

Faculty Guide

**School of Teaching and Learning
Minnesota State University Moorhead**

(Updated 11/9/2006)

November 2006

Greetings!

Welcome to Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) and the School of Teaching and Learning (STL). We are delighted you have decided to join us and hope you will find your work at MSUM rewarding.

We have put together this booklet to help orient you to the university, the School of Teaching and Learning, and our teacher education programs. It consists of three parts: (1) a brief overview and recent history of teacher education at MSUM; (2) an outline of procedures that are most important to a new faculty member; and (3) some ideas about teaching and learning at MSUM, including characteristics of our students and strategies other faculty members have found to be effective.

As you look over this booklet, please jot down questions or additional topics you would have liked covered. We will be asking for feedback when we revise this guide next year. In the meantime, your colleagues and the STL administrative staff will be happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have.

Again, welcome to MSUM and the School of Teaching and Learning. We are glad to have you on board.

Sincerely,

Charles Howell
Chair, School of Teaching and Learning

1. History and Overview

The institution now known as Minnesota State University Moorhead was founded in 1888 as Moorhead State Normal School. It is still affectionately known to many local residents as Moorhead State or MSU. Originally devoted exclusively to teacher preparation, the institution diversified in the late 1940's, when the G.I. bill swelled enrollment, and now grants B.A. degrees in the arts and sciences, as well as B. S. degrees in a number of professional fields besides education.

Teacher education at MSUM has long been recognized as the premier program of its kind in this region. Our programs have been continuously accredited by NCATE since 1954, and we are working hard to prepare for reaccreditation in the spring of 2008.

Until recently, teacher education programs were divided between three departments: (1) Special Education, (2) Elementary and Early Childhood Education, and (3) Counseling, Educational Leadership, Foundations, and Field Experience (CELFFE). In Spring of 2005, special education, elementary education, and several CELFFE programs were merged into a single department, the School of Teaching and Learning (STL).

STL is currently responsible for 14 undergraduate teacher education programs, which are approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT). This fall, a full-time advisor with a 12-month appointment will coordinate advising for students in all programs. On completion of a program, the student is recommended for licensure, and a completed license application is forwarded to the BOT. Students who desire licensure in North Dakota must apply to the North Dakota Division of Public Instruction. A teacher who is licensed in Minnesota is ordinarily granted a provisional North Dakota license for two years to allow time for completion of North Dakota requirements.

The core undergraduate licensure programs are supplemented by a variety of certificates, graduate licensures, and graduate degree programs:

- Middle School Certificate
- Teaching English as a Second Language—add-on post-baccalaureate licensure (under development)
- Online graduate licensure—for students who hold an undergraduate degree in their prospective teaching field (under development, currently available for mathematics)
- Reading Licensure and Reading Certificate
- M.S. in Reading
- M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction
- M.S. in Special Education

This array of programs has evolved over a period of years to meet local needs and changes in Minnesota licensure requirements; a number of new initiatives to address

current conditions are in progress. The Director of Teacher Education tracks changes in licensure requirements and monitors compliance with new BOT standards.

Legal and Contractual Responsibilities of the STL

MSUM is a member institution of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), and is subject to the authority of the MnSCU Chancellor and Board of Trustees.

The Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) Master Agreement, otherwise known as “the contract,” spells out the rights and responsibilities of faculty members. New faculty members receive a copy of the contract, which is also available at www.ifo.org. Also available at the IFO website are complete faculty seniority rosters.

The School of Teaching and Learning is considered a department under the contract. The STL faculty has the right and responsibility to make recommendations on personnel, curriculum, workload, and other matters relating to the academic functions of the university. The STL chair communicates these recommendations to the Dean, and also makes independent recommendations. The Dean, in turn, passes recommendations about personnel issues on to the academic vice president and curricular issues to the appropriate curriculum committee. A further recommendation at this level is passed on to the President, who makes the final decision.

