The Master of Arts in Educational Studies (Elementary Education) is a competency-based program that enables students to earn a Master of Arts degree online. The M.A. in Educational Studies includes content knowledge related to elementary-level teaching as well as research, and instructional planning. It does not include a supervised teaching practicum in a real classroom and therefore does not meet the requirements for initial teacher licensure. The program is for individuals who, for various reasons, want the academic knowledge that relates to teaching, but who cannot or do not want to participate in a supervised classroom practicum and do not expect to be eligible to teach as a result of completing the program. Once students complete the content and pedagogical knowledge domains of the program, they proceed through the graduate study domains. All students complete a capstone project.
Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, what does it mean when we say that WGU’s programs are competency-based? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on credit hours or on a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts through a series of carefully designed courses.

Progress through your degree program is governed not by classes but by satisfactory completion of the required courses that demonstrate your mastery of the competencies. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you brush up on competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. For this learning and development, WGU has a rich array of learning resources in which you may engage under the direction of your student mentor. You will work closely with your mentor to schedule your program for completing the courses. You will also work closely with additional faculty members as you proceed through courses of study that are designed to lead you through the content you must master in order to pass the assessment(s) for each course.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that it makes it possible for people who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a WGU 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, indeed, 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). The WGU Teachers College is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Informatics program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

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 will 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 may need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to pass the 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, you will complete preassessments to help your mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and experience for use in creating your personalized Degree Plan.

WGU’s Mentoring Approach

The mentoring approach is a powerful component of the WGU educational experience. When you enroll at WGU, you will begin interacting with your student mentor, course mentors, and other support staff. Your student mentor will meet with you on a regular basis and take an active role and a personal interest in your success. Your student mentor will be your point of contact throughout your program and will be available to communicate with you via e-mail or phone. Your mentor will help you set weekly study goals, guide you to learning materials, help you understand what to expect in courses, and motivate you to work hard to complete your program. When you have questions or concerns, your mentor will help you resolve them.

As you work on each course, you will also be assigned course mentors. These course mentors are content experts who can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and help you navigate the course successfully. Your course mentors are available to meet with you individually to provide personal support. You can also communicate with them by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

Working closely with your own personal mentoring team will help you engage in the learning process and be a successful student while at WGU.

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 have interactions with faculty and other students.

The resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments through the utilization of reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by content experts. 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 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. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for “Transfer Credit Evaluation.”

Within the Teachers College, there may be additional courses to meet state 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 student 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 eight (8) competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least twelve (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.

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

You will work with your mentor to select the various learning resources needed to prepare for the assessments in each course. In most cases, the learning materials you will use are independent learning resources such as textbooks, e-learning modules, study guides, simulations, virtual labs, and tutorials. WGU works with dozens of educational providers, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions to give you high-quality and effective instruction that matches the competencies that you are developing. The cost of most learning resources is included in your tuition, and you can enroll directly in those through your Degree Plan as your mentor has scheduled them. Some resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU has excellent bookstore and library arrangements to help you obtain the needed 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 Master of Arts, Educational Studies

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<td>Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education</td>
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<td>Elementary Science Methods</td>
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### 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. As these changes are implemented, WGU will ensure that the length of the student’s degree program (i.e., total competency unit requirements) will not increase and that competency units already earned will be applied to the updated program version. When program requirements are updated, students returning from term break or returning after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter the updated version of the program.
Areas of Study for Master of Arts, Educational Studies

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.

