seminar in late November.)

What does the registration fee cover?

The registration fee of \$250 covers meals for all seminars, the resource binder, all handouts, room rental, speaker fees, etc.

What type of credit is available?

The Saturday Seminars may be taken either for Graduate Academic Credit, which will appear on a Saint Mary's College transcript, or for Continuing Education Units (CEUs), which will not appear on a transcript.

For the Graduate Academic Credit, six units are available each of the two years of Level 1. (The seminars offer three units with an additional three units offered via the Practicum seminars.) These twelve graduate academic units form Level 1 of the **Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership**, but may also be earned independently of that degree.

Continuing Education Units are professional development credit earned by attending the seminars. Each CEU equals 10 hours of professional development. Each Saturday Seminar is equal to .5 CEU credit. These units do not appear on a transcript. They are issued on a certificate and are accepted by some districts for salary level advancement.

What do I have to do to get academic credit?

See **Course Descriptions** for additional details

First year participants start by enrolling in:

EDTL 600 – *Exploring Teaching and Learning Leadership* (3 units)

and

EDTL 610 – *Connecting Teaching and Learning Practices*
(3 units).

Second year participants take:

EDTL 700 – *Developing Teaching and Learning Practices*
(3 units)

and

EDTL 710 – *Investigating Reflective Learning* (3 units).

The assignments for EDTL 600 and EDTL 700 are aligned with induction completion requirements. For the Practicum courses EDTL 610 and EDTL 710, participants attend three regional Learning Community meetings facilitated by Practicum Advisors and complete assignments that are linked to induction requirements. (See following questions.)

What do I need to do for the Practicum courses?

For EDTL 610 and EDTL 710, you will implement the strategies learned in the seminar in your classroom and/or work setting. You will provide evidence and student work samples to document professional growth.

What does a “Practicum Advisor” do?

Practicum Advisors are experienced teacher leaders who facilitate regional learning community seminars that assist participating teachers in the implementation and demonstration of strategies learned in the seminars.

Do I receive grades for the seminars?

Yes. Letter grades are given for EDTL 600 and EDTL 700. For the practicum courses, EDTL 610 and EDTL 710, participants are given Credit/No Credit grades.

What if I need to miss a Saturday Seminar?

Per college policy, students are allowed one excused absence in Level 1. Participants will need to contact their Peer Group facilitator and make up the contact hours related to the focus standard for that seminar at another related professional development. ALL assignments need to be completed and turned in to Peer Group facilitators.

How does Induction support this program?

Some Induction programs pay the registration fee for their participating teachers. Mentors and experienced teachers need to pay their own registration fees. Tuition costs are the responsibility of **all** participants. BTSA funds may not be used for tuition. Level 1 courses are currently priced at \$150 per unit, \$450 per three-unit course.

Will my Induction completion requirements for my Professional Clear credential be complete after completing Level 1 (the first two years of seminars)?

The seminars are focused on the Induction Standards and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Sessions will integrate the competencies necessary for completion requirements. Facilitated peer group sessions will discuss what teachers need to know and be able to do to be competent in the various standards. Resources and evidence will be provided for the participating teachers’ portfolios. The participating teacher must demonstrate successful completion.

When do I apply for the Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership?

After successful completion of the Level 1 12 graduate academic units: EDTL 600, 610, 700, and 710, participants file an Application for Graduate Studies. This occurs during the second year of Level 1, prior to the annual March 1 application deadline.

Experienced Teachers (with five or more years of teaching):

What do I need to do to apply for the Master of Arts?

Prior to March 1 of the year you intend to begin the program, you will need to submit a formal online application to the Graduate School of Education, an essay, 3 letters of recommendation, and official transcripts of undergraduate and credential-related college coursework (one per institution) along with a few additional items listed in the application instructions. All applicants will be invited to the formal interview and writing sample held after the March Saturday Seminar. Successful applicants will then be notified of their official acceptance and will be enrolled in the Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership program.

How do I challenge the Level 1 coursework?

Once you have been accepted into the MATL program, you will receive the forms and instructions to challenge the Level 1 courses. In addition to filling out the forms, you will need to write a three- to five-page paper that demonstrates your training and experience relative to Standards 5 and 6. All courses challenged may be covered by one paper. There is a fee of \$100 for each course challenged and the courses will appear on your transcript. Challenges may not be submitted until you are officially enrolled in MATL courses.

How long does the program take?

If Beginning teachers stay on schedule, the entire program can be completed in 3 years. Experienced teachers beginning with Level 2 can expect to complete the program in one year.

How many units are in the Master of Arts of Teaching Leadership Program?

There are a total of 30 semester units in the program. Please see Course Descriptions for course titles and sequence. There are 12 units in Level 1 and 18 units in Level 2, including 6 units for the Action Research Project.

How much does the entire program cost?

As a service to our broader educational community, this program is offered at a significant discount from our normal college tuition. For Level 1, there are 12 units at \$150 each (6 units per year). The Level 2 program cost for the 18 units is currently (2011-12) set at \$395 per unit. This is spread over the summer, fall and spring semesters with 6 units each semester.

Is there financial aid available?

The MATL program (Level 2 only) is eligible for financial aid. Financial aid information can be obtained by calling the Financial Aid Office at: 925-631-4370.

Is the Master of Arts degree accredited?

Saint Mary's College of California is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

What work do I need to do during the summer?

There are two courses during the summer. There will be a choice of dates for these courses. The summer is intended for thorough inquiry, planning and investigation of topics that learners determine are essential for their teaching and learning, and that are based on the core concepts for the MATL program.

How does the program prepare me for National Board Certification?

The M.A. in Teaching Leadership integrates the standards and provisions for National Board Certification into all of the coursework and assignments. The program does not guarantee certification, but prepares candidates for this rigorous and rewarding process. Moving forward with NBC is a separate process and this decision is up to the candidate.

Do I need to write a thesis?

In this innovative master's program, participants are required to identify and implement an action research project. The action research project will be presented at the Teaching Leadership Colloquium in May. The written documentation of the action research project takes the place of a traditional master's thesis.

Will there be a commencement ceremony?

Graduates of the Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership will be invited to participate in traditional commencement exercise at Saint Mary's College that is held on campus each May.