Among the most important consultative functions of the department are recruitment of new faculty members and retention, tenure, and promotion decisions. Service on search committees is highly valued, as is thoughtful and fair-minded consideration of the credentials of colleagues seeking retention, tenure, and promotion. Criteria for the evaluation of faculty members are prescribed by the contract, and faculty members are expected to adhere strictly to these criteria in formulating their recommendations. The relevant procedure is spelled out in detail in our promotion and tenure policy, available online at the STL website. At the start of each academic year, the chair will send out a schedule listing dates for submission of documents related to this procedure.

2. Procedures and Resources

(a) General Information

The secretary in your office suite is your primary administrative support person:

Lommen 209	Bev Nokken	x 2297	nokken@mnstate.edu
Lommen 213	Tracy Heng	x 2217	hengt@mnstate.edu
Lommen 214	Lisa Rorvig	x 2013	rorvig@mnstate.edu

Offices are staffed from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Student workers in the reception area will handle routine requests such as copying and taking phone messages. If you have projects you would like the student workers to handle, please channel that work through the secretary in your suite, and she will distribute the work to the student workers. For faculty and curriculum issues, contact the chair, Charlie Howell (howell@mnstate.edu; x 2559; 218-233-2362 nights until 10 pm).

(b) Book Orders for Students

The university bookstore is on the first floor of MacLean Hall. Textbooks are located in the basement. Book orders should be sent to Mary Beckerleg (beckerlg@mnstate.edu) and should include the course and section numbers of the class, title of the book, edition, publisher, ISBN number, and number of copies you want ordered. Allow at least 2 weeks for orders to arrive. The secretary will order the book(s) for your class(es) in your first semester, and will provide you with a desk copy.

If you decide to change textbooks, order a complimentary desk copy from the publisher. (Check with the secretary if you have trouble doing this.) If the desk copy doesn't arrive on time, you may purchase a copy at the bookstore. Avoid marking it, so it can be returned for credit when you receive the desk copy.

(c) Building and Office Access

The secretary will order a key to your office (for fixed-term and tenure-track faculty) and a key to the outer office door. You can pick the keys up at Owens 209. The keys cannot be duplicated, and there is a replacement charge if you lose them.

(d) Class Cancellation

If you must cancel your class, please notify your secretary as soon as possible so that a sign can be posted on your classroom and office doors. If you have an email list of students, send them a message that class is cancelled.

(e) Computer Equipment

Tenure-track faculty members receive a new laptop and carrying case when they arrive on campus. Also included are a monitor cable (for hookup to classroom projectors), a docking station with its own power supply, a pen drive (removable storage device for the USB port), and an Ethernet cable (for Internet access). The laptop is wireless-capable, and you will receive instructions for wireless access on campus. As of Fall 2006, however, most of Lommen does not have reliable wireless connectivity. The docking station allows you to connect quickly to a mouse, conventional keyboard, second monitor, and wired internet connection, which you will find in your office.

Laptops are loaded with Windows Office and Symantec Anti-Virus software. Symantec will be set to update automatically, but it will only do so when you're on campus.

As of Fall 2006, nearly all classrooms in Lommen Hall have been equipped with overhead projectors for both laptops and the VCR/DVD machines. Adjunct instructors may use their personal laptops. Make sure you have the appropriate cables. There are also two carts with laptops and projectors available, in case you don't have a laptop or find yourself in a room without a projector. The carts are stored in LO 214Y and LO 213, and sign-up sheets are available at the respective reception desks.

If you have a technology problem, contact Information Technology (x 2603, second floor of the Lord Library). If you have a problem with the connections or equipment in the classroom contact Instructional Media (x 2233 or 2234, media @mnstate.edu).

(f) Copies and Printing

Please use Printing Services for jobs of more than 15 pages. It's 50% cheaper than the office copier. You must get your copy to the student workers 1 full business day in advance (more at the start of the semester). Include a note with your name, course number, the number of copies needed, and any special instructions (collating, stapling, double-sided, etc.). The copies will be placed in your mailbox. You may also email the materials to the appropriate secretary. If you are based in LO 214, copy the message to the student workers, stlstud@mnstate.edu. For confidential materials (e.g. tests), please send the message to the secretary and the chair. Do not send it to the student workers.

