



Program Guidebook

Bachelor of Arts, Special Education, Mild to Moderate

The Bachelor of Arts, Special Education, Mild-to-Moderate (BASPMM), is a competency-based degree program that prepares teacher candidates to teach Special Education (K-12). The Special Education, Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities program is specifically designed for the preparation of prospective teachers to work with students with mild to moderate disabilities in a variety of educational settings, including inclusionary K-12 classrooms and resource classrooms. This program consists of online courses which take the learner from general education, through methods of instruction, assessment, and classroom management to special education courses for teaching students with exceptionalities. Candidates develop and refine their skills through a series of sequential experiences beginning with video-based observations of classroom instruction, to prepare candidates for authentic, collaborative, pre-clinical teaching experiences in K-12 settings. Clinical experiences culminate with supervised demonstration teaching experience that consists of two placements, one in an elementary special education setting and another in a secondary special education setting. Both placements support the academic needs of students with mild-to-moderate disabilities. With the successful completion of program expectations and required assessments in the major area of teaching, the candidate can receive institutional recommendation for certification in special education.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the content you must master to pass the course assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the number of credits hours on your transcript.

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2020. The WGU Teachers College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and by the Association of Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study.

Students vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason,

pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success.

Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards and allow you to advance.

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other students.

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU’s competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. WGU undergraduate programs may accept transfer credits or apply a

'Requirement Satisfied' (RS) in some cases. Refer to your specific program transfer guidelines to determine what can be satisfied by previously earned college credits. In most cases, WGU does not accept college transfer credits at the graduate (master's) level. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree transcripts verified before being admitted to WGU. In addition to a program's standard course path, there may be additional state-specific requirements.

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a "B" grade or better.

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be

required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

External Content & Basic Skills Exams

Western Governors University requires that candidates pass the state-mandated content exam that aligns with their WGU program in addition to a basic skills exam (initial licensure programs only). Specific information regarding required content and basic skills exams required for each program and state can be found in the WGU Student Handbook. In many cases, it is the candidates' responsibility to register and pay for the required exams and submit their official passing score reports to WGU.

State Licensure Requirements

Many states have specific licensure requirements that are not part of WGU programs that you will have to fulfill in addition to the degree requirements of your program. These state licensure requirements might include, but are not limited to: subject-specific licensure exams, state-specific teacher performance assessments, course work related to state history, basic skills exams, and background clearances. The WGU Student Handbook outlines the credentialing requirements of each state. Teacher candidates should consult the applicable section to become familiar with their state's expectations regarding licensure.

Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU.

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without

any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

Standard Path for Bachelor of Arts, Special Education, Mild to Moderate

Course Description	CUs
Composition: Writing with a Strategy	3
The School as a Community of Care	3
Composition: Successful Self-Expression	3
Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others	3
Introduction to Physical and Human Geography	3
Educational Foundations	2
Mathematics for Elementary Educators I	3
Integrated Physical Sciences	3
Educational Psychology and Development of Children and Adolescents	4
Fundamentals of Diverse Learners	4
US History: Stories of American Democracy	3
Natural Science Lab	2
Global Arts and Humanities	3
Mathematics for Elementary Educators II	3
Managing Engaging Learning Environments	3
Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education	3
Introduction to Biology	3
Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	3
Behavioral Support Strategies for K-12 Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities	4
Assessing Impact on Student Learning	3
Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning	3
Assessment in Special Education	3
Collaborating with Partners for Student Success	3
Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions	3
Language Arts Instruction and Intervention	3
Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions	3
Mathematics for Elementary Educators III	3
Elementary Mathematics Methods	3
Children's Literature	3
Disciplinary Literacy	3
Considerations for Instructional Planning for Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities	3
Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Elementary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionali	2
Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Secondary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalit	2
Preclinical Experiences in Special Education	3
Student Teaching I in Special Education	6

Course Description	CUs
Teacher Performance Assessment in Special Education	3
Professional Portfolio	2
Cohort Seminar in Special Education	3
Student Teaching II in Special Education	6

Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.

Areas of Study for Bachelor of Arts, Special Education, Mild to Moderate

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

General Education

Composition: Writing with a Strategy

Welcome to Composition: Writing with a Strategy! In this course, you will focus on three main topics: understanding purpose, context, and audience, writing strategies and techniques, and editing and revising. In addition, the first section, will offer review on core elements of the writing process, cross-cultural communication, as well as working with words and common standards and practices.

Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to check your learning, practice, and show how well you understand course content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to gain proficiency in the seven competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge or experience, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The individual writes with purpose for a given context and target audience.*
- *The individual incorporates writing strategies and techniques for written communication.*
- *The individual constructs a written document with correct format, style, structure, and grammar.*
- *The individual formulates a strategy for editing and revising written text.*
- *The individual composes constructive feedback of written texts.*

Composition: Successful Self-Expression

Welcome to Composition: Successful Self-Expression! In this course, you will focus on four main topics: professional writing for a cross-cultural audience, narrowing research topics and questions, researching for content to support a topic, and referencing research sources. Each section includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to check your learning, practice, and show how well you understand course content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to gain proficiency in the seven competencies that will be covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge or experience, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content. You will demonstrate competency through a performance assessment. There is no prerequisite for this course and there is no specific technical knowledge needed.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner composes a written message with language appropriate for cross-cultural communication.*
- *The learner writes in a professional manner for a given scenario.*
- *The learner researches valid and reliable sources.*
- *The learner writes a reference list.*
- *The learner incorporates research to support a position or idea.*
- *The learner writes a message using an effective communication approach for a given situation.*
- *The learner incorporates self-expression in written communication.*

Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others

Welcome to Introduction to Communication: Connecting with Others! It may seem like common knowledge that communication skills are important, and that communicating with others is inescapable in our everyday lives. While this may appear simplistic, the study of communication is actually complex, dynamic, and multifaceted. Strong communication skills are invaluable to strengthening a multitude of aspects of life. Specifically, this course will focus on communication in the professional setting, and present material from multiple vantage points, including communicating with others in a variety of contexts, across situations, and with diverse populations. Upon completion, you will have a deeper understanding of both your own and others' communication behaviors, and a toolbox of effective behaviors to enhance your experience in the workplace.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner implements appropriate communication styles based on audience and setting.*
- *The learner uses communication strategies for managing conflict.*
- *The learner uses communication strategies to influence others.*

Introduction to Physical and Human Geography

This is Introduction to Physical and Human Geography, a three-module course that addresses the question of what geography really is in today's complex world; how migration affects—and has been affected by—geography; and one of the biggest present problems related to geography: climate change. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the five competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 30–40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes the message of a data visualization for a specific purpose.*
- *The learner interprets complex global systems through the lenses of physical and human geography.*
- *The learner analyzes the various causes and effects of human migration.*
- *The learner analyzes the connections among the various factors contributing to climate change.*
- *The learner applies logical reasoning to the analysis of climate change.*

Mathematics for Elementary Educators I

Mathematics for Elementary Educators I guides preservice elementary teachers in an investigation of number systems, place value, number theory, and ratio and proportion. This is the first course in a three-course sequence. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies concepts related to number theory to solve problems involving prime and composite numbers, factors, and multiples of numbers.*
- *The graduate applies understanding of place value to solve problems that involve exponents, rounding numbers, and composing or decomposing numbers.*
- *The graduate uses standard algorithms, properties of numbers, mathematical models, and order of operations in whole number and integer arithmetic.*
- *The graduate applies the properties of rational numbers to solve problems.*
- *The graduate solves problems involving percentage, ratio, rate, and proportion.*

Integrated Physical Sciences

This course provides students with an overview of the basic principles and unifying ideas of the physical sciences: physics,

chemistry, and earth sciences. Course materials focus on scientific reasoning and practical, everyday applications of physical science concepts to help students integrate conceptual knowledge with practical skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner describes the nature and process of science.*
- *The learner examines applications of physics including fundamental concepts such as forces, motion, energy, and waves.*
- *The learner examines applications of key chemistry concepts including the structure of matter and the behavior and conservation of matter in chemical reactions.*
- *The learner describes the underlying organization, interactions, and processes within the Earth system including the Earth's structure and atmosphere, and Earth's interactions within the solar system.*

US History: Stories of American Democracy

This course presents a broad survey of U.S. history from early colonization to the mid-twentieth century. The course explores how historical events and major themes in American history have affected diverse populations, influenced changes in policy and established the American definition of democracy. This course consists of an introduction and five major sections. Each section includes learning opportunities through reading, images, videos, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to practice and check how well you understand the content. Because the course is self-paced, you may move through the material as quickly or as slowly as you need to, with the goal of demonstrating proficiency in the five competencies covered in the final assessment. If you have no prior knowledge of this material, you can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes secondary sources to understand events and processes in American History.*
- *The learner analyzes primary sources to understand events or processes in American history.*
- *The learner explains the effect of the actions of individuals in U.S. History.*
- *The learner explains the effect of institutions on society.*
- *The learner describes how economic, political, and social factors affect communities*

Natural Science Lab

This course provides students an introduction to using the scientific method and engaging in scientific research to reach conclusions about the natural world. Students will design and carry out an experiment to investigate a hypothesis by gathering quantitative data. They will also research a specific ecosystem using academic sources and draw conclusions from their findings.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate evaluates academic sources for their credibility and relevance to a chosen research topic on a natural world phenomenon.*
- *The graduate accurately executes the process of scientific inquiry through experimentation in the natural world.*
- *The graduate draws conclusions based on academic research and scientific inquiry.*

Global Arts and Humanities

This is a Global Arts and Humanities course that contains three modules with corresponding lessons. This course is an invitation to see the world through the humanities, examine the humanities during the Information Age, and explore the global origins of music—essentially questioning what makes us human, and how people are connected across culture and time. Each module includes learning opportunities through readings, videos, audio, and other relevant resources. Assessment activities with feedback also provide opportunities to practice and check learning. With no prior knowledge or experience, a learner can expect to spend 30-40 hours on the course content.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The learner analyzes diverse voices, ideas, perspectives, and cultural interactions through the lens of the humanities.*
- *The learner analyzes the humanities during the Information Age.*
- *The learner analyzes how music shapes and is shaped by diverse cultures and perspectives.*

