

Selective Retention Packet
Guidelines for Letter of Application

Dear Master's Degree student:

The letter of application for the selective retention process is an important document. It serves as a component of your formal application for unconditional acceptance into your graduate degree program. It is also an avenue for you to introduce yourself to the TED graduate faculty as you reflect on your graduate studies to date as well as consider your future as an educator. As such, it should be developed carefully and completely.

Begin by describing who you are. Discuss your background, experience, and present location/status as an educator. Consider your thoughts as you were completing the Diversity Dispositions Index including your reaction to the items as well as what you learned about yourself.

Then describe how the graduate courses you have completed thus far have informed your current practice and plans for future practice. Specifically discuss any knowledge and skills you have integrated into your teaching, planning, understanding, etc. Reflect on ways you have grown as a scholar in your understanding of research and other sources of information that impact the day-to-day work of schools. Use specific examples from your classroom (or plans if not now in a classroom) to support your descriptions. Finally discuss how you anticipate the rest of your Master's program will support your work with your students, your school community, and/or the families of your students.

Finally, discuss your post-Master's Degree plans. Do you intend to be in the classroom or pursue other avenues? What has influenced you in this decision-making process? What do you anticipate you will be doing five or ten years after completing your Master's Degree?

A thoughtful and well-crafted formal letter can enhance your chances of being admitted to candidacy. One lacking in those qualities will need to be reworked and resubmitted to assure admission. Consider the task carefully.

Call me if you have questions, (554-3926) or email wkuhlman@unomaha.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wilma Kuhlman, Chair
TED Graduate Program Committee

March 2008

Selective retention letter rubric
Graduate chair guidelines

Component	Pass	Rewrite
Background	Provides clear and well-articulated background with experiences, present location and/or status as educator. Includes thoughtful reflection about own completion of the Diversity Dispositions Index	Hazy or unclear and/or neglects reflection about Diversity Dispositions Index
Application of learning	Specifically describes and reflects on (with examples) ways knowledge, skills, research, etc. learned in courses have informed one's practice for teaching. Includes specific examples.	Speaks only in generalities and indicates only cursory reflection and application. No specific examples.
Expectations of remaining courses	Discusses remaining courses in ways that indicate understanding of building blocks of learning and work in community beyond classroom.	Doesn't address future courses with any coherency
Post-Master's Degree	Discusses plans for future in light of degree and indicates reasons and influences for plans.	Doesn't address post-Master's plans
Conventions	Formal English conventions are used throughout the letter. Apostrophe and capitalization usage is consistent throughout the letter.	Inconsistency with Master's, Masters, masters degree. Non-sentences, commas, repetitions, etc. Organization makes piece hard to follow.

Major errors or omissions in any one category will result in requirement for a candidate to rework and resubmit his/her letter before being unconditionally accepted into the Master's program.

March 2008