The copy machines require an access code, which the secretary will give you when you arrive. The code can also be used in the Dean's Office (Lommen 212).

(g) Course Packets for Students

If you use many handouts in your courses, we encourage you to create a course pack for student purchase. Copies Plus, in Comstock Memorial Union, 477-2121, will duplicate your packet. During the semester, this takes 1-2 days; at the start of the semester, it may take as long as 2 weeks. A complimentary instructor copy is provided if you request it.

(h) Course Scheduling

Proposed course schedules are prepared by the chair approximately one full semester in advance. The following factors, listed in order of priority, determine who teaches what, where, and when:

- expected enrollment
- maximum feasible class size
- faculty qualifications
- faculty release time for administrative responsibilities
- student scheduling needs
- workload (avoiding too many preps, avoiding too many new preps, avoiding fragmented schedules, avoiding last-minute changes)
- faculty needs (e.g., technology, room layout)
- seniority
- faculty preference

Before the schedule is prepared, faculty members will be asked to submit preferences for course assignments, times, and classrooms. Listing several preferences in each category is appreciated, and will make it more likely that needs and preferences of faculty members and students will be met.

When a draft schedule has been created, it will be posted on-line, and you will have a week to review it, note any conflicts or problems, and request changes. Please examine your assignment carefully. Catching mistakes early will avoid anguish when the semester begins.

(i) Course Syllabus

The lead instructor, who has overall responsibility for the integrity and consistency of the course you are assigned to teach, will provide an official syllabus for you to use as a guide. Copies of official syllabi are also kept on file in the office of the Director of Teacher Education, as well as by the Board of Teaching. You are encouraged to not only adapt the official syllabus to your strengths and exercise your judgment in selection of content and teaching method, but also to ensure learning opportunities in your section are similar to those in other sections. You should confer with the lead instructor for the course to help maintain consistency.

The university requires that every instructor give students a syllabus that includes specific information, such as the catalogue course description, course objectives, methods of assessment, attendance policy, method of grading, etc. The complete list is provided in Appendix A. Your attendance policy should conform to the policy of the university, included as Appendix B. Education courses are expected to include two additional items: (1) Standards of Effective Practice (STEP's) addressed by the course, and (2) the Conceptual Framework for the College of Education and Human Service. Both of these items should be copied verbatim from the sample syllabus.

The syllabus is a contract. It should include all basic expectations and requirements of the students: how they're going to be graded, attendance requirements, policies about late work, etc. Include a schedule of classes/topics/assignments, but notify students this is tentative, subject to change, in case you need to adjust the schedule later. You can change details of assignments, but not the basic course requirements. If your syllabus doesn't mention a midterm exam, don't add one later. For 3-credit courses, the final exam should be administered in the scheduled time slot during finals week; if you use a different summative assessment, you are still required to hold class in that time slot.

Make sure information about materials is complete and accurate. For textbooks, specify the edition. If you have a course packet, tell them where they can get it.

Go over the syllabus with students early in the course. Point out the major requirements. Establish clear expectations at the outset. The students don't want any surprises. Nor do you. The great majority of students want to fulfill all your requirements, and laying these out in advance in a clear and straightforward way will help them to do this more effectively.

(j) Email and Websites

We recommend that you use an MSUM email account. As soon as you receive your dragon ID number, you can sign up online. From the MSUM home page, click "email" at the top right. After obtaining an email account, you can sign up for a website if you want one. From the home page, click Technology (upper right), then Web Page Application (lower left). If you have difficulty with this, contact our computer support specialist, Joe Allen (x2030, Lommen 107).

The University email program is rather temperamental, and Outlook, though loaded on your computer, is not supported. For security, convenience, and reliability, consider using Thunderbird (by Mozilla), available free on the web at www.mozilla.com.