Mathematics for Elementary Educators II

Mathematics for Elementary Educators II engages preservice elementary school teachers in mathematical practices of algebraic reasoning. This course explores important algebraic topics such as patterns, expressions and equations, linear equations, inequalities, and functions. This is the second course in a three-course sequence.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate uses patterns to make predictions and solve problems.*
- *The graduate identifies and evaluates expressions, equations, and formulas.*
- *The graduate solves linear equations and inequalities represented by equations, inequalities, number lines, graphs, and tables.*
- *The graduate interprets relations and functions.*

Mathematics for Elementary Educators III

Mathematics for Elementary Educators III engages preservice elementary teachers in important concepts in geometry, measurement, data analysis and statistics, and probability. This is the third course in a three-course sequence.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes statistical data using numerical measures and graphical displays.*
- *The graduate applies principles of probability.*
- *The graduate applies geometric properties of lines, angles, polygons, and circles to classify shapes and solve problems.*
- *The graduate applies transformations, principles of congruence and similarity, and knowledge of the coordinate plane to solve problems.*
- *The graduate applies formulas to solve problems involving perimeter, area, surface area, and volume.*
- *The graduate calculates solutions to problems that involve measurement, including elapsed time, temperature, money, length, and weight, using the appropriate units.*

Professional Core

The School as a Community of Care

The School as a Community of Care is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to meet the social and emotional needs of learners, taking into account theories and philosophical perspectives on child and adolescent development and learning. Candidates learn to effectively collaborate with parents, families, caregivers, and other community stakeholders in each child's education, to build a strong foundation for academic and personal success. Emphasis is placed on family engagement as candidates gain knowledge of individual, cultural, and community assets that can be used to facilitate learner growth and development, as well as understand mental health and emotional differences among learners that may necessitate leveraging additional resources to support students' wellbeing. Issues of youth mental health, substance abuse, suicide awareness and prevention, and abuse within families will be addressed as will the importance of parent involvement. Candidates will engage in seven hours of preclinical experiences, which include visual observations of learning environments that involve parents and families in their children's education while supporting the social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of learners and an interview with an educational professional to explore topics related to parent involvement, youth mental health issues, and professional responsibilities to ensure student wellbeing. Additionally, crosscutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate plans for learning environments that meet all students' cultural, social, and emotional learning needs by incorporating knowledge of individual learners, diverse cultures, and communities.*
- *The graduate develops strategies to address the social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of students, including the incorporation of trauma-informed or restorative instructional practices.*
- *The graduate identifies appropriate resources and processes to support the mental health and emotional well-being of students.*
- *The graduate collaborates with families, caretakers, and the larger community to identify partnerships that facilitate learner growth.*

Educational Foundations

Educational Foundations is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. The course provides candidates with early classroom experience where they observe multiple school settings at three different levels of schooling and interview an educator to learn how state standards and various legal and ethical issues affect classrooms today. The course also provides candidates with opportunities to gain foundational knowledge about what it means to be a teacher in the current educational context while exploring their future role within the larger landscape of historical and cultural influences. This course ensures candidates have a firm grasp on important issues affecting educators including state standards-based curriculum, legal and ethical requirements affecting educational opportunities, and professionalism, preparing them for subsequent coursework within the Professional Core and their content area major courses. Five preclinical hours are interwoven throughout this course, and cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are introduced for further development throughout the candidate's programs.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes the role of historical and cultural influences, including issues of federal and state governance, in determining standard educational practices and ensuring equal access to educational opportunities.*
- *The graduate examines the impact of standards-based curriculum on students and teachers to determine how it supports a school's goals.*
- *The graduate evaluates the application of educational best practices in diverse learning settings to inform teaching practice.*
- *The graduate explores pathways and opportunities for professional development to grow as an educator.*

Educational Psychology and Development of Children and Adolescents

Educational Psychology and Development of Children and Adolescents is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to support classroom practices grounded in research-validated principles from the areas of educational psychology and child/adolescent development. Candidates will be introduced to learning theories that equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to support the diverse populations of students with whom they will interact. This course addresses theories of human development, spanning early childhood through adolescence, and candidates completing this course will be able to explain and analyze the guiding perspectives on linguistic, physical, cognitive, and social development. This course will also cover appropriate instructional and assessment strategies to support student learning and development. Candidates will engage in four hours of virtual classroom observations related to issues in educational psychology and learner development. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes theories of development across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas to understand the needs of students at various developmental levels.*
- *The graduate evaluates the influence of students' developmental characteristics on their learning and evaluates performance to inform instructional decisions.*
- *The graduate recommends instructional strategies that will positively impact learning, based on principles of learning theories.*

- *The graduate evaluates classroom practices to determine how theories of child and adolescent psychology, learning, and development are applied in the classroom environment.*

Fundamentals of Diverse Learners

Fundamentals of Diverse Learners is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to consider and address the wide range of learning needs in the classrooms of today. This course teaches candidates to identify and support the needs of diverse populations of learners, including, for example, students with disabilities (Including Dyslexia), students who are English language learners, and students who are gifted and talented. Practical strategies for differentiating instruction while creating a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environment are explored. This course helps candidates develop skills for partnering with parents and advocating for all students, particularly those impacted by provisions of IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Multitiered systems of support are addressed to prepare candidates for their future classrooms as they seek to select appropriate instructional practices and interventions to best serve their students. Candidates will engage in four hours of preclinical experiences that include a simulated teaching experience in which skills learned can be applied. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes the application of policies, practices, and legal requirements to inform teaching practice.*
- *The graduate creates inclusive learning environments featuring multitiered systems of supports to address the needs of all students, including exceptional learners and English learners.*
- *The graduate creates learning experiences that accommodate the needs of students with exceptionalities, including gifted and talented students, in order to facilitate the success of all learners.*
- *The graduate integrates equity pedagogy to address the needs of multicultural learners.*
- *The graduate plans learning experiences that accommodate linguistic diversity to facilitate the success of all learners.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies to engage with students, families, administrators, and other stakeholders in ways that are effective, legal, and ethical.*

