REQUIREMENTS FOR EARNING ELECTIVE CREDIT FOR THE BTSA EXPERIENCE

Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program

The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program provides opportunities for fully-prepared first and second year teachers to expand and deepen their teaching knowledge and skill. The BTSA Program also provides a smooth transition into the complex responsibilities of teaching, increases the retention of beginning teachers, and improves learning opportunities for their K-12 students. The School of Education wishes to maintain a close connection between continuing professional growth and exemplary instructional practice by providing opportunities for earning graduate credit for field-based BTSA defined work. To motivate new teachers towards advancing their careers through enrollment at CSUSM and to assure our graduate students are well grounded in current concepts of teacher roles, instructional pedagogy and reflective practice, the following units may be earned. You are eligible to apply for CSUSM semester units for BTSA credit if you completed BTSA within the last two years.

If credit was obtained while in BTSA

Masters candidates may choose to apply the units as electives in their program. After being accepted to the program, master’s candidates can complete an Elective Credit Approval Form from the School of Education website Forms and Resources page: http://www.csusm.edu/soe/currentstudents/formsandresources.html. Attach a transcript verifying successful completion of the BTSA courses and submit it for approval by their program advisor.¹

If credit was NOT obtained while in BTSA

NOTE: The master’s candidate should already be admitted into a program.

Contact the specific master’s option coordinator for the CRN for the BTSA courses. Typically, master's option coordinators will enroll candidates in an independent study course to obtain retroactive credit for the BTSA experience. The following process should be followed:

¹ NOTE – The Literacy Program and some levels of the Special Education Program do not accept BTSA units as the program requires too many units to meet the standards or credential requirements.
FOR 3 SEMESTER UNITS (BTSA I)

For three units of credit, provide evidence from your district that you have successfully completed all BTSA requirements. This can be in the form of a letter or E-mailed document. Attach a five-page summary description of the activities you completed while in BTSA and close with a reflection of your progress since completing your BTSA experience. If you have taken masters coursework at CSUSM, include a reflection on how the course continued your professional growth in your field. Attach your BTSA professional growth plan as determined at the conclusion of your BTSA experience. Paper must reflect graduate level writing and formatting. Candidates are encouraged to submit their paper as a draft and receive feedback prior to submitting for the final grade.

3 ADDITIONAL SEMESTER UNITS (BTSA II)

For an additional 3 BTSA units, provide a comprehensive, standards-based lesson plan and reflection (10 pages) documenting continued progress towards professional growth as outlined in your BTSA professional growth plan. If you followed a prescribed lesson plan format with BTSA, you may use that as long as you clearly reference content standards as well as student technology standards. If you need a lesson plan form, consult your advisor for an acceptable format. If you have taken masters coursework at CSUSM, include a part of your reflection on how the course continued your professional growth in your field. Attach your BTSA professional growth plan as determined at the conclusion of your BTSA experience. Paper must reflect graduate level writing and formatting. Candidates are encouraged to submit their paper as a draft and receive feedback prior to submitting for the final grade.

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

Q: For BTSA 1, when is the document and reflection due?
A: At least four weeks before the end of the semester in which you are enrolled for credit.

Q: Can my lesson or unit be from last year, and should my reflection show how the lesson was built based on things I learned in BTSA (and how the subject has evolved and continues to evolve?)
A: The lesson and reflection should be from your current classroom teaching. You may use a previous lesson as a baseline but the emphasis should be on how your instructional skills are evolving.

Q: I took BTSA about 4 years ago. I am not sure where to get verification, as my support provider is no longer with the district. Additionally, so much has happened in my teaching since then. What do I do?
A: BTSA credit can only be obtained within two years after completing BTSA. It is necessary that your BTSA experience be recent to have any relevance to your current experience as a Masters candidate.