

10 GOOD REASONS TO PURSUE A MASTERS OF ART IN TEACHING ONLINE



Is pursuing a Masters of Art in Teaching (MAT) "worth it?" We hear this often—and while we would undoubtedly answer "yes" to this question, our reasons for it may surprise you. While a graduate degree is certainly a financial investment for teachers, we would also argue that there are a number of non-monetary reasons to pursue an MAT degree.

Below we offer 10 good reasons teachers should consider earning a Masters of Art in Teaching degree.

1) It is a Financial Investment

Before we tackle the non-monetary reasons to pursue an advanced degree, let's talk finances.

In general, teachers with a graduate degree earn more money than those with an undergraduate degree alone. According to a September 2013 report from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), graduates of bachelor's degree programs in elementary education earned an average starting salary of \$39,000. In comparison, graduates of master's degree programs earned an average starting salary of \$48,600.

2) It Often Leads to More Choices and a More Satisfying Career

We have yet to meet a teacher who got into the profession because of the health benefits, the pay, or because he or she has holidays and summers "off."

Teachers want more than a job; they want a satisfying and intellectually stimulating *career*. A bachelor's degree and a teaching certificate qualify you to teach, no one is disputing that. But a MAT degree can lead to even more satisfaction, more interesting work, more responsibility, and [career possibilities that extend beyond the classroom](#).

3) It is Personally Fulfilling

Contrary to popular opinion, pursuing a Masters of Art in Teaching Online doesn't mean that you have to postpone your "life." Quite the opposite, actually: It means that you are making a deliberate life choice that will be personally and professionally fulfilling.

Will graduate school challenge you? Absolutely. Will it force you to prioritize? For sure. Will it inspire personal and professional growth? If you have the right attitude, it certainly will.

We can't speak for you, but being challenged, learning how to live deliberately, learning to prioritize, and growing both personally and professionally all sound a lot like "living."

4) It Gives You What Books and Teaching Materials Can't

Some of the most brilliant artists, filmmakers, musicians and professionals are autodidacts—that is, they are either completely or mostly self-taught.

Anyone with a library card or an Amazon.com account can pick up the most recent education literature. You can read these books. You can understand them. You can put this knowledge to good use in the classroom.

However, what these books can't do is talk back to you. You can't have a conversation with a book. Pursuing a graduate degree will open up a world of conversations with people that you might never have had the opportunity to learn from or collaborate with.

5) It Forces You to Take Your Craft Seriously

This next point is an extension of the previous one. Knowledge is only a library card—or a couple of Internet keystrokes—away. And while it is certainly possible to read and learn on your own, many of us lack the discipline to carve out the time that is necessary to do this.

More to the point though, even if one does have the discipline to read during his or her leisure time, truly learning often requires the guidance of scholars and professors who are deeply enmeshed in the field.

By pursuing a MAT degree, you will be forced to set aside time to learn; you will also receive the attention and guidance of professionals who will share their knowledge and experience with you.

6) It Can Have a Transformative Effect on You

We've yet to meet an educator who got into the teaching business for the money. While there's no doubt that an advanced degree is a long-term financial investment for teachers, it will also give you immediate access to things that money will never buy: Personal satisfaction, self-fulfillment, pride, personal and professional growth, and the list goes on and on.

7) It's Challenging, but Also Fun

Let's be honest, choosing to pursue graduate school is not essential to anyone's life. No one is wagging their finger or forcing you to matriculate. Therefore, it should be a pleasure, fun, interesting, and something that you believe it ultimately worth your time and money. In our experience, graduate school is all of these things.

8) You've Already Learned How to Learn

Much of the undergraduate experience is spent adjusting to the rigors and demands of the classroom and professors. This can be both challenging and stressful for undergraduate students.

Academically, the graduate experience is very different than the undergraduate experience. As a graduate student, you've already learned how to learn. Not only that, you've built a sturdy foundation of knowledge and experience that make adjusting to our Masters of Art in Teaching Online program much easier, exciting, and pleasant.

9) Graduate Classes are Light on Tests and Quizzes and Heavy on Meaningful Discussion

While many professors enjoy teaching undergraduates, they are often frustrated by their students' lack of engagement, commitment, and preparedness. As a result, undergraduate classes are often heavy on tests, quizzes, rules and regulations, and light on dynamic and meaningful discussion between students and the instructor.

As a student in our **Master of Arts in Teaching Online Program**, your experience will be quite the opposite. There are absolutely no tests in any of the **MAT** courses. Although some of our instructors give quizzes, these are meant to be a source of information so that they can act in a supportive way to ensure that you understand the content and can put it into practice.

In our Masters of Art in Teaching Online program, your time will be spent collaborating with your peers, engaging in group discussions, listening to lectures and discussing them with your peers on our online message board, and reflecting, in writing, on your own practices in the classroom.

10) You Will Have the Opportunity to Connect with and Learn from Other Teachers

Camaraderie is another good reason to pursue an Masters of Art in Teaching Online. Our schools may be full of people, yet the demands of the profession often cause teachers—both new and veteran teachers alike—to feel isolated. In our program you will work closely with teachers and professors, folks who understand the challenges of the profession and what it means to be an educator.

We've been saying it since 1905 and we're still saying it: You can earn a Masters of Art in Teaching Online—and we're here to ensure that you do. We understand the needs of working teachers and parents; that's why we've custom-tailored our MAT program to fit your schedule and your needs.