Managing Engaging Learning Environments

Managing Engaging Learning Environments is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to establish and contribute to safe and productive learning environments that support the success of all learners by ensuring student engagement and motivation for learning. Candidates will learn strategies, such as incorporating consistent routines and expectations, to provide positive behavior supports, increase learner motivation, promote active learning and self-direction, and ensure a safe and productive classroom setting that fosters a sense of community through collaborative educational practices. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of current strategies, theories, or philosophical perspectives related to motivating and engaging all students in a learning community. Candidates will engage in seven hours of preclinical experiences that include both virtual observations of classroom settings and time in a simulated classroom environment where theory can be put into practice. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate establishes norms and routines to create a safe and productive learning environment that encourages positive social interactions, individual and collaborative learning, and appropriate classroom behaviors.*
- *The graduate interacts with each student in a way that builds positive relationships by using knowledge of individual learners, diverse cultures, and communities.*
- *The graduate analyzes the theoretical foundations and application of classroom management strategies, including behavior support and conflict management, to inform teaching practice.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies that are motivating and encourage active engagement from all students.*

Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course provides candidates with the knowledge and skills necessary to create engaging and standards-aligned lessons that meet the needs of all learners. Candidates will learn to analyze learner needs

based on a variety of inputs, including their state P–12 standards, assessment results, and knowledge of learner differences. This course will help candidates design, deliver, and modify instruction in accordance to needs and educational requirements. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences that include virtual classroom observations. They also will record a short teaching segment, allowing for authentic teaching experience. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for continued development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate aligns lessons to learning goals by synthesizing knowledge about students and their assessment data.*
- *The graduate analyzes the role of various assessment types in evaluating student learning and planning future instruction.*
- *The graduate implements evidence-based instructional strategies to increase content area learning.*
- *The graduate differentiates instruction to facilitate mastery for all learners.*
- *The graduate incorporates cross-disciplinary instruction, skills, and content into lessons.*
- *The graduate creates standards-based instructional plans based on their state's P–12 standards that incorporate knowledge of learners' developmental needs, prior learning, and community and cultural context.*

Assessing Impact on Student Learning

Assessing Impact on Student Learning is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course equips candidates to evaluate student learning and their own professional practice, ensuring candidates are prepared to ensure all learners' success. In this course, candidates learn multiple methods of assessment to ensure they are able to implement a balanced approach to assessment while monitoring their students' progress. Assessments types such as formative, summative, standardized, and common assessments are addressed so candidates understand their purposes and can apply them within the context of a lesson to determine impact on learning. Data literacy skills are taught to ensure candidates interpret and analyze individual and classroom data and apply their knowledge in ways that support academic success. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences that include virtual classroom observations. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate plans a progress-monitoring strategy, including formative, summative, and common assessments, that actively engages students in their own learning.*
- *The graduate analyzes assessment results to evaluate student learning and teacher effectiveness.*
- *The graduate makes evidence-based instructional decisions that are informed by student assessment data.*
- *The graduate determines their impact on learners and the broader school community through evaluation of teaching practice.*

Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning

Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning is a key component of WGU's professional core and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. This course prepares candidates to incorporate technology into their classroom practices in ways that improve teaching and learning. The ISTE standards will form the basis for their practice. The material will teach candidates to critically evaluate software and hardware options that may positively impact the classroom environment, while also increasing their awareness of ethical usage and considerations related to equity, access to technology, and appropriate use of technology by P–12 students. Assistive technologies to meet the needs of a diverse learner population also will be taught in this course. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experience that include virtual observations of classroom practices incorporating technology to support educational goals. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes how research-based applications of technology facilitate student learning.*
- *The graduate evaluates the application of technology in the classroom, including its impact on learning for all students*

and potential equity or access issues.

- *The graduate promotes a technology-enabled classroom culture that is equitable, ethical, and socially responsible.*
- *The graduate applies curricular and instructional design principles to create effective digital learning environments.*
- *The graduate recommends technology as an assessment tool to encompass multiple learner needs, provide in the moment feedback, and inform instruction.*
- *The graduate fosters student self-directedness and independent learning through the use of technology.*

Special Education

Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education

Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education prepares candidates to practice within ethical and legal guidelines in day-to-day teaching, stakeholder interactions, and other complex situations. This course provides an overview of the professional ethics and standards from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), which guide candidates to act in a professionally conscientious manner. Candidates will explore the legal foundations and case laws related to special education to gain understanding of how legislation influences teaching and learning. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Fundamentals of Diverse Learners OR Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes federal cases, laws, and policies that ensure students with disabilities have the right to a free and appropriate public education to determine how the legislation impacts teaching and learning in the classroom and in other educational settings.*
- *The graduate applies ethical principles and professional practice standards to guide practice when working with individuals with disabilities.*
- *The graduate collaborates with families, colleagues, and other stakeholders to ensure that students with disabilities receive access to all the services and interventions entitled to them under federal laws and policies.*
- *The graduate applies the law to analyze special education processes including referrals, evaluations, and individualized education programs.*

