



KALMANOVITZ  
SCHOOL OF  
EDUCATION

**Student Credential Handbook**  
**For the**  
**Specialist Credential in**  
**Reading and Language Arts**  
**& the Reading Certificate**

**Saint Mary's College of California**  
**Kalmanovitz School of Education**

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**Mel Hunt, Credential Analyst**  
**(925) 631-4727**  
**(925) 376-8379 fax**  
**[mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu)**

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Part I: The Credential Process .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>While You Are Enrolled in the Program:.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Essential Credentialing Documents in your Student File: .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Applying for Your Credential or Certificate: .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Recommendation Process:.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CTC Address and Phone Number: .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Extraordinary Circumstances: .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Part II: Credential Requirements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A. For a Reading Certificate .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Definition of the Certificate Program Completion .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Basic Teaching Credential .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Verification of Employment as a Full-Time Teacher .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Transfer Course Work: .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>B. For a Specialist Teaching Credential in Reading and Language Arts .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Prerequisite Reading Certificate Requirements .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Definition of the Credential Program Completion .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Basic Teaching Credential (Xerox Copy): .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Verification of Employment as a Full-Time Teacher .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5. Transfer Course Work: .....</b>	<b>7</b>

# INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on being admitted to the Reading credential program at Saint Mary's College Kalmanovitz School of Education (KSOE). This handbook is designed to make the credential process as easy and efficient as possible.

As Credential Analyst, it is my job to recommend you to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) when you have completed your program and fulfilled all other credential requirements. The following pages explain both the process and the current requirements.

Read this handbook carefully. You will be unable to obtain your credential until you have fully satisfied the CTC requirements current on the day you are recommended for your credential. Unlike college policies, CTC standards are set by law. You will be held to the legal requirements in effect on the day your recommendation is made to CTC, not those in effect at the time you began or even when you finished your program at Saint Mary's.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Credential Office in the KSOE building. I am the Credential Analyst and my name is Mel Hunt. My phone number is (925) 631-4727, my email is [mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu) and I can be reached by fax at 925-376-8379.

## PART I: THE CREDENTIAL PROCESS

### **While You Are Enrolled in the Program:**

You should receive this manual during your first semester in the Specialist Teaching Credential in Reading and Language Arts or in the Reading Certificate program. Its purpose is to confirm the information you received in the admission process on the requirements for your document(s) and to give you the information you need to apply for your credential when your program is completed.

### **Essential Credentialing Documents in your Student File:**

These documents should be in your file as part of the normal admissions process, but it is worthwhile to note that they are also essential when the time comes to recommend you for your document.

**California Credential:** It is important that your KSOE file contain a copy of your current, valid California teaching credential. Your reading authorization will be dependent upon your teaching credential and the reading authorization will lapse should your teaching credential cease to be valid. You must hold a Preliminary or Clear California Multiple Subject, Single Subject or Education Specialist teaching credential to participate in the Specialist Teaching Credential in Reading and Language Arts program. To participate in the Reading Certificate program only you may also hold clear, full-time designated subjects teaching credential, provided that you hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and have fulfilled the California basic skills requirement.

**Transcripts:** Your KSOE file should contain official copies of your teaching credential program

transcripts as well as those from the college or university where you earned your baccalaureate degree. (Transcripts from additional colleges and universities may be required for admission purposes or to receive transfer credit for work you may have completed elsewhere.)

**English Learner Prerequisite:** It is essential that your KSOE file include proof that you have already met the Reading Program prerequisite requirement that you hold a valid California authorization to teach English Learners. A CLAD Certificate is one of the options you can use to prove you have met this prerequisite, but it is not the only one. Other options include SB 2042 Multiple or Single Subject credentials, which include a full authorization to teach English Learners or an Education Specialist Level I Credential issued after July 1, 2007, when the English Learner authorization was embedded in those programs. A Multiple or Single Subject credential with a CLAD or BCLAD emphasis is also proof that the prerequisite has been met, as is a BCLAD Certificate.

It is important to note that various types of district-based training programs established under the authorization of a number of California statutes (SB 1969, SB 395, etc.) which allow veteran teachers to earn a partial authorization to teach English Learners in their classrooms are not equivalent to a full California English Learner Authorization. Completion of one of these programs, even if confirmed by a CTC-issued document verifying “Completion of Staff Development,” **DOES NOT** serve as proof that the English Learner prerequisite has been met.