Foundations of Teaching

Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration

Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration helps students to review and synthesize foundational teaching concepts including classroom management, human development, assessment, diversity and inclusion, and the historical, legal, and philosophical foundations of education.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate learns about students and establishes a risk-free classroom environment where students are encouraged through equitable treatment and positive reinforcement/feedback to express interests, set goals, make choices, produce quality work, self-evaluate, and reflect.
- The graduate understands how to communicate effectively with parents and families.
- The graduate describes the importance, reasons, and methods for assessing students.
- The graduate arranges physical classroom space, equipment, and materials to optimize students' learning.
- The graduate models appropriate social skills and teaches students how to work productively and cooperatively.
- The graduate uses persuasion, compromise, debate, negotiation, and coping as strategies for resolving conflicts and disagreements.
- The graduate recognizes signs of emotional distress, child abuse, neglect, substance abuse, parental divorce, homelessness, and hunger.
- The graduate knows common influences on growth and development (i.e., organic causes, socio-cultural factors, and socioeconomic factors).
- The graduate explains atypical stages of development.
- The graduate develops and promotes higher-order thinking skills in students.
- The graduate describes how learners construct knowledge and acquire and retain skills.
- The graduate describes the causes, symptoms, and challenges to learning caused by various exceptionalities.
- The graduate interacts with students in a supportive and respectful manner and helps students interact with each other similarly.
- The graduate expresses the belief that learning is important, that all students can learn, and assumes responsibility for student learning.
- The graduate understands the special learning needs of English Language Learners and describes methods and strategies to address student language learning needs.
- The graduate recognizes and uses a range of conventions in both spoken and written English.
- The graduate elicits and maintains high levels of active engagement and motivation from all students during teacher-led and independent academic instruction.
- The graduate understands and is sensitive to differences in cultural values, norms, and mores of the families of culturally diverse students and is committed to respecting these differences.
• The graduate understands personality, moral, behavioral, and emotional development in children and adolescents.
• The graduate understands the influences of developmental and external factors on learning and their implications on instruction and learning.
• The graduate understands the principles of strengthening and maintaining appropriate behavior and provides feedback and positive reinforcement to students.
• The graduate understands measurement and testing issues relevant to classroom instruction.
• The graduate understands the principles of weakening inappropriate behavior and provides appropriate corrective feedback to students.
• The graduate understands general issues related to physical development.
• The graduate teaches procedures for carrying out reoccurring activities with individuals and whole groups.
• The graduate identifies the characteristics, uses, advantages/disadvantages, and methods for using different types of assessment appropriate for evaluating how students learn.
• The graduate identifies the historical and philosophical foundations of learning, the influence of early educational practices and theories, and the contributions of individuals on education.
• The graduate understands the legal requirements for providing a free appropriate public education and implements Individualized Education Plans of exceptional students.
• The graduate describes cognitive development theory and forms of cognitive knowledge.
• The graduate reads and describes the teacher and student content and pedagogy standards (e.g., local guidelines, state curricula, state and national teacher standards, and student achievement standards).
• The graduate engages in research activities (e.g., locates, accesses, gathers, reviews, evaluates, organizes, and cites primary and secondary information).
• The graduate understands the principles of weakening inappropriate behavior and provides appropriate corrective feedback to students.
• The graduate identifies the general characteristics and uses of technology; describes the functions and appropriate uses of common computer hardware and media devices to enrich learning opportunities; and uses computer software applications.
• The graduate identifies the characteristics, uses, advantages/disadvantages, and methods for using different types of assessment appropriate for evaluating how students learn.
• The graduate understands general issues related to physical development.

Mathematics Content

Mathematics for Elementary Educators
Mathematics for Elementary Educators III engages pre-service elementary teachers in mathematical practices based on deep understanding of underlying concepts. The course covers important topics in statistics, measurement, and covers geometry from synthetic, transformational, and coordinate perspectives. This is the third course in a three-course sequence.

This course covers the following competencies:

• The graduate applies transformations to determine congruence and similarity of geometric figures.
• The graduate analyzes statistical data using numerical measures and graphical displays in order to summarize data, predict trends, and make inferences.
• The graduate applies formulas and theorems to find the length, area, and volume of figures and solve problems.
• The graduate applies principles of congruence and similarity to solve problems.
• The graduate applies geometric properties of lines, angles, polygons, and circles to classify shapes and solve problems.