Behavioral Support Strategies for K-12 Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Behavioral Support Strategies for K–12 Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities prepares candidates to work effectively with students exhibiting behavior in the classroom that is below age and cultural norms. This course provides an overview of behavior disorders and their causes, as well as appropriate research-based intervention strategies, including positive behavior intervention and supports, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), applied behavior analysis, replacement behavior and reward strategies, culturally responsive practices, and data collection and assessment methods. After completing this course candidates emerge prepared to strategize and recommend adjustments to the learning environment that support positive behavior and student success in the classroom and beyond. This course also examines behavioral assessment and analysis, including the creation of functional behavior assessment (FBA) and the creation and monitoring of behavioral improvement plans (BIP) in an authentic learning environment. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Fundamentals of Diverse Learners or Fundamentals of Diversity Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners, Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education, and Managing Engaging Learning Environments or Classroom Management, Engagement, and Motivation.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies knowledge of behaviors falling significantly below cultural and age norms to understand and respond appropriately to students with exceptionalities.*
- *The graduate identifies appropriate research-based intervention strategies and provides positive behavior support for students exhibiting behavior significantly below the cultural and age norms.*
- *The graduate employs methods of collecting and analyzing data to assist the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team in development of a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) for a student with behavior significantly below the cultural and age norms.*

- *The graduate recommends adjustments to a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) based on student data collected through collaborative evaluation of an existing BIP's implementation.*

Assessment in Special Education

Assessment in Special Education prepares candidates to use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making educational decisions about the student and the learning environment. This course is designed to help provide an understanding of how assessment data is used during screening in multitiered systems of support (MTSS), the eligibility process, the evaluation process, progress monitoring, and data-based instructional decision making. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education and Assessing Impact on Student Learning OR Educational Assessment.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate identifies screening, pre-referral, and classification procedures in compliance with legal and ethical principles regarding the assessment of individuals with possible exceptionalities.*
- *The graduate selects technically sound formal and informal assessments based on a variety of data sources to assess and monitor individuals with possible exceptionalities.*
- *The graduate uses knowledge of measurement principles and practices to interpret assessment results and guide educational decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.*
- *The graduate will use multiple assessment data sources in making educational decisions when writing student goals and present level of performance.*

Collaborating with Partners for Student Success

Collaborating with Partners for Student Success prepares candidates to apply team processes and communication strategies to collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraeducators, and other professionals (within the school, other educational settings, and the community) to plan programs and access services for students with exceptionalities and their families. The course introduces ways to enhance parental involvement and family engagement while teaching families and students advocacy throughout the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and transition planning processes. This course also focuses on the components of the IEP and how the practice of effective communication and collaboration skills is key to the program's development and implementation. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences that includes a simulated collaborative experience in which skills learned can be applied. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Professional, Ethical, and Legal Practices for Special Education OR Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners, and Assessment in Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate collaborates with stakeholders in a school setting to build consensus, meet goals, and promote culturally responsive communication.*
- *The graduate collaborates with diverse families of students with exceptionalities to foster advocacy, facilitate connection with available resources, and promote culturally responsive communication.*
- *The graduate collaborates with team members to create mutually agreed upon individualized education program (IEPs) for students with exceptionalities.*

Considerations for Instructional Planning for Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Considerations for Instructional Planning for Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities introduces candidates to a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance the learning of students with exceptionalities. The course focuses specifically on strategies for intensifying and individualizing instructional interventions; making instructional decisions based on progress-monitoring data; collaborating with general education teachers and paraeducators; teaching to mastery; promoting generalization of learning; and teaching students with exceptionalities how to use self-assessment, problem solving, and other cognitive strategies to organize critical content and meet their needs. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment course OR Introduction to Instructional Planning and Presentation AND Instructional Planning and Presentation in Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate explains how special education teachers use data to intensify instructional interventions for students with mild to moderate exceptionalities.*
- *The graduate applies research-supported instructional strategies that result in students with mild to moderate exceptionalities making the maximum possible academic gains.*
- *The graduate applies cognitive and metacognitive processing strategies that support memory, attention, self-regulation, self-determination, and independence.*
- *The graduate knows and understands how learning occurs, how students construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop disciplined thinking processes.*

Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Elementary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Elementary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities prepares candidates to use evidence-based instructional practices appropriate for elementary students receiving special education services. The course includes cognitive and metacognitive strategies that elementary students can use to acquire new content knowledge and generalize skills across learning environments. It also provides opportunities for candidates to incorporate intensive instructional strategies and practice making accommodations to elementary math and English language arts lesson plans based on learner characteristics, performance data, and individualized education program (IEP) goals. In addition to discussing how to make appropriate accommodations, the course teaches candidates how to assess student learning through progress monitoring and apply intensive interventions when warranted. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Considerations for Instructional Planning for Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate implements reading, writing, and math strategies and interventions for elementary students with mild to moderate exceptionalities to address targeted reading deficits and regularly assesses those learned skills to measure progress toward individualized education plan (IEP) goals and adjust instruction as needed.*
- *The graduate plans learning experiences which align to content standards and are appropriate to meet the needs of individual learners.*

Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Secondary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Instructional Strategies and Technologies for Secondary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities prepares candidates to use evidence-based instructional practices appropriate for use with secondary students receiving special education services. Strategies taught in this course focus on intensive instruction and making accommodations to secondary lesson plans in order to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills to enhance acquisition of age-appropriate secondary content across academic disciplines. This course also promotes the achievement of Individualized Education Program (IEP) and transition goals for independent living and career preparation through demonstration of strategies that increase students' self-awareness, self-regulation, self-management, self-control, and self-esteem. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Considerations for Instructional Planning for Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate implements reading strategies and interventions for secondary students with mild to moderate exceptionalities to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that increase learner independence, and regularly assesses those learned skills to measure progress toward IEP and transition goals and adjust instruction as needed.*
- *The graduate implements writing strategies and interventions for secondary students with mild to moderate exceptionalities to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that increase learner independence, and regularly assesses those learned skills to measure progress toward IEP and transition goals and adjust instruction as needed.*
- *The graduate implements mathematical strategies and interventions for secondary students with mild to moderate exceptionalities to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that increase learner independence, and regularly assesses those learned skills to measure progress toward IEP and transition goals and adjust instruction as needed.*

General Science Content

Introduction to Biology

This course is a foundational introduction to the biological sciences. The overarching theories of life from biological research are explored as well as the fundamental concepts and principles of the study of living organisms and their interaction with the environment. Key concepts include how living organisms use and produce energy; how life grows, develops, and reproduces; how life responds to the environment to maintain internal stability; and how life evolves and adapts to the environment.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes the characteristics and classifications of living organisms.*
- *The graduate analyzes the basic chemical composition of cells and the basic processes that happen at the cellular level.*
- *The graduate analyzes different types of cells based on their structures and biological functions.*
- *The graduate analyzes the biological basis for and patterns of heredity and gene expression.*
- *The graduate analyzes inter-dependencies of organisms and their environments.*

Elementary Education Methods

Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions

Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions provides candidates with an in-depth look at best practices for developing reading and writing skills. Course content examines the science of reading, the stages of and approaches to literacy development, differentiation, technology integration, literacy assessment, and Multitiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), including the comprehensive response to intervention (RTI) model used to identify and address the needs of learners who struggle with reading comprehension. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes major theories and research that support the development of literacy.*
- *The graduate integrates various instructional approaches, materials, and curriculum into the development of learning experiences that support a comprehensive approach to reading and writing.*
- *The graduate uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of literacy.*
- *The graduate integrates effective, engaging instructional approaches, methods, and curriculum into the development of environments that support literacy.*
- *The graduate integrates best practices and instructional strategies in reading and literacy that support the unique needs of diverse learners into the development of reading and language arts education.*
- *The graduate recommends effective evidence-based teaching practices in the planning of meaningful, engaging, and developmentally-appropriate literacy lessons.*
- *The graduate selects developmentally appropriate technology tools that support literacy development and learning.*

Language Arts Instruction and Intervention

Language Arts Instruction and Intervention helps students learn how to implement effective language arts instruction and intervention in the elementary classroom. Topics include written and spoken English, expanding students' knowledge, literature rich environments, differentiated instruction, technology for reading and writing, assessment strategies for reading and writing, and strategies for developing academic language. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate designs instruction that facilitates the learning of formal English so elementary students can express their*

ideas clearly and persuasively to a variety of audiences both orally and in writing.

- *The graduate uses various texts and instructional strategies to facilitate the development of word recognition, comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading-writing connections to expand elementary students' knowledge of the world.*
- *The graduate designs instruction that supports the development of awareness, understanding, respect, and the valuing of differences in society.*
- *The graduate uses appropriate technology tools that motivate students to read, write, interact, and collaborate with others.*
- *The graduate uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of reading and writing.*
- *The graduate recommends instructional strategies that support the development of academic language, discourse, reading, and writing across the curriculum.*

Elementary Mathematics Methods

Elementary Mathematics Methods helps students learn how to implement effective math instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include differentiated math instruction, mathematical communication, mathematical tools for instruction, assessing math understanding, integrating math across the curriculum, critical thinking development, standards-based mathematics instruction, and mathematical models and representation. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Introduction to Instructional Planning and Presentation AND Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary or Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate plans differentiated instruction in mathematics education to support the unique needs of diverse learners.*
- *The graduate integrates effective mathematical communication strategies into the development of mathematics education for elementary students.*
- *The graduate integrates tools that enhance student mathematics learning.*
- *The graduate evaluates student learning to measure elementary students' mathematical achievement and to plan further instruction.*
- *The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences as contexts for mathematical instruction.*
- *The graduate recommends various instructional strategies that encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills in mathematics.*
- *The graduate applies mathematical learning research as a foundation for instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates national, state, and local mathematics standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of mathematics education for elementary students.*
- *The graduate applies models and representations to support and enhance the interpretation, organization, recording, and communication of mathematics.*

Children's Literature

Children's Literature is an introduction to and exploration of children's literature. Students will consider and analyze children's literature as a lens through which to view the world. Students will experience multiple genres, historical perspectives, cultural representations, and current applications in the field of children's literature. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Introduction to Instructional Planning and Presentation AND Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary or Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate determines how literary and visual elements are used to convey common themes found in children's literature.*
- *The graduate analyzes various genres of children's literature to understand the characteristics of each genre.*
- *The graduate develops learning experiences that integrate diverse representations from children's literature to help students gain a perspective for understanding the world.*

