

Biology Licensure Requirements for Admission into Teacher Education

The Gold Card serves as documentation that a student has met all admission requirements and has been officially admitted into an undergraduate, initial licensure teacher preparation program within the Professional Education Unit at The University of Southern Mississippi.

The following requirements must be met for the Gold Card:

- Completion of a core curriculum of pre-major coursework
- A minimum grade point average of 2.75 on the 44 semester-hour core curriculum of pre-major coursework (see list below)
- A grade of “C” or better in freshman English Composition I and II
- Good academic standing at Southern Miss (a student on probation, probation continued, or suspension status cannot be admitted to teacher education until the transcript reflects good academic standing)
- A clear background check via CastleBranch at <https://mycb.castlebranch.com>, the system currently selected by the Southern Miss Professional Education Council. Students who pass the background check process will be issued a background check badge.
- All candidates must subscribe to the Tk20 assessment system. Tk20 provides an electronic portfolio and storage system for students as well as tracks, stores, retrieves, and analyzes data for accreditation purposes.
- Successful completion of a nationally normed ability/achievement assessment OR a teacher education normed entrance test:
 - Nationally Normed Ability/Achievement Assessment:

An ACT composite score of 21 or higher, with no scale score below 18 (all on the same test date). If the student did not take the ACT, an equivalent SAT score of 990 or above satisfies requirements as well.
- Teacher Education Normed Test:

Acceptable scores on the Core Academic Skills for Educators Test (CORE): Reading Test Code 5712 with a score of at least 156, Writing Test Code 5722 with a score of at least 162, and Mathematics Test Code 5732 with a score of at least 150. This is the most recent teacher-normed test approved by the State of Mississippi. MDE will begin accepting this test 9/1/2013 with it becoming mandatory as the new test starting 1/1/2014.

Except for the Background Check that allows for a two week extension into the first semester (see Background Check Policy), all requirements must be met **prior** to enrollment in restricted teacher education courses.

Once the above qualifications have been met, admittance into the teacher education program (and assignment of the "Gold Card") is required to enroll in restricted courses.

To apply for admittance, see Jennifer Wild, Teacher Certification Specialist, in OMH 121.

(Contact info: 601-266-5522, jennifer.wild@usm.edu)

Any student with a question about these requirements should be directed to the College of Education and Psychology Dean.

The following core courses must be completed before applying for the “Gold Card”

ENG 101

ENG 102

ENG 203

BSC 197

BSC 110/BSC 110L

BSC 111/BSC 111L

MAT 114 **or** MAT 167

HIS 101

HIS 102

PSY 110

CMS 111

One *Social Sciences* course: ANT 101, GHY 101 **or** SOC 101

One *Aesthetics Values* course: ART 130, DAN 107, MUS 165, **or** THE 100

Two courses with labs from:

CHE 106/CHE 106L

PHY 111/PHY 111L

CHE 107/CHE 107L

PHY 112/PHY112L