

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026

**CULTURALLY &  
LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE  
EDUCATION**



School of Education  
& Human Development

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CU IN THE CITY 

# Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) Student Handbook

This handbook applies to students in the Master of Arts in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education program as well as students in stand-alone CLDE or CLD-BE (bilingual education) endorsements or the TCLD graduate certificate.

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## 1. Program Mission and Vision

Your successful experience in the Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education program is important to us. This handbook is a tool to support you in your academic progress according to SEHD and University of Colorado Denver (UCD) policies and procedures. In addition to this handbook, students should refer to the School of Education and Human Development *Student Policy Handbook*, available on the [SEHD Graduate Student Resources page](#). ***The Student Policy handbook includes information on registration, Financial Aid, grades, graduation, and other topics that relate to students in all SEHD programs.***

Through state-wide partnerships and research collaborations, the CLDE program prepares teachers and other educational professionals to be leaders in education who advocate for and are engaged in creating equitable, quality educational opportunities for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The CLDE program is designed for educators passionate about championing the strengths and assets of multilingual children. This program will transform your practice and develop your expertise and leadership in culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogies. As of Fall 2024, all courses are offered online with synchronous and asynchronous courses.

We emphasize sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and social justice approaches to the study of language and learning. We are committed—through courses, practica, and performance-based assessments—to asset-based approaches that engage teachers in field-based projects focused on better understanding and working with multilingual learners. The overarching commitment and responsibility of the CLDE program is to provide teachers with critical knowledge, understandings and skills to help multilingual learners thrive.

The classes in the CLDE program teach about:

- Foundations of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
  - Language development and bilingualism
  - History, law and politics around immigration and education of bilingual students
  - Language, culture, and identity; life and community outside of school for bilingual and multidialectal students; teaching for social justice
- Effective literacy instruction and development for multilingual learners

- Effective content instruction that positions multilingual learners as experts and leaders with important contributions to the classroom community
- Strength-based assessment of multilingual learners
- Advocacy and leadership for bilingual learners in K-12 schools




## 2. Program Format

As of Fall 2024, all required MA and CLDE endorsement courses are offered “remote”. Most classes have required synchronous via zoom, whereas a few have asynchronous formats. A few of the elective course options are offered in-person or hybrid.

Our program design allows MA candidates to maximize financial aid by taking 4 or more credits per semester, while maintaining a reasonable load for full-time working teachers.

## 3. Program Staff and Faculty

Our program staff and faculty are here to support you as you engage in this academic and professional journey.

	<p><b>Shelley Gomez</b> CLDE MA Program Advisor <a href="mailto:shelley.gomez@cudenver.edu">shelley.gomez@cudenver.edu</a> Shelley is your academic advisor and the go-to person for questions about registration, university policies and procedures, etc.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Adriana Alvarez</a></b> Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:adriana.alvarez@ucdenver.edu">adriana.alvarez@ucdenver.edu</a> Adriana is the faculty advisor for all BAMA, CLD BE Endorsement students in the MA program. She is the faculty advisor for BESO (Bilingual Education Student Organization)</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Chris Carson</a></b> Senior Instructor <a href="mailto:Christopher.carson@ucdenver.edu">Christopher.carson@ucdenver.edu</a> Chris (with help from his trusty sidekick, Pokey) is the faculty advisor for partnership and certificate MA program offerings, and the faculty advisor for ASPIRE program and partnership certificate students.</p>
	<p><b><a href="#">Sofía E. Chaparro</a></b> Assistant Professor <a href="mailto:sofia.chaparro@ucdenver.edu">sofia.chaparro@ucdenver.edu</a> Sofía is an advisor for MA students and doctoral students, and is the go-to person for questions about the culminating experience.</p>



**Ester de Jong**

Professor

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Ester is the program leader, as well as a faculty advisor for MA and doc students. She is the go-to person for general questions about the program.

## 4. Important Policies and Information

### Program Plan

Your faculty advisor will reach out to you before you get started in the program to create a plan for your program of study (link to templates below). Be sure to check in with them each semester before you register for classes the following semester. This will make sure that you take courses in the right sequence in the most efficient way possible.

### Grade Policy for All Endorsement and MA programs:

To count toward the endorsement or MA, a minimum grade of a “B-” must be earned in all courses.

### Communication

To protect your privacy and confidentiality, all communications related to your studies at UC Denver will be sent to your UC Denver email address. This includes any messages that come from your instructors through Canvas, our online learning management system.

### Scholarship Opportunities and Financial Aid

In addition to the standard financial aid available to all students, CLDE MA students have additional options to ensure their education is affordable. These include:

- **Federal TEACH Grant:** Because English language acquisition and bilingual education are designated as “high-needs fields”, the TEACH grant is available to those who work in schools serving low-income students. See the [federal TEACH grant](#) requirements and talk to your financial aid advisor.
- **CLDE-specific scholarships:** See links from the [CLDE graduate information webpage](#).
- **Colorado Graduate Grant:** This state grant is available for qualifying students taking more than three credits per semester. Speak to your financial aid advisor.
- **District incentives:** Some districts offer added tuition reimbursement and/or incentives for endorsement/MA completion. We recommend that all students district HR department.