Teacher Education Diversity
Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners

Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners helps candidates develop an understanding of the needs of exceptional learners and students representing diverse cultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds, with a focus on understanding and meeting the unique needs of learners representing a variety of ability levels, cultural backgrounds, and learning needs.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate recommends best practices to plan classroom instruction in a supportive learning environment for ELL students.
- The graduate selects appropriate strategies to effectively and ethically engage with students, families, administrators, and other stakeholders in support of the education of diverse learners.
- The graduate applies appropriate policies, programs, accepted practices, and legal requirements to classroom and instructional practices as they relate to special education, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners.
- The graduate selects appropriate behavioral intervention strategies for students with special educational needs.
- The graduate selects effective and appropriate learning opportunities for the specific needs of diverse learners.
- The graduate selects appropriate technology tools and accommodations to support the education of diverse learners.
- The graduate integrates knowledge of characteristics, contexts, and conditions of students in the process to address the needs of multicultural learners, exceptional learners, atypical development, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners and to implement equity pedagogy into their practice.
- The graduate selects research-based and data-driven assessment strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners.

Instructional Planning and Presentation

Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary Education

Instructional Planning and Presentation assists students as they continue to build instructional planning skills. Topics include unit and lesson planning, instructional presentation strategies, assessment, engagement, integration of learning across the curriculum, effective grouping strategies, technology in the classroom, and using data to inform instruction.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate plans safe and engaging learning environments that foster cultural and community understanding, collaboration, student voice, positive social interactions, and that include individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- The graduate incorporates various grouping strategies into instruction to facilitate learning for all students.
- The graduate effectively and appropriately uses data, including assessment results, in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction.
- The graduate integrates appropriate and effective presentation strategies in the planning or delivery of lessons for a variety of learners.
- The graduate develops instructional materials that effectively incorporate prior learning and cross-curricular learning outcomes to promote relevant, meaningful, and engaging instruction.
- The graduate integrates research derived from evidence-based practice into the planning and delivery of meaningful, relevant, and engaging instruction and assessment.
- The graduate develops active learning opportunities for a variety of students to promote meaningful, relevant, and engaging student-focused instruction.
- The graduate effectively evaluates and integrates standards, learning outcomes, assessment, instructional strategies, and learning resources in the development and modification of unit and lesson plans.
Elementary Education Methods

Elementary Reading and Literacy Methods
Elementary Reading and Literacy Methods helps students learn how to teach reading and literacy instruction in the elementary classroom by utilizing research based instructional practices. Topics include literacy development, balanced literacy approach, literacy assessment, differentiated literacy instruction, technology supporting literacy development, and effective literacy teaching practices.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate selects developmentally appropriate technology tools that support literacy development and learning.
- 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 uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of literacy.
- The graduate analyzes major theories and research that support the development of literacy.
- The graduate integrates effective, engaging instructional approaches, methods, and curriculum in to the development of environments that support literacy.
- The graduate integrates various instructional approaches, materials, and curriculum into the development of learning experiences that support a comprehensive, balanced approach to reading and writing.
- The graduate recommends effective evidence-based teaching practices in the planning of meaningful, engaging, and developmentally-appropriate literacy lessons.

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.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate recommends instructional strategies that support the development of academic language, discourse, reading, and writing across the curriculum.
- The graduate designs instruction that supports the development of awareness, understanding, respect, and the valuing of differences in society.
- 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 uses multiple assessment strategies that support the development of reading and writing.
- 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 appropriate technology tools that motivate students to read, write, interact, and collaborate with others.

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 math instruction, and mathematical models and representation.

This course covers the following competencies:
● 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 selects appropriate technological and physical tools that enhance student mathematics learning outcomes.

● The graduate effectively uses models and representations to support and enhance the interpretation, organization, recording, and communication of mathematics.

● The graduate recommends various instructional strategies that encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills in mathematics.

● The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences as contexts for mathematical instruction.

● 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 evaluates student learning to measure elementary students’ mathematical achievement and to plan further instruction.

● The graduate effectively uses mathematical learning research as a foundation for instruction.

Elementary Science Methods
Elementary Science Methods helps students learn how to implement effective science instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include processes of science, science inquiry, science learning environments, instructional strategies for science, differentiated instruction for science, assessing science understanding, technology for science instruction, standards based science instruction, integrating science across curriculum, and science beyond the classroom.

This course covers the following competencies:

● The graduate evaluates assessment information to inform instructional decision making and support science education for all students.

● The graduate evaluates the alignment of science standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate selects appropriate technology tools that support science instruction and learning for elementary students.