***Applying for Your Credential or Certificate:***

Recommendations for credentials to the CTC are now made online. When you are ready to apply for your document, contact the Credential Office ([mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:mlhunt@stmarys-ca.edu)) so that you can receive a packet by return email which will describe the current recommendation process.

The Reading Certificate is intended to be a stage on the way to earning a Specialist Teaching Credential in Reading and Language Arts. Many students in the SMC Reading Program will qualify for the Reading Certificate one or more semesters before they are qualified for the full credential. **It is in your best interests to apply for the Reading Certificate as soon as you qualify for it.** Not only will the Certificate make you eligible to apply for and hold a range of reading specialist positions, once you hold the certificate, any new requirements that CTC may establish for the document will NOT apply to you.

***Recommendation Process:***

When you have provided the information specified in the recommendation email to the Credential Office, the Credential Analyst will review your file and forward it to the Reading Program Director. The Program Director's responsibility at this stage will be to determine whether or not you have successfully completed the Credential or the Certificate program coursework.

If the program has been successfully completed, the Program Director will so indicate and return the file to the Credential Office. If the Program Director has any concerns or the program has not been successfully completed, program approval will be denied until the concerns are resolved. No recommendation will be made to the CTC until the Program Director confirms that the coursework has been completed. In general, this process takes a few days, although it may take longer during

holiday/semester break periods.

When the Program Director's approval has been received, and all other documentation is complete, your file is ready for online recommendation to CTC. No recommendation will be made until your credential file is COMPLETE and your program director has verified that you have completed the credential program. Your credential will normally date from the day you complete the final credential requirement, though the date may be **later** if the Credential Office does not receive the necessary documentation in a timely manner.

If you receive a formal Reading Specialist job offer from a district and have not yet been recommended for your reading document, notify the Credential Office of the offer at once with the following information: your name, the name of the district, and your start date. It is very important that your credential be valid when you start work or that if it is not, the district takes some alternative step to cover you in the classroom. This can only happen if you, the district, and the Credential Office communicate.

Once you have been recommended for your credential, you will need to go online and complete the process with CTC by paying the current fee for your document on the CTC website. Your document will be granted and mailed within 10 working days of the day you pay for it, unless there are current moral fitness issues related to your status with CTC. However, the recommendation will remain unprocessed indefinitely by CTC unless the fee is paid, so it is important that you complete your end of the recommendation process in a timely manner.

### **CTC Address and Phone Number:**

As noted above, CTC is the final authority in the credentialing process. On occasion, you may wish to contact the staff of the CTC for information, though this Handbook and the Credential Office should be your first resources. The Commission address is listed below.

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
1900 Capitol Ave.  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2700  
(888) 921-2682  
Web Site: [www.ctc.ca.gov](http://www.ctc.ca.gov)

The phone number noted above is available only for limited hours each day. The web site is your best alternative for information, especially the credential look-up function. The website will answer many of the basic questions you may have regarding credential requirements. The web address gives also access to a great deal of credentialing information and through links to other sites, good information on legal and educational issues in California.

### **Extraordinary Circumstances:**

During your program there may be an instance when specific, extraordinary circumstances make it impossible for you to comply with certain KSOE Credential Office procedures. In that event, you must make a cogent and convincing written request to the Dean of the KSOE for an exemption from standard Credential Office procedure. The Dean will make a decision in consultation with the

Program Director and the Credential Analyst in as timely a manner as possible. The student needs to understand that the KSOE may not waive, modify or exclude **any** State requirement or regulation for a credential.

## **PART II: CREDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. For a Reading Certificate**

#### **1. Definition of the Certificate Program Completion**

Before a recommendation for any credential can be made, the student must complete the courses which make up the Saint Mary's CTC- approved preparation program. **All courses in the program must be completed with a grade of B or higher.** Since the Reading Program is often taken while the student is already employed, program completion may take a significant period of time. It is important to keep in close contact with the Program Director and/or Program Advisor, so that the student makes certain that the entire program is in fact completed. Approval for any transfer courses or program changes should be obtained in writing from the appropriate program administrator.

##### **a. GaelXpress and In-Progress and Incomplete Grades**

Any courses for which you have an In Progress or Incomplete currently posted are NOT completed. You can use GaelXpress to confirm that all the courses required for your program have been taken and are completed, with a grade of B- or better posted for every course. If your transcript is not accurate, you need to work with the instructor of each course to ensure that you get proper credit for your work.

It is also the student's responsibility to ensure that all incomplete, in-progress and incorrect grades are completed or corrected in a timely fashion. **Incomplete grades will automatically become AF@ of failing grades if the work is not completed by the middle of the following long term.** You will **not** be notified of this deadline after the Incomplete grade has been issued. It is your responsibility to complete your work in a timely fashion.

