Student Guide
to the
Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure
2015-2016
What’s the MTEL About? Becoming an Educator in Massachusetts

If you are considering a career as a teacher in the public schools (or in some private schools), you will need to earn a teaching license. The following academic programs offered at Wheelock College are state approved and nationally recognized. In order to earn a teaching license, you must take each course required by your academic program and pass it, including your student teaching pre-practicum and practicum. You must also take and pass a series of state tests known as the Massachusetts Tests for Educator License (MTELs). As you move through your academic program, you will notice that in order to register for certain courses, you will have had to pass particular parts of the MTEL. You cannot register for your final course in your program until you have passed all required MTEL exams specific to your academic program.

There are different types of teaching licenses issues by the state of Massachusetts. The programs below lead to an initial teacher license issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and are associated with the Bachelor Degree level.

- Early Childhood, grades PreK- 2nd
- Elementary, grades 1-6
- Moderate Disabilities, grades PreK-8

It is important to note that the MTEL exams are not a requirement for completion of all Wheelock programs, only the ones listed above that lead to a teaching license.

Any changes in state MTEL requirements are automatically incorporated into the program by Wheelock College to ensure that our graduates are prepared for licensure and employment upon graduation.

What if I’m not planning to teach in Massachusetts?

If you do not plan to teach in the state of Massachusetts, you are still required to take and pass the MTEL exams in one of these programs listed above because the College’s programs are linked to a Massachusetts license. If and when you move to another state, you may have to take that state’s exam, but your academic program will be accepted (it is unlikely that you will need to take additional coursework unless teacher preparation programs change significantly in the future). Interstate agreements and reciprocity exist among some of the states in the nation. This means that most states will accept your academic work and student teaching practicums and may require that you pass their exam. Please let us know if you are intending to move to another state, and we will help you research and understand that state’s requirements.

You are more likely to pass the required tests on the first attempt if you plan ahead, prepare well, and take and pass the tests separately, and use the test objectives and practice tests provided by the state for your preparation.
Wheelock College’s Policy on the MTEL

According to Massachusetts law and regulations, to be licensed to teach in Massachusetts public schools (and some private schools) you must complete a state-approved program of study and pass the MTELs specific to your program of study (early childhood, elementary, or special education). The purpose of the exams is to ensure that each licensed educator has the entry-level knowledge and skills essential for effective teaching.

All students in Wheelock educator preparation programs leading to licensure from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) must meet the following requirements:

- Students in undergraduate educator licensure programs must pass the MTEL Communication and Literacy Skills exam (including both the Reading and Writing sub-tests) prior to registering for a first pre-practicum (Elementary Education) or practicum (Early Childhood and Moderate Disabilities). The Field Experience Office requires evidence of passing scores by March 30th each spring or October 30th each fall for candidates to receive an interview in a school for a pre-practicum or practicum placement in the following semester.

- Students in undergraduate educator licensure programs must pass all necessary MTEL subject matter exams in order to register for their final capstone course.

The College provides MTEL support courses for each of the exams at no cost to the student. You can register for these courses on the portal in the same way that you register for all other courses.

Passing the MTEL: Follow these 3 Steps

1. Take test preparation support classes at the time suggested by the faculty within your academic program. (For example, before you take the Foundations of Reading MTEL test, check with your literacy course instructor to get specific advice about the best time for taking it).

2. Design a personal plan for studying for the test; block off time in your weekly schedule to take practice tests in the same way that you would set aside time for homework each week. (Preparing for the MTEL is like taking another course).

3. Take each exam separately and immediately following any test preparation support course. (Even though you can take the Communication and Literacy test all at once, passing rates are higher for students who take the reading test separately from the writing test. Unfortunately, you will have to pay to register twice, but the results may be worth the extra money).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Academic Program</th>
<th>Required Tests</th>
<th>When should I plan to take it?</th>
<th>When do I have to pass it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Inclusive Classroom Teacher Program (leading to the PreK-2 Initial License)</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Literacy: Reading</td>
<td>Take during/immediately after ENG 121 and ACD 315 prep (take a year before first practicum is scheduled).</td>
<td>Prior to receiving an interview for a practicum placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication &amp; Literacy: Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations of Reading</td>
<td>Take immediately after EDU 335. Complete before senior year.</td>
<td>Prior to registration for UG ECE Capstone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Subject Test</td>
<td>Take during first practicum and after ACD 306.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prior to registration for UG ECE Capstone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Teacher Program (leading to the 1-6 Initial license)</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Literacy: Reading</td>
<td>Take during or immediately after ENG 121 and ACD 315. (Take C&amp;L tests a year before practicum or pre-practicum is scheduled.)</td>
<td>Prior to receiving an interview for a practicum placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication &amp; Literacy: Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundations of Reading</td>
<td>Take immediately after EDU 335 review and before senior year. (Best if taken immediately after RDG 337 or 338).</td>
<td>Prior to registering for Capstone (Elementary) or Portfolio (TSMD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Curriculum: Multi-Subject Subtest</td>
<td>Take each subtest separately.</td>
<td>Prior to registering for the Capstone Course (for Elementary) or Portfolio (for Special Education).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Curriculum: Math Subtest</td>
<td>Take the Multi-subject subtest after completing ACD 316 prep: Multi-subject review sessions are offered for different subject areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics: Math review sessions are recommended prior to taking the subtest.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take both subtests in second or third year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**MTEL: Test Descriptions and What to Expect**

The MTEL is a series of tests: a Communication and Literacy Skills Test and subject matter tests. All licensure candidates in initial and advanced programs are required to pass the Communication and Literacy Skills test. This also applies to candidates in Wheelock’s advanced Teacher of Reading program. In addition, candidates must pass the appropriate subject matter test(s) for the license they seek. Students are given four hours to complete an individual test administration (www.mtel.nesinc.com). If you don’t pass the MTEL tests, you can take them again until you pass, but keep in mind the added registration costs, additional time that this might add to your program of study and graduation plans, as well as the added stress you may encounter. Try your best to prepare well so that you are not caught in a cycle of being unable to pass.