● The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that effectively incorporate the concepts and modes of scientific inquiry.

● The graduate integrates appropriate science concepts, skills, and processes in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches to support science inquiry in the development of science education for elementary students.

● The graduate integrates developmentally appropriate strategies and approaches that support science literacy into the planning of science learning environments.

● The graduate plans instruction in science education that provides equitable opportunities for all children.

● The graduate plans science instruction that supports the development of scientific knowledge, inquiry, and reasoning in elementary students.

● The graduate uses a variety of strategies to extend science learning and exploration beyond the classroom.

Application of Elementary Social Studies Methods
Application of Elementary Social Studies Methods, as a continuation of Elementary Social Studies Methods, helps students
apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary social studies instruction.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate selects appropriate technology tools that support social studies instruction and learning for elementary students.
- The graduate plans instruction in social studies education that provides equitable opportunities for all students.
- The graduate plans developmentally appropriate, healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments that promote social studies learning.
- The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches that promote elementary students’ growing ability to value diversity and develop connections between their community and culture.
- The graduate evaluates assessment information to inform instructional decision making and support social studies education for all students.
- The graduate develops engaging learning experiences for elementary students that promote research, analysis, and evaluation of real-world situations.
- The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that effectively incorporate the concepts and modes of inquiry of social studies.
- The graduate integrates social studies standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of social studies education for elementary students.
- The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches that promote informed and engaged citizenship in a diverse and interdependent democratic society into social studies learning activities.
- The graduate integrates appropriate themes, concepts, and modes of inquiry in the development of social studies education for elementary students.

Application of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods

Application of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods, as a continuation of Elementary Visual and Performing Arts Methods, helps students apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary visual and dramatic arts instruction.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate evaluates the impact of the visual and performing arts on childhood learning and development.
- The graduate develops relevant and meaningful learning experiences that integrate visual and performing arts into other disciplines for elementary students.
- The graduate integrates the content, functions, and achievements of performing and visual arts into the design of creative, engaging, and cooperative instruction and learning environments for elementary students.
- The graduate develops learning opportunities that allow students to explore the cultural dimensions and contributions of the arts from diverse places, peoples, and periods.
- The graduate develops learning opportunities that allow for the full and equitable participation in and expression through the arts for students with diverse abilities, needs, backgrounds, and interests.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of visual arts in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of the dramatic arts in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, tools, and structures of music in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
- The graduate effectively incorporates central concepts, inquiry tools, standards, and structures of dance and movement in the design of learning experiences for elementary students.
Application of Elementary Physical Education and Health Methods

Application of Physical Education and Health Methods, as a continuation of Elementary Physical Education and Health Methods, helps students apply, analyze, and reflect on effective elementary health and physical instruction.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate selects instructional and behavioral strategies that support healthy lifestyles and address health concerns of elementary students.
- The graduate integrates movement concepts, principles, strategies, and approaches in the development of physical education lesson and unit plans for elementary students.
- The graduate plans learning environments that promote the health and safety of elementary students.
- The graduate recommends instructional and behavioral strategies that promote healthy nutritional habits in elementary students.
- The graduate plans developmentally appropriate educational activities that provide elementary students with the knowledge, skills, fitness, and attitudes necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The graduate creates relevant and meaningful learning experiences that integrate elementary physical education across other disciplines.
- The graduate integrates current research and public policy into the planning, promotion, and advocacy for educational programs that support the health, safety, and well-being of all elementary students.
- The graduate develops active learning opportunities to accommodate all elementary students, including those with varied abilities, needs, backgrounds, and interests to promote meaningful, relevant, and engaging student-focused physical education.