We encourage you to view this 2025 webinar on financial aid for CLDE and other high-needs fields. Use [this link](#) and enter this passcode: &sm1\$95v.

### Culminating Experience for the Masters

The MA in CLDE with or without CLDE or CLD-BE Endorsement uses a Culminating Experience to help you synthesize your learning. This final project is a portfolio where you synthesize your academic and professional development in the MA program. Students typically complete their

Culminating Experience as part of the capstone class: *CLDE 5035 Connecting multilingual theories to practice*.

A description of the current [Culminating Experience](#) can be found here.

## 5. Degree, Endorsement, and Certificate Pathways

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) program offers several MA degree paths, two stand-alone Endorsements options, and one certificate option. In addition, we offer special pathways for students who chose the Bachelor to Master option in their undergraduate program (BAMA) at CU Denver and for those who successfully completed CU Denver's alternative licensure program, ASPIRE to Teach or PEBC.

### Pathways:

1. [MA in CLDE without endorsement](#)
2. [MA in CLDE with CLDE endorsement](#)
3. [MA in CLDE with an added Bilingual Education \(BE\) endorsement](#) (for bilingual candidates with a current CLDE endorsement)
4. [MA in CLDE with CLD + Bilingual Education \(CLD-BE\) Endorsement](#) (for bilingual candidates without a current CLDE endorsement)
5. [Endorsement only, CLDE or CLD-BE](#)
6. [Graduate certificate](#)

### **MA in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE)**

The MA in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) requires 4 core courses (12 credit hours). In consultation and with approval from your faculty advisor, select 5 courses from the Thematic Course Categories list to customize your learning (15 credits). Finally, take CLDE 6912 as your research course (3 credits) and then complete the Capstone course (3 credits) for a total of 30 credits. Please note that this MA plan does not include an endorsement or license.

Please see [course plan check list via this link](#) (substitute online link when available)

### **MA in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) with CLDE Endorsement**

The MA in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) with the state CLDE endorsement includes 6 core endorsement courses (18 credit hours). In consultation and with approval from your faculty advisor, you will select 2 additional elective courses (6 credits). Finally, take CLDE 6912 as your research course (3 credits) and then complete the Capstone course (3 credits) for a total of 30 credits.

Please see [course plan via this link](#) (substitute online link when available)

### **Adding the Bilingual Education (BE) endorsement with your MA in Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education For those with a current CLDE endorsement.\***

Students who already have a CLDE endorsement and would like to pursue the Bilingual Education Endorsement (CLD-BE) as a part of their MA in CLDE may do so. At this time, CU Denver's bilingual endorsement is only available to those who are bilingual in Spanish and English. This plan is essentially the MA plan, but **CLDE 5824 Teorías y Métodos en Educación Bilingüe** (3 credits) must be taken as a foundations course, along with 2 courses from the Spanish department (1 pedagogy course and 1 Spanish sociolinguistics course, 6 credits).

Practitioners who are currently work in bilingual settings and who do not wish to take Spanish courses as their electives may find it easier to apply for this endorsement directly through the [Colorado Department of Education](#) (using CLDE 5824 + demonstration of bilingual methods and teaching competency), but CU Denver cannot guarantee issuance.

Please see course plan check list via this link [\(substitute online link when available\)](#)

### **MA in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education with CLDE and Bilingual Education (CLD-BE) Endorsement**

Please discuss the combined endorsement program with your advisor. Colorado has recently modified this endorsement option and we are awaiting approval (expected Fall 2025).

#### **Endorsement only Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) or CLD Bilingual Education (CLD-BE)**

Either endorsement (CLDE or CLD-BE) can be done without a degree. Please see MA with endorsement [course plan via this link](#) [\(substitute online link when available\)](#). Final research and capstone classes do not need to be taken for the endorsement only. For those interested in the CLD-BE, please discuss the combined endorsement program with your advisor. Colorado has recently modified this endorsement option and we are awaiting approval (expected Fall 2025).

Practitioners with a current CLDE endorsement who wish to add the Bilingual Education endorsement (without pursuing an MA) should also speak to their faculty advisor. This can be done through CU Denver with 9 credit hours of study, or through CDE worksheet.

#### **Graduate Certificate in Teaching for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (TCLD)**

This plan does not include an added endorsement or degree. This certificate plan does not include an endorsement or degree. The certificate denotes an understanding of the fundamentals of teaching in linguistically diverse classrooms, with a grounding in the foundations of language development, teaching methods, and assessment. Speak to your advisor for course requirements.

Please see [course plan check list via this link](#) [\(substitute online link when available\)](#)

#### **Special Pathways BAMA @ UC Denver**

This option is only available for those who completed the Bachelor to Master's (BAMA) pathway as part of your undergraduate education at UC Denver SEHD. As part of BAMA, you can count up to 9 credits as part of your master's degree so you have only 21 credits remaining for the MA in CLDE.

#### **ASPIRE to Teach and PEBC at CU Denver**

This option is only available for those who satisfactorily completed the ASPIRE to Teach or PEBC

alternative certification program. Completers are able to apply for credit by evaluation through Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) for nine credits toward the MA in CLDE. Contact your ASPIRE or PEBC advisor for information about cost and procedure for these credits.

