



College of Education and Human Services

Master of Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) Program

The Master of Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) program at Cleveland State University is a masters licensure option developed in the late 1990s to train teachers who would be prepared for and remain in urban settings. MUST is a selective, field-based graduate teacher education program, focusing on the training of secondary teachers in English, social studies, math, science, Spanish, and art. The MUST program's goal is to prepare thoughtful teacher-activists who actively address the effects of race, class, gender, and other differences on student achievement and communities' well-being. MUST operates with a critical theory framework and a "professional development school" model, with two full-time university-based faculty collaborating with school-based site coordinators and mentor teachers at six Cleveland-area high schools to license approximately twenty-five new teachers per year. Students in the program enter as a cohort, take most classes together over a four-semester sequence, and work exclusively with one mentor teacher at a partner high school during a 9-month, unpaid internship. In addition to an Ohio teaching license, graduates earn a Master of Education degree based on culminating teacher research projects and professional portfolios.

MUST has made responding to the challenges of urban settings explicit in its definition of urban teaching. Its founders recognized that any successful urban licensure option must continually shift the profession of urban teachers so that these educators take responsibility for addressing the intense conditions found in these settings. Only if city teachers are consciously assessed against these higher principles and evaluated using holistic, performance-based instruments will they achieve the measures of quality that urban schools and communities require. The MUST program founders fashioned a unique set of urban and social justice-oriented teacher licensure outcomes upon which its students are evaluated through both individual portfolio reviews and public exhibitions of portfolio artifacts:

- **Social Justice:** The MUST intern is a reflective, responsive teacher-leader who successfully addresses the effects of race, class, gender, linguistic difference, ability, and sexual orientation on student achievement.
- **Urban Teaching:** The MUST intern promotes students' learning by utilizing culturally responsive pedagogy.
- **Urban Schooling and Communities:** The MUST intern demonstrates a strong commitment to urban schooling and community activism.

- Resilience, Resistance, and Persistence: The MUST intern addresses the complexities and demands of urban settings by responding appropriately with resilience, resistance, and persistence.

A rubric clearly defines what each program outcome requires should occur in school and classroom practices.

While program interns complete a variety of both traditional and non-traditional assessments throughout their college and program coursework, it is expected that these pre-service teachers will collect portfolio artifacts from all coursework and field experiences. MUST portfolio construction begins in introductory summer courses, continues into the fall semester, and concludes during the spring semester. During each of these three semesters interns gather artifacts representative of their experiences and assess these artifacts as evidence of their proficiency with the MUST outcomes. Each semester interns engage in a formative assessment process around the artifacts they've chosen to address the MUST outcomes. These formative assessment activities are intended to prepare interns for the final, 45-minute summative assessment conference with a MUST university coordinator at the end of each semester—the coordinator review. At the conclusion of each of these three summative coordinator reviews each intern must be assessed as “proficient” with each of the four MUST outcomes. If an intern is not assessed as proficient with all four MUST outcomes, she or he is not allowed to continue in the MUST program the following semester or to finish the program.

Over its nine-year existence MUST has graduated better than 200 teachers, all of whom meet the most stringent requirements for “highly qualified” status. These graduates enjoy a better than 95% hiring rate, with the vast majority finding employment as teachers in Cleveland-area schools and nearly 40% teaching in area urban settings. The program has also played a national leadership role through its involvement with the “Staying in City Schools” induction support and research project. The training and induction efforts of MUST have resulted in a retention rate amongst its urban teaching graduates that counters the national trend of double-digit annual attrition.

As it approaches its second decade of existence, the MUST program has also received significant state and national recognition, including awards from the Ohio Association of Teacher Educators for “Outstanding Field-Based Licensure Program,” “Outstanding Mentor Teacher,” “Outstanding Student Teacher,” and “Outstanding College/University Supervisor.” One of the program’s coordinators has recently received the national “Outstanding Supervisor” award from the Association of Teacher Educators. In 2007, the MUST program received the Nancy Zimpher “Best Partnership” Award from the Holmes partnership. The program is a charter member of the National Association for Professional Development School, and its Cleveland State University faculty, school-based mentor teachers, and students presenting on their partnership efforts and research at numerous national conferences. Its students and faculty have published several studies of effective classroom and teacher education practices.