- *The graduate recommends appropriate texts in children's literature that align with instructional goals to meet the individual learning needs of students.*
- *The graduate creates cross-curricular learning experiences that support, motivate, and engage students when interacting with children's literature.*

Pedagogy

Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions

Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions explores the comprehensive, student-centered response to intervention (RTI) model used to identify and address the needs of learners in middle school and high school who struggle with reading comprehension and/or information retention. Course content provides educators with effective strategies designed to scaffold instruction and help learners develop increased skill in the following areas: reading, vocabulary, text structures and genres, and logical reasoning related to the academic disciplines. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment course OR Introduction to Instructional Planning and Presentation AND Instructional Planning and Presentation in Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate explains how the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach identifies, monitors, and differentiates instruction to ensure that struggling readers obtain the appropriate support and interventions to improve academic progress.*
- *The graduate develops effective vocabulary instruction to enhance students' reading comprehension in the content areas.*
- *The graduate integrates knowledge of effective comprehension strategies to help students monitor and improve their own comprehension when reading.*
- *The graduate integrates reading strategies that scaffold instruction for students when reading increasingly complex texts.*
- *The graduate integrates reading assessments to make informed instructional and placement decisions.*

Effective Teaching Practices

Disciplinary Literacy

Disciplinary Literacy examines teaching strategies designed to help candidates to develop the literacy skills necessary to read, write, and think critically while engaging content in different academic disciplines. Course content highlights strategies to help candidates distinguish between the unique characteristics of informational texts while improving comprehension and writing proficiency across the curriculum. Strategies to encourage inquiry and cultivate skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity also are addressed. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment course OR Introduction to Instructional Planning and Presentation AND Instructional Planning and Presentation in Special Education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate distinguishes between the basic strategies used to facilitate comprehension in the content areas and the specialized reading practices needed to comprehend text in a specific discipline.*
- *The graduate integrates discipline-specific literacy instruction to help students make meaning from the text structures, vocabulary, and language features found in a variety of discipline-specific texts.*
- *The graduate plans authentic writing activities to promote understanding of discipline-specific content.*
- *The graduate integrates instructional strategies and materials in disciplinary literacy practices to enhance student understanding within specific disciplines.*
- *The graduate creates authentic learning tasks that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate digital literacy and discipline-specific understandings.*
- *The graduate plans differentiated lessons and units to help students develop language and literacy skills within the disciplines.*

Pre-Clinical Experiences

Preclinical Experiences in Special Education

Pre-Clinical Experiences in Special Education provides candidates the opportunity to observe and participate in a wide range of in-classroom teaching experiences in order to develop the skills and confidence necessary to be an effective teacher. Candidates will reflect on and document the 75 hours of in-classroom observation and experience in their performance assessments. Prior to entering the classroom for the observations, candidates will be required to include a cleared background check, passing scores on the state or WGU required basic skills exam and a completed resume.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate develops a classroom management plan that integrates best practices for engagement and motivation.*
- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various content knowledge applications, tools of inquiry, instructional strategies, models and trends in the context of classrooms and schools.*
- *The graduate collaborates with a mentor teacher in the planning and delivery of instruction in a classroom setting.*
- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various strategies that are intended to support the use of academic language, metacognition, and communication in classroom contexts.*
- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical applications of various assessment practices as they relate to student learning and instructional design.*
- *The graduate evaluates various applications of technological integration in support of learning for all students.*
- *The graduate evaluates the theoretical, legal, ethical, and practical applications of teaching students with exceptional learning needs.*
- *The graduate evaluates educational observations and experiences connected to professional practices to support the development of appropriate teaching dispositions and a personal teaching philosophy.*

Student Teaching

Student Teaching I in Special Education

Student Teaching I in Special Education is the first of two culminating experiences and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. Student Teaching I is a supervised classroom-based activity in an authentic setting, which enables the candidate to demonstrate professional dispositions and ethics while collaborating with a practicing teacher and applying instructional strategies using co-teaching models. The candidate assumes increasing responsibilities while developing the skills and confidence necessary to be an effective teacher. Each candidate receives formative feedback through observations and a mid-term evaluation on the relevance of required activities, how culturally engaging the activities are, and how successful each candidate is in teaching each student. Each candidate is also evaluated on the ability to think about, analyze, and modify classroom actions as needed, and on a willingness to take risks and experiment with materials and methods that may be new or that may challenge your cultural knowledge.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner implements the full cycle of teaching while exhibiting professional dispositions and ethics.*
- *The learner analyzes feedback and data from observations and evaluations to identify opportunities for improvement.*