In-Progress grades, unlike Incomplete grades, are final grades and will remain on your Saint Mary's College transcripts. In order to clear an In-Progress grade, **you must re-register for the course in the semester in which you complete the work** so a new grade can be posted. (The previous In Progress grade will not be changed or modified.) Failure to register to clear your In-Progress will mean that your credential recommendation will be delayed until you can register and the new grades are posted for that term. It is your responsibility to register to clear all In-Progress grades before filing your request for a recommendation for a credential with the Credential Office.

##### **b. Residency Requirement:**

**If less than one half of a student's teacher preparation program was taken at Saint Mary's College, the Credential Office cannot formally recommend the student for the credential. It should be noted that neither competence evaluations nor challenged courses may be used to meet this residency requirement.**

## **2. Basic Teaching Credential**

Each student's Reading documents are dependent upon their basic teaching credential (see Page 1). If you hold a Preliminary or Level I document you should make sure that in addition to completing the requirements of the Reading Program, you also take steps to clear your Preliminary credential. Remember that your credential authorizations must include a full, valid authorization to teach English Learners.

## **3. Verification of Employment as a Full-Time Teacher**

The students need to obtain written verification that they have been employed for three years in as a full-time teacher of record. The service need not be consecutive nor have been in California, but it must have occurred in a K-12 public or qualifying (regionally accredited) private school. If the applicant has taught in more than one district, verification from each is required, up to the three year minimum.

The letter(s) verifying the service needs to be signed and dated after the employment occurred. Signed contracts for employment through the school year or letters stating the person will be employed through the end of a school year are not acceptable. Before a recommendation can be forwarded to CTC, the student must have completed the required service.

It is important to note that acceptable employment experience does **NOT** include student teaching, internship teaching, or teaching while holding an emergency permit of any type.

## **4. Transfer Course Work:**

At the discretion of the Program Director, a student may complete some of the course work required for the Reading Program at another institution. Written approval of such course work should be obtained prior to beginning your course work in the Reading Program.

In order to apply for the Reading document, transcripts from prior colleges or universities is only required if courses used to fulfill the Reading Program requirements were taken at the institution. The student must provide the Credential Office with an official transcript for all course work used to meet credential requirements. Which transcripts are required will be established in the Reading Credential Documentation Report during the student's first semester in the Program.

It is the student's responsibility to have all necessary official transcripts on file with the Credential Office before a recommendation for any document will be made to CTC.

## **B. For a Specialist Teaching Credential in Reading and Language Arts**

### **1. Prerequisite Reading Certificate Requirements**

All the requirements for the Reading Certificate, including the three years full-time teaching experience requirement, are also required for the Specialist Credential in Reading and Language Arts even if the applicant has not applied for the Reading Certificate. The employment requirement need

only be met once, but it is not possible to receive EITHER document without having completed three years of successful full-time teaching employment.

## **2. Definition of the Credential Program Completion**

Before a recommendation for any credential can be made, the student must complete the courses which make up the Saint Mary's CTC- approved preparation program. **All courses in the program must be completed with a grade of B or higher.** Since the Reading Program is often taken while the student is already employed, program completion may take a significant period of time. It is important to keep in close contact with the Program Director and/or Program Advisor, so that the student makes certain that the entire program is in fact completed. Approval for any transfer courses or program changes should be obtained in writing from the appropriate program administrator.

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## **3. Basic Teaching Credential (Xerox Copy):**

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The letter(s) verifying the service needs to be signed and dated after the employment occurred. Signed contracts for employment through the school year or letters stating the person will be employed through the end of a school year are not acceptable. Before a recommendation can be forwarded to CTC, the student must have completed the required service.

It is important to note that acceptable employment experience does **NOT** include student teaching, internship teaching, or teaching while holding an emergency permit. If the student has already three years of service for the Reading Certificate then the experience for the Credential has been met. An additional three years is not required.

#### **5. Transfer Course Work:**

At the discretion of the Program Director, a student may complete some of the course work required for the Reading Program at another institution. Written approval of such course work should be obtained prior to beginning your course work in the Reading Program.

In order to apply for the Reading document, transcripts from prior colleges or universities is only required if courses used to fulfill the Reading Program requirements were taken at the institution. The student must provide the Credential Office with an official transcript for all course work used to meet credential requirements. Which transcripts are required will be established in the Reading Credential Documentation Report during the student=s first semester in the Program.

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