

# TEP M.Ed. Student FAQ

2019-2020

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## What is the M.Ed about?

"The M.Ed." (Master of Education in Teaching) is a year-long, systematic inquiry into children, their learning, and educational contexts, driven by close analysis of classroom data (also referred to as "records of practice"). The M.Ed work begins in the Fall with an Introduction to Inquiry course where candidates will analyze video from their classrooms. In the Winter quarter, candidates will focus on outside research around areas of interest. In the Spring, candidates will be working on both individual and collaborative research, advised by faculty. This will culminate in a collaborative research poster or presentation and evaluated by faculty members.

## What's purpose of the M.Ed.?

First and foremost, every M.Ed. inquiry is about students, their learning, and educational contexts. Through a process of asking questions, acquiring and analyzing data from their classrooms, candidates will use evidence to develop claims about the educational contexts they and their students inhabit. The purpose of this process is to develop a lens with which to see student learning and their practice as a teacher. We hope this process will lead candidates to a place of paying attention to what their students are up to, and why it matters. Examining the work with colleagues is an essential part of the process.

## What will I have to do?

Each inquiry depends upon having material that you can look at to see what's really going on in your classroom. These materials will come from your classroom practice. You will have to gather **data** (what we call "records of practice") yourself. Video recordings (and transcripts) and student work are often essential. Other records can include audio recordings, interviews, and surveys. What you collect will depend on your topic and questions.

Once you have gathered records of practice, you will need to analyze them. There are many different approaches to analysis, with each academic discipline contributing its share. For us, the consistently best way to describe what you will actually *do* is "close, careful looking." There will be no magic formula, no easy counting and comparing. Your analyses will proceed in multiple "rounds," unpeeling and untangling what's going on.

There are parts to the M.Ed that are *individual*, and there are *collaborative* parts as well. The majority of the collaboration will take place in the Winter and Spring quarters. It is important to note that even with the individual components, you will need other people to help you see what you don't already see and ask questions that you don't already ask. Sometimes you will do this informally, sitting with a colleague to examine your writing or some record of practice. Argument, collaboration and dialogue among group members are central to the process.

## What are “records of practice?” Where do they come from?

“Records of practice” are materials drawn from actual teaching practice that, when analyzed and re-represented, make visible the complex relationships among children, their learning, and educational contexts. We encourage you to select records that are *dense*, i.e., that have much and varied information, especially information that exceeds what their guiding questions demand. Such dense records provide the chance to “see new things” and to “see in new ways.” The most common records are video recordings, transcripts, and student work. At the earliest stages of the inquiry, you may not have a clear idea for choosing one or more records. We will encourage you to trust the “warm” and “cold” spots in your experience as possible markers of good records. Later, as your topic and questions take shape in the Winter and Spring quarters, your selection of records will become more deliberate.

## What is the role of “outside” literature?

This will be the focus of the Winter quarter.

The role of outside literature is to learn more about what others have said about your areas of interest. We have described some of the functions of outside literature for the M.Ed inquiry project. This may include:

- confirming claims, methods, questions, or concepts
- changing the direction of the inquiry (topic or questions)
- clarifying questions, methods, or concepts
- prompt new questions for exploration

Each candidate will create an **annotated bibliography** during the Winter quarter which will include:

1. A list of citations (in our case 6 resources)
2. Each citation is followed by a brief **summary and evaluation** of the article
3. **Connections to your practice:** we will also ask you to write and think about how the literature helps you think about what you might research in the Spring, as well as perhaps how it related to the Fall work we did.

## What’s the culminating project?

There are two pieces to this that are integrated. One is an *individual* piece, which is the individual research you have done in your specific classroom. This is called the “Inquiry Paper.” The second part is *collaborative*, in which you will be working with a group of colleagues to create a presentation or poster which will include, at the heart of it, your data analysis and findings from your classroom. The details of the criteria will be laid out explicitly for you as you move forward with the project with your faculty instructors.

### **What is the relationship between the teaching credential and the M.Ed?**

First and foremost, the credential precedes the M.Ed. You MUST be in current and good standing with all credential requirements to pursue the M.Ed. If you are not in current and good standing in terms of credential requirements (including student teaching, state requirements such as RICA, and coursework) by the end of Winter quarter, you will need to postpone the M.Ed. This means you must be up to date in terms of course content, but also in terms of the student teaching requirements. The spirit of postponing is so that you can focus your energies on meeting the credential requirements. Again, the credential precedes the M.Ed. If you wish to appeal your case, you would meet with the M.Ed Steering Committee.

### **What about the M.Ed. course (Ed 265 series)?**

In order to complete the M.Ed. degree, you need to take (and pass) the Ed 265 series. As part of the course, you will be required to meet several milestones. If you miss one of the milestones, on time, you may be unable to continue forward with the M.Ed. this year. If you miss more than one Ed 265 session, you may be in jeopardy of passing the course.

### **What about the evaluation of the work (“MEd exam/presentation”)?**

You must complete both *individual* work (Inquiry paper) and a *collaborative* presentation or poster. You will be evaluated on both of these in order to receive your M.Ed.

### **What if I don't complete the M.Ed this year? Postponing the M.Ed...**

You can postpone the M.Ed at any point during your credential year. You will be in contact with Eva Oxelson (eoxelson@education.ucsb.edu), who is the M.Ed. Returning Coordinator. The basic criteria for postponing the M.Ed. include: (1) you must have taken and passed Ed 265A in the Fall quarter that you entered the credential program, (2) you are teaching in some capacity, (3) you commit to attend several Saturday seminars in the year you return to complete the M.Ed., (4) you work in an M.Ed group and participate in the Final Peer Review process, and (5) successfully pass M.Ed. exam in the summer you complete the M.Ed.