When you obtain your account, you will be signed up for several electronic mailing lists. In addition to the University-wide list, there is a list for the College of Education and Human Services staff (cehs@mnstate.edu), a departmental list for the School of Teaching and Learning (stl@mnstate.edu), and a list, which includes STL and other education programs, including secondary education and educational leadership (edunit@mnstate.edu). To send to any of these lists, you must send the message from the email address under which you are subscribed to the list. If you wish to receive email at another address, you can add to or change your list subscription. Joe Allen can help with this.

(k) Films

The TCU film library, located on the first floor of the Lord Library (<http://www.mnstate.edu/tcufilm/>), provides a wide assortment of videotapes and DVDs for faculty use. Each fall they invite faculty members to request new films. Your request

is more likely to be granted if it is supported by a faculty member at each of the other Tri-College campuses (NDSU and Concordia).

With an MSUM staff ID, you can also check films or other materials out of the Concordia Library. Our student workers will pick up and drop off films for you, but, as with copy jobs, please plan ahead and get your requests to them 24 hours in advance.

(l) ID cards

The first semester you teach at MSUM, you will be entered into the University database only after you sign and return your contract. At that time, you can obtain a Dragon ID number (needed for an email and Desire2Learn web account) and a Dragon ID card (needed to check out books from the library). Both are obtained from IT on the second floor of the Lord Library (x 2063). When you are given your Dragon ID card, you should ask to have it validated for weekend and after-hours access to Lommen Hall.

(m) Library Services

Lord Library is by far the most important academic support resource. The education collection has been carefully cultivated; faculty members are periodically asked to review and recommend new titles.

The Curriculum Materials Center (www.mnstate.edu/cmc) on the second floor provides an extensive collection of text and trade books, multimedia resources, and other learning materials. Instructors can reserve the CMC computer classroom, and the Curriculum Librarian will work with students and instructors

The online catalogue provides access to all Minnesota university and public libraries, including the University of Minnesota. Interlibrary loan is quick and convenient. Articles are often sent electronically, so they can be stored on the patron's computer and printed when needed. Books arrive promptly, as soon as one business day if they are coming from Concordia or NDSU.

The library also provides access to an extensive array of online databases, including JSTOR, Academic Search Premier, Ingenta, and WilsonWeb. To locate a specific journal, use the A – Z Online Serials Directory, available from the library home page. There is also a link on the home page to access databases from off campus if you are working at home.

(n) Mail

The campus post office is located across the mall in Flora Frick Hall (down the hall from the bookstore). Daily mail deliveries ordinarily take place at 10 AM and 2 PM. Outgoing mail (including campus mail and U.S. mail with stamps) should be placed in baskets in the reception area of departmental offices. For U.S. mail related to University business, use department envelopes stamped with the appropriate account number.

(o) Office Hours

Fixed-term and tenure-track instructors are expected to allocate 10 hours weekly for student advising and other contact. Office hours should be included in the syllabus and also posted outside the faculty member's office.

(p) Online Instruction

MSUM and other MnSCU institutions subscribe to Desire 2 Learn (D2L), an online course management software package similar to Blackboard and WebCT. Workshops on D2L are offered periodically throughout the semester. To register for a course site on D2L, start from the MSUM home page, click on Technology (top right), then Getting Started (right-hand side, under Desire 2 Learn). You do not have to have your own website to use D2L.

(q) Parking

Parking rules at MSUM are strictly enforced, even when classes are not in session. Before parking in MSUM parking lots, obtain a parking tag in the Parking Office in the Maintenance Building, 709 17th Street South. You can also apply on line at the Parking office website, <http://www.mnstate.edu/parking/>. If you expect to be on campus regularly before the fall semester starts, you should purchase a pro-rated parking tag for summer.

(r) Registration, Class Lists, Attendance Records, and Grading

The Records Office supplies class lists at the start of the semester. Instructors can also check class lists online. The instructor sends the list back to the Records Office with corrections if needed. (From the home page, click Registration at the top center and follow the login instructions. Then click employee and class lists. Make sure the current semester is selected.) Grading forms and instructions are provided at the end of the semester; grades can be entered either online or on a paper form delivered to the Records Office.

