



Blended 3-6 Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the Trainers?

- Uma Ramani is the Director of Training for the 3-6 Blended Training at MINT. She completed her training in India forty years ago. She has worked in the USA in both private and public schools for over 20 years, as a guide, a coach and as a consultant. As a member of the AMI SPG, she spearheaded the design of blended training. She is passionate about the rights of children and the application of Montessori principles to serve all children. To this end, she coordinated the design of the Montessori Core Principles course (the first new AMI certificate course in decades), and piloted the Montessori Core Principles course at MINT in 2019. She is involved in the AMI Educateurs sans Frontieres, and designed the EsF Community Rooted Education (EsF CoRE) program to train Early Childhood Education workers at the grassroots level. This course has been piloted in one district in India, serving over 43 Aanganwadi centers.
- BethAnn Slater has been part of the blended training at MINT, joining the pilot course in 2019 first as Assistant Director and stepping into the role of co-trainer. BethAnn has been running her school serving children from 0-15 years of age for the past 19 years after working for 3 years in another private Montessori School in Virginia. She began her teaching career working 6 years in 3rd grade at a public city school. Her Montessori passion is rooted in her own 3-6 Montessori experience as a child. She is also currently co-directing the first AMI 3-6 training in South Africa. Since joining the pilot blended course at MINT, she has been integral to the implementation and refinement of the design of the AMI Blended course.

We know that the 14-month blended course at MINT contains all of the required content that AMI has for any course however, what is unique about the Blended course at MINT?

There are two features that are unique to the MINT Blended course:

- The MINT course is the result of a 2-year long design process under the aegis of AMI and the AMI Scientific Pedagogy Group. Beginning in 2017, a team of AMI trainers worked on designing a blended format training in order to increase accessibility to AMI training. Uma led the work of this group and in 2019 she was approved by AMI to pilot the design of a blended 3-6 training at MINT. We have now offered three blended courses at MINT and the 2022-2023 course will be the fourth course. The training team continues to work closely with AMI to review and refine the design of the course with each implementation.
- Another unique feature of the MINT Blended 3-6 course is that it integrates the new AMI Montessori Core Principles certificate course (MCPCC) into the diploma course. The MCPCC was designed as an introduction to the core principles that are intrinsic to all Montessori work and offers a strong foundation for the preparation of the Montessori practitioner.

What does someone need to do this course?

You can go to montessori-mint.org to learn more about what qualifies you to apply for this course, however, if you have the following you can do this course!

- A working laptop with up-to-date software
- A good internet connection
- A phone or similar device for recording videos
- Access to a fully prepared practice environment

(Access to materials is important as hands on practice is an essential component of training. *You can access these materials at your school or in your own classroom, with approval from the trainers. Students in Dallas area will have the option of using the prepared environments at MINT for practice.*)

How does the MINT 3-6 Blended course work?

- An AMI diploma means that you leave training with certain competencies – an orientation to children, society and the environment that understands their interconnections; an understanding and appreciation of children; a new perspective on education and the skills to implement this method in diverse communities.
- This course is designed with this in mind – that you will leave the course with the confidence and capabilities to work with children and families.
- Meeting times: This is a 14-month course. You will begin in June with the MCPC, meeting online three times a week. You will segue into the diploma course in July. This is structured to have three onsite, in person modules in July, January and July. In addition, we will meet weekly: 3 times a month on Monday evenings for a synchronous webinar (90 mins long) and 3 times a month for study and practice (90 mins each).
- Prepared Environment: Students will interact in a carefully prepared online environment and in the beautiful training environment at MINT. Both environments are prepared to offer opportunities for the learner to interact with the course content, with the materials, with the cohort and with the training faculty for a rich learning experience.
- Course content: Is offered in a variety of formats: written material with graphics and illustrations, lectures and demonstrations (both recorded and live), primary sources such as writings by Dr. Montessori.
- Learner experience: Learners will be introduced topics and will review associated course materials in preparation for further discussion with the trainers and the learning cohort. Tasks are designed to help analyze and understand the content for a rich interactive learning experience.
- Activities include online discussion boards, creation of annotated visual summaries of presentations, recording videos of activities for analysis and self-reflection, illustration of materials; group activities and discussions, mind maps, and presentations on specific topics.
- Students will also do a lot of material making as this is an important component of creating a prepared environment for the children.

How much time should I plan for the course?

- The two weekly meetings will be total 3 hours long. In addition, you should plan another 12-15 hours for preparation and follow up work each week.
- The course is intensive, and it is essential to keep pace with weekly tasks in order to understand the material. Participation in each week is a large part of the course and this is made easier when you are up to date and prepared.
- In addition, you should plan a focused time of 90 hours for observing in a Montessori classroom – this can be done in a minimum of one-week segments. You will also need to complete 120 hours of practicum in a prepared environment under the guidance of the training faculty.
- This course will have 6 webinars per month as scheduled during the distance modules.

What support does MINT offer?

- We offer an orientation course to introduce you to Populi, the learning management system that we use. The orientation also offers a description of the various elements of the course. We have staff on board to help with technical issues, but it is expected that all students on the course will be comfortable using the computer and online meeting and learning platforms.
- The training staff works one on one with students to offer clarifications on material as well as to help students as needed to plan and complete their work.
- The MINT Team also offers times for the students to go in a practice in the MINT practice environments throughout the year.
- Students in their own classrooms are offered one on one mentorship to transition their learning to practice throughout the entire course.