Student Teaching II in Special Education

Student Teaching II in Special Education is the second of two culminating experiences and is a required course for all initial licensure candidates. Student Teaching II is a supervised classroom-based activity in an authentic setting, which enables the candidate to demonstrate professional dispositions and ethics while collaborating with a practicing teacher and applying instructional strategies using co-teaching models. The candidate assumes increasing responsibilities while developing the skills and confidence necessary to be an effective teacher. Each candidate receives formative feedback through observations and a final evaluation on the relevance of required activities, how culturally engaging the activities are, and how successful each candidate is in teaching each student. Each candidate is also evaluated on the ability to think about, analyze, and modify classroom actions as needed, and on a willingness to take risks and experiment with materials and methods that may be new or that may challenge your cultural knowledge. The final evaluation in Student Teaching II is the determining factor in applying for licensure as a professional educator.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The learner engages in a continual improvement process in order to advance learner outcomes and personal professional practice.*

- *The learner plans content-based instruction that supports student learning objectives.*
- *The learner integrates instructional strategies to address the needs of all students and meet the learning goals and objectives.*
- *The learner assesses student learning to monitor progress, engage learners in their own growth, and guide decision-making.*

Demonstration Teaching

Teacher Performance Assessment in Special Education

Teacher Performance Assessment in Special Education course is a culmination of the wide variety of skills learned during your time in the Teachers College at WGU. In order to be a competent and independent classroom teacher, you will showcase a collection of your content, planning, instructional, and reflective skills.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate evaluates the teaching context to accommodate student differences to plan for instruction and assessment.*
- *The graduate plans learning environments that support individual learning, collaboration, and positive social interaction.*
- *The graduate plans comprehensive learning segments of instruction and assessment that align with standards and the needs of students.*
- *The graduate applies instructional strategies that promote learning, engage students, and provide differentiated instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates strategies to develop academic language that facilitates effective student participation and engagement in learning.*
- *The graduate utilizes assessment data to profile student learning, communicate information about student progress and achievement, and guide and modify instruction.*
- *The graduate evaluates teaching experiences including the planning and implementing of curriculum and instruction through ongoing reflection.*

Professional Portfolio

Professional Portfolio requires candidates to create an online teaching portfolio that demonstrates professional beliefs, growth, and effective teaching practices from the Demonstration Teaching experience. The portfolio includes reflective essays (educational beliefs, professional growth, and collaboration with stakeholders) and professional artifacts (resume and artifacts with commentary on academic language, systems of student support, education technology, and professional communication with families) developed and acquired during Demonstration Teaching.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate recommends improvements for instruction and professional practice through personal reflection.*
- *The graduate integrates technology into classroom learning experiences to enhance student learning and monitor academic progress.*
- *The graduate demonstrates ethical responsibilities and appropriate teaching dispositions, including those outlined in the Western Governors University Teachers College Code of Ethics.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies that support the development of academic language for all students.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of strategies and resources to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of diverse learners.*
- *The graduate develops appropriate plans for professional growth in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, including habits and skills of continual inquiry and learning.*

Cohort Seminar in Special Education

Cohort Seminar in Special Education provides mentoring and supports teacher candidates during their demonstration teaching period by providing weekly collaboration and instruction related to the demonstration teaching experience. It facilitates their demonstration of competence in becoming reflective practitioners, adhering to ethical standards, practicing inclusion in a diverse classroom, exploring community resources, building collegial and collaborative relationships with

teachers, and considering leadership and supervisory skills.

This course is eligible for an In Progress grade. Please see the Grading Scale Policy for more information.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate demonstrates the ability to positively impact student learning through work samples, student artifacts, assessment results, and reflection.*
- *The graduate recommends improvements for instruction and professional practice through personal reflection.*
- *The graduate demonstrates ethical responsibilities and appropriate teaching dispositions, including those outlined in the Western Governors University Teachers College Code of Ethics.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies for effectively collaborating with colleagues, parents, and community professionals to support student development, learning, and well being.*
- *The graduate selects community resources that support students' non-instructional needs in and out of the classroom.*
- *The graduate recommends strategies that support the development of academic language for all students.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of strategies and resources to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of diverse learners.*
- *The graduate recommends effective strategies to maintain high levels of student engagement.*
- *The graduate recommends best practices for classroom management, effective transitions, and pacing to maximize instructional time.*
- *The graduate develops appropriate plans for professional growth in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, including habits and skills of continual inquiry and learning.*

Accessibility and Accommodations

Western Governors University is committed to providing equal access to its academic programs to all qualified students. WGU's Accessibility Services team supports this mission by providing support, resources, advocacy, collaboration, and academic accommodations for students with disabilities and other qualifying conditions under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). WGU encourages student to complete the Accommodation Request Form as soon as they become aware of the need for an accommodation. Current and prospective students can reach the Accessibility Services team Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST at 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) x5922 or at ADASupport@wgu.edu.

Need More Information? WGU Student Services

WGU's Student Services team is dedicated exclusively to helping you achieve your academic goals. The Student Services office is available during extended hours to assist with general questions and requests. The Student Services team members help you resolve issues, listen to student issues and concerns, and make recommendations for improving policy and practice based on student feedback.

Student Services team members also assist with unresolved concerns to find equitable resolutions. To contact the Student Services team, please feel free to call 877-435-7948 or e-mail studentservices@wgu.edu. We are available Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. Closed Sundays.

If you have inquiries or concerns that require technical support, please contact the WGU IT Service Desk. The IT Service Desk is available Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. To contact the IT Service Desk, please call 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) or e-mail servicedesk@wgu.edu. The support teams are generally closed in observance of university holidays.

For the most current information regarding WGU support services, please visit "Student Support" on the Student Portal at <http://my.wgu.edu>.