MTEL tests are administered weekdays and Saturdays throughout the year, and with some holiday observance. Each test is scored on a scale of 100-300 points, with a passing score of 240. Most tests are computer based. Read the information booklet and instruction sheets carefully on the test vendor website. Students can access test and registration information at www.mtel.nesinc.com.

**Communication and Literacy Skills Test**

The Communication and Literacy Skills Test (C&L) has two subtests – Reading and Writing – which can be taken in the same 4-hour period or separately on different test dates. Candidates are required to take the subtests in order to demonstrate that they have the communication and literacy skills necessary for effective instruction and communication with parents and other professionals.

- **The Reading Subtest** primarily consists of multiple choice items to test the knowledge of educator candidates. It tests comprehension, reasoning skills, identification of a writer’s main idea, summarizing and graph interpretation. The minimum passing score is 240.

- **The Writing Subtest** contains a written summary exercise, a written composition exercise, and multiple choice or short answer questions on sentence construction, identification of sentence errors including grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization and punctuation. The minimum passing score is 240.

Students must pass both the Reading and the Writing subtests in order to pass the Communication and Literacy Skills Test. For more specific information on the C&L Test, including test objectives, sample test questions and a practice test, access www.mtel.nesinc.com. (Note the Wheelock MTEL policy; undergraduates must pass the C&L test prior to registering for first practicum or pre-practicum.)
Subject Content Tests

Subject tests are intended to assess the breadth and depth of content knowledge, conceptual understanding, and research methodologies of a subject area at a level required of a beginning practitioner. Subject test(s) are license-specific.

Each subject test has objectives based on content drawn from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and other sources. The test objectives and elements under each objective are an essential resource for test preparation.

Subject matter tests include both multiple-choice and one or two open-response questions. The number of multiple choice test items and open response questions vary among tests. Teacher candidates taking the Early Childhood Subject Test are asked on occasion to apply knowledge of child development to specific situations. In addition, the Foundations of Reading test includes content and pedagogy for teaching reading, writing, communication, and other language and literacy skills.

The General Curriculum Subject Test has two subtests which should be taken separately. The General Curriculum: Multi-subject subtest covers general content in English language arts and literature, life and physical science, history and the social sciences, with a few questions on special education. The General Curriculum: Mathematics subtest is focused solely on mathematics.
MTEL Requirements for Passing by Program

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS EXAM

**Early Childhood Education:**
Undergraduate students in the Inclusive Classroom Teacher program leading to the PreK-2 license must pass the Communication and Literacy Skills exam prior to interviewing for or registering for the 300-hour practicum (EDU 436, EDP 437).

**Elementary Education:**
Undergraduate students must pass the Communication and Literacy Skills exam prior to interviewing for or registering for pre-practicum (EDU 316, EDP 317).

**Special Education (Moderate Disabilities):**
Undergraduate students must pass the Communication and Literacy Skills exam prior to interviewing for or registering for practicum (SPP 460).

SUBJECT MATTER TESTS

**Early Childhood Education:**
Undergraduate students must pass the Early Childhood and Foundations of Reading subject tests prior to registering for Capstone (EDU 465).

**Elementary Education:**
Undergraduate students must pass the General Curriculum and Foundations of Reading subject test prior to registering for Capstone (EDU 487).

**Special Education (Moderate Disabilities):**
Undergraduate students must pass the General Curriculum I and II, and Foundations of Reading subject tests prior to registering for the final Portfolio Class (SPE 465).
Plan, Prepare and Pass the MTEL

It is important to begin planning for the MTEL as soon as possible. In an effort to meet the MTEL requirements of your program of study—and related areas of licensure that you are seeking—we strongly encourage you to meet with your advisor as early into your academic career as possible. Talk with faculty and program department Chairs to establish how you are going to approach the MTEL, and implement the best planning strategies to meet your needs.

When registering for the MTEL, designate Wheelock as a recipient of your test scores. Wheelock College’s Institution Code is 58. If you decide not to include Wheelock as a direct recipient of your test scores, you are responsible for providing the Wheelock Registrar with that information in the form of the official test score report. The official form will be returned to you after a copy is made in the Registrar’s office. Your pass record is available to you and to your advisor in the portal.

For More Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MTEL Information</th>
<th>To obtain test objectives, sample questions, practice tests, and other resources for individual test preparation, visit <a href="http://www.mtel.nesinc.com">www.mtel.nesinc.com</a>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MTEL Prep Courses at Wheelock</strong></td>
<td>Contact Ms. Brenda Bee, Educator Licensure and Data Management Assistant at 617-879-1213 or <a href="mailto:bbee@wheelock.edu">bbee@wheelock.edu</a> or come by the Dean’s Office in Suite 205 of the Classroom Building.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## MY MTEL PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests I Need to Pass</th>
<th>How I Will Prepare</th>
<th>When I Need to Take Each Test</th>
<th>When I Need to Have Passed Each Test to Register for Courses in My Program</th>
<th>My Preferred Testing Dates (Allow time to receive the scores with adequate time to meet my program plan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>