Pre-Clinical Experiences

Preclinical Experiences in Elementary Education

Preclinical Experiences in Elementary Education provides students 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. Students will reflect on and document at least 60 hours of in-classroom observations. Prior to entering the classroom for the observations, students will be required to meet several requirements including a cleared background check, passing scores on the state or WGU required basic skills exam, a completed resume, philosophy of teaching, and professional photo.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical implications of various general instructional strategies, models, and trends in the context of classrooms and schools.
- 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 implications of various elementary education instructional strategies, models, and trends in the context of classrooms and schools.
- The graduate evaluates various applications of technological integration in support of learning for all students.
- The graduate develops a classroom management plan that integrates best practices for engagement and motivation.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical, legal, ethical, and practical applications of teaching students with exceptional learning needs.
- The graduate evaluates the theoretical and practical applications of various assessment practices as they relate to student learning and instructional design.
- The graduate evaluates educational observations and experiences connected to professional practices to support the
development of appropriate teaching dispositions and a personal teaching philosophy.

Research Fundamentals

Research Foundations
The Research Foundations course focuses on the essential concepts in educational research, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed, and action research; measurement and assessment; and strategies for obtaining warranted research results.

This course covers the following competencies:
• The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.
• The graduate completes a research proposal.
• The graduate analyzes the key aspects of action research and characterizes the major approaches to action research.
• The graduate analyzes the key aspects of mixed methods research and characterizes the major approaches to mixed methods research.
• The graduate analyzes the key aspects of quantitative research and characterizes the major approaches to quantitative research.
• The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.
• The graduate analyzes the key aspects of qualitative research and characterizes the major approaches to qualitative research.
• The graduate analyzes different measurement scales and differentiates between reliability and validity, and their subtypes, as they relate to assessments.
• The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.
• The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).
• The graduate evaluates the purpose, process, and practice of the generation and justification of knowledge in educational research.
• The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.
• The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.
• The graduate analyzes the characteristics of research quality and the potential threats to the quality of results in qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, and action research studies.

Research Questions and Literature Review
The Research Questions and Literature Reviews course focuses on how to conduct a thorough literature review that addresses and identifies important educational research topics, problems, and questions, and helps determine the appropriate kind of research and data needed to answer one’s research questions and hypotheses.

This course covers the following competencies:
• The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.
• The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in
the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.

- The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to educational research topics, problems, and questions.

Research Design and Analysis
The Research Design and Analysis course focuses on applying strategies for effective design of empirical research studies. Particular emphasis is placed on selecting or constructing the design that will provide the most valid results, analyzing the kind of data that would be obtained, and making defensible interpretations and drawing appropriate conclusions based on the data.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate analyzes the key aspects of action research and characterizes the major approaches to action research.
- The graduate analyzes the key aspects of mixed methods research and characterizes the major approaches to mixed methods research.
- The graduate analyzes the key aspects of quantitative research and characterizes the major approaches to quantitative research.
- The graduate analyzes the key aspects of qualitative research and characterizes the major approaches to qualitative research.
- The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.
- The graduate analyzes different measurement scales and differentiates between reliability and validity, and their subtypes, as they relate to assessments.
- The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.
- The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).
- The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.
- The graduate analyzes the characteristics of research quality and the potential threats to the quality of results in qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, and action research studies.

Research Proposals
Research Proposals focuses on planning and writing a well-organized and complete research proposal. The relationship of the sections in a research proposal to the sections in a research report will be highlighted.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate develops clear research questions that can be investigated and hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data.
- The graduate completes a research proposal.
- The graduate analyzes ethical issues and identifies appropriate procedures for educational research.
- The graduate differentiates among the major methods of data collection, including their strengths and limitations in the selection of an appropriate method of data collection.
- The graduate applies and justifies appropriate research methods and design in quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios to address the research question(s).
- The graduate evaluates and selects appropriate basic data analysis techniques for quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and action research scenarios.
- The graduate describes the purpose for a literature review and develops an organized literature review relevant to
Capstone

MAES Capstone
The MAES Capstone takes the student through the steps of designing, managing, and developing an instructional product for which there is an identified need. The instructional product they develop is an exportable form of instruction designed to bring their target audience to a mastery of predetermined knowledge and skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- The graduate integrates and synthesizes competencies from across the degree program and thereby demonstrates the ability to participate in and contribute value to the chosen professional field.
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 administrative or accessibility issues. 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. The Student Services team provides a formal means by which you can express your views, which in turn will inform the decisions we make.

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., and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time.

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.

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