Make sure all students attending your class are properly registered. If a student needs an override to register, see the secretary for instructions. You should maintain enrollment records throughout the semester. If a student stops attending, you may be asked for the date of last attendance.

(s) Student Course Evaluations

Instructors are expected to administer student course evaluations at the end of the semester. The form and procedure developed by the university and IFO is available online at <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/TeachingEval/procedure.htm>. Instructors may supplement this form or use a different one at their discretion.

3. Teaching and Learning at MSUM

Every educational institution has traditions of teaching and learning, which shape faculty practices and influence student expectations. You may not want to adopt these for your own use—sometimes it's more productive to teach against the grain. Even so, life is easier if you know what they are.

(a) Grading

Most instructors use a point system, with criteria for grading specified in advance. The instructor should rate student performance against each of the criteria. Students will expect to get full points in each category unless they have clearly failed to meet your written expectations. Rubrics are particularly helpful in clarifying the instructor's expectations. Points may also be deducted for late papers, absences, or lack of participation, but this should be clearly stated in the syllabus, and the instructor should adhere to the announced policy.

Points should be distributed throughout the semester, so that students can monitor their progress, make adjustments as needed, and generally gauge their success in the course. Point values are likely to determine the amount of effort student expend on a given assignment. They also expect point values to reflect the relative difficulty of the assignment.

(b) Student Work Habits

The great majority of our students are highly motivated and punctilious about fulfilling the instructor's expectations. They are also pressed for time. It is not uncommon for students to work 20-30 hours per week while taking 18 hours of classes. Hence you can expect them to establish priorities. In effect, they conduct a cost-benefit analysis: if they can either do x or y, how much do they gain or lose by doing one rather than the other?

Often, the answer is determined by how many points x and y are worth. Sometimes it is determined by how much time students have to expend to get the points. The elasticity of the assignment also figures into their thinking. A vague assignment with ambiguous grading criteria is likely to elicit substandard work.

Given the pressures in students' lives, it makes sense pedagogically to reduce total workload if this can be done without compromising the quality of instruction. Here are some strategies instructors in our program have found helpful:

- Minimize group meetings outside of class. For group projects, set aside class time and set the project up so students can handle organizational details electronically. Pairs of students can meet outside of class more easily than larger groups, especially if they're allowed to choose partners, so they can pick someone with a compatible schedule.

- Review assignments and whenever possible, eliminate any complications that do not contribute to learning.
- Observe students working on projects and see what's causing difficulty. Maybe some of the difficulties can be reduced by clearer or simpler instructions, samples of student work, definitions of key terms, or other scaffolding strategies.
- Ask students at the end of the semester which assignments were least beneficial and caused most difficulty. Consider redesigning or replacing these assignments for the next semester.
- Spread work out evenly through the semester. Do large projects in smaller stages, with each stage submitted and graded separately.
- Negotiate due dates. Sometimes allowing an extra week on a paper will avoid conflicts with assignments for other classes.

(c) Reading

Don't assume students will read what you assign. In a recent class survey, half the students reported having done half the reading, one-quarter had done one-quarter or less, and only one quarter had done three-quarters or more. On an average day, a discussion of reading in this course would involve only half the students!

Instructors have developed a number of ways to encourage students to read more consistently. Here's a list of some of the "do's" and "don'ts" we've found to be most useful:

Do . . .	Don't . . .
Assign modest amounts of reading.	Assign more reading than you plan to cover in class.
Ask students to <i>do</i> something with the reading—answer a question, make a group report, lead a small-group discussion, select a meaningful passage.	Assign a longer reading when students could learn as much from a shorter selection.
Give a quiz on the reading, preferably on-line outside of class. Open books can be allowed to develop critical reading and thinking skills.	Repeat what the book says in a lecture (unless you are summarizing as a springboard to new material).
Make clear to students that they will be tested or otherwise held responsible for the readings.	Wait several class periods after a reading is assigned before it is discussed.
Do something which requires them to have the book in class (e.g. read a passage aloud and interpret it)	
Briefly summarize the reading for the day as a prelude to introducing new material on a related topic.	
Preview the reading the day it is assigned, explaining why it's important and what students should get out of it.	
Survey students at the end of the semester about which readings were most and least interesting and what topics they'd like to read more about.	
Use multi-media—music, pictures, cartoons, brief videos, photographs, etc—in addition to printed text.	

