

# Minnesota to Highly Qualified, Unlicensed Teachers: Go Away

I am not qualified to teach in Minnesota public schools. Here are my non-qualifications:

- A B.A. in Philosophy from Augsburg College
- An M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Wales (U.K.)
  - I worked as a teaching assistant for several courses during this time.
- 14 years of successful teaching at Trinity School at River Ridge. This included:
  - 13 years teaching Modern European History (roughly, 1500 – 2000), which included reading from Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke, and other political theorists. I also redesigned the curriculum for this course and mentored teachers new to the course. (AP European History, anyone?)
  - 14 years teaching Jane Austen, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Charles Dickens, Harper Lee, T.S. Eliot, Homer, Tolkien, Augustine, Shakespeare, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and other thinkers and writers. (AP English, anyone?)
  - 14 years as a writing teacher – for 8<sup>th</sup> graders, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.
  - 3 years teaching Chemistry, one-third of which was biochemistry.
  - 2 years teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade Literature and Composition.
  - 1 year teaching Ancient History (basically, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, and Greece).

- 1 year teaching Medieval History (basically, Europe and Byzantium 400 – 1453).
- Writing and editing several school documents, including documents for accreditation.
- Serving on several faculty committees.
- 1 year as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Philosophy Department at the University of St. Thomas.
- Several stints as an adjunct professor at Augsburg College and the University of St. Thomas.
- 8 years as a professional writer, including 5 years running my own writing business.

Oh, the State of Minnesota says. You could teach – in fact, if a school would hire you, you could get a provisional license that's good for three years. But if you want to teach for more than three years, you need get a Minnesota teaching license during that time. Not to worry! It's only:

- 25-40 credits, and at \$450/credit, that's only \$12,000 – \$18,000 or so.
- Nights and weekends away from your family.
- Taking courses on making lesson plans, classroom management, teaching methods, and other education topics I know nothing about.
- Taking undergraduate English courses to qualify as an English teacher – because I just haven't read enough.
- Paying to teach a class supervised by an instructor (or two), even though I would actually be working as a teacher during that time.

Supposedly, Minnesota is facing a teacher shortage now and in the foreseeable future. Hard to believe, isn't it?

Image Credit