Appendix A

Course Syllabus Policy

All students enrolled in a MSU Moorhead course shall be provided a course syllabus during the first week of class. For courses offered in a condensed format, the time frame for distribution will be adjusted accordingly. The required course syllabus elements follow; optional elements appear in italics. Moreover, the items underlined are required under Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 3.22, Course Syllabi.

1. Course Number, Title.
2. Instructor.
Department
Office Building/Office Number.
Office Telephone.
E-mail Address.
Office Hours.
Classroom Building and Room Number.
Website.
3. Course Description. (The description should be taken from the MSU Moorhead Bulletin; include pre-requisites, credits, and lecture/laboratory breakdown.)
4. Required Texts/Readings.
5. *Conceptual Framework. (This is required for every syllabus for education courses.)*
Available online at <http://www.mnstate.edu/edhuman/STL/cf.doc>.
6. Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes.
7. *Instructional Strategies: (List the strategies that you use in this class, e.g., discussion, small group work, role play, and so on.)*
8. Course Requirements. (Include all extra curricular events with times/dates, if possible.)
9. Evaluation Standards/Course Grading Policy.
10. Course Outline.
11. *Other. (Any additional information that you feel is important.)*
12. Attendance Policy. (Include if applicable; see MSUM Student Absence Policy, Student Handbook: <http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/>)
13. Academic Honesty. (See MSUM Student Absence Policy, Student Handbook: <http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/>)
14. Special Accommodations. Include this statement from the Disabilities Service Office: "Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Coordinator of Disability Services at 477-5859 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), CMU 114 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion."

Appendix B MSUM Student Absence Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings unless they are ill or officially excused as the result of participation in a university function. However, faculty members may or may not take roll in their classes, and they may or may not lower the marks of students for the sole reason of unexcused absences. If a faculty member has a practice of penalizing for nonattendance, he/she must (a) announce the policy regarding the penalty for nonattendance in writing during the first week of class, (b) not penalize the student for nonattendance unless the student is absent without official excuse for more class periods during the term than the number of periods the class meets each week (or more than two class periods during a summer session), (c) maintain accurate attendance records, and (d) submit in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs the explicit class attendance policy statement. *As a point of clarification, if a student has an unexcused absence for a class session during which an examination or other graded exercise is scheduled and the student has more unexcused absences than the number of times the class meets each week, this policy permits the faculty member to reduce the student's grade for the sole reason of the unexcused absences and for failure to complete the graded assignment.*

In cases of individual absence due to jury duty or other legal obligations, the student must notify his/her faculty instructors prior to the absence. Each faculty member will determine the work to be made up and any effect on the course grade. For military absences, see the *MSU Moorhead Bulletin* index under military withdrawal, or refer questions to the Records office.

In the case of individual absence due to health or other emergency, the student must notify his/her faculty instructor as soon as feasible. Each faculty member will determine the appropriateness of the absence, all work to be made up, and any effect on the course grade.

When an official university activity conflicts with scheduled classes, students participating in the official activity will be regarded as excused. Within the limits of feasibility, an excused absence assures a student the right to make up the missed class requirement(s). The nature, time, and place of the make-up work are at the discretion of the instructor. Official university events are those that are approved by the appropriate dean, athletic director, or vice president. At least two weeks prior to the activity, lists of participating students should be distributed to those affected faculty members by the faculty member or organization advisor who will be overseeing the university activity. In the case of conflict about the appropriateness of an absence or the feasibility of the student making up missed work, the faculty members involved should confer directly; the student should not be expected to mediate the conflict. In cases where the faculty members involved cannot agree to a solution, the dean(s) of the respective colleges can be called upon to mediate.

Students wishing to appeal academic decisions or policies further may do so by appealing in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee (Owens 206).