



Program Guidebook

Master of Arts in Teaching, Special Education

MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING WITH A CONCENTRATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION is a competency-based program that enables teacher candidates to earn a Master of Arts degree with a concentration in Special Education, Mild to Moderate disabilities which will lead to an initial licensure in Special Education (K-12) teaching certificate. The program will be completed online except for preclinical experiences, classroom clinical components, and student teaching. This program will involve an intensive, fast-paced education in fundamental issues, methodology, knowledge and skills for special education teachers. With core courses in learning theory and behavior management, candidates will study educational assessment and intervention while developing skills in building strategies for successful, inclusive classrooms. Candidates develop and refine their skills through a series of sequential experiences beginning with video-based observations of classroom instruction. The culminating experience is full-time student teaching with a mentor teacher under the supervision of WGU's clinical experience team in two special education settings at the K-6 and 7-12 levels. Both placements will support the academic needs of students with mild-to-moderate disabilities. The Master of Arts in Special Education is a specifically designed program for the preparation of prospective teachers to work with students with mild to moderate disabilities in today's diverse inclusionary K-12 classrooms. With the successful completion of program expectations and required assessments in the major area of teaching, the candidate can seek an 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 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. It includes a list that can be referenced to determine the mobile friendliness of all core course materials used in a program.

[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 Master of Arts in Teaching, Special Education

Course Description	CUs
Educational Psychology and Human Development of Children and Adolescents	4
Schools as Communities of Care	2
Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse Learners	3
Special Education Practices: Professional, Ethical and Legal Guidelines	2
Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments	2
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	2
Mathematics Methods and Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Exceptionalities	2
Management Strategies for Academic and Social Behavior	3
Assessment and Evaluation Procedures in Special Education	2
Language Arts Instruction and Intervention	2
Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions	2
Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions	2
Disciplinary Literacy	2
Using Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning	2
Collaborative Techniques with Partners for Effective IEPs	2
Special Education Methods of Instruction and Intervention	2
Designing Instruction for Elementary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities	2
Designing Instruction for Secondary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities	2
Preclinical Experiences in Special Education	2
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 1 and 2	2
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 3 and Midterm	2
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 4 and 5	2
Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 6 and Final	2
Teacher Performance Assessment in Special Education	1
Professional Portfolio	1
Cohort Seminar in Special Education	1

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 Master of Arts in Teaching, Special Education

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.

Education

Educational Psychology and Human Development of Children and Adolescents

Educational Psychology and Human Development of Children and Adolescents is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course introduces candidates to research-validated theories of human development and psychology, spanning from early childhood through adolescence, and their applications in teaching practice. Candidates will explore how linguistic, physical, cognitive, and social development influence the learning process and inform educational approaches. This course will also cover appropriate instructional and assessment strategies that can be used to support learning for developmentally diverse student populations. The course will culminate in analysis of learning theories related to educational psychology in order to develop a personal educational philosophy. Candidates will engage in four hours of preclinical experiences, which include virtual classroom observations from the perspective of educational psychology and learner development. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Foundations of Education 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 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.*
- *The graduate analyzes learning theories to develop a personal educational philosophy.*

Professional Core

Schools as Communities of Care

Schools as Communities of Care is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course introduces candidates to strategies for providing a culturally inclusive learning environment that meets the social and emotional needs of learners while taking into account theories and philosophical perspectives on child and adolescent development and learning. Emphasis is placed on fostering a collaborative relationship with families, caregivers, and community stakeholders, and on leveraging community resources to support each learner's growth and well-being to build a strong foundation for their academic and personal success. Topics addressed include culturally responsive practice, social and emotional learning (SEL), youth mental health, substance abuse, suicide awareness and prevention, abuse within families, and professional responsibilities to ensure student wellbeing. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of strategies that support the whole child in a community of care. Candidates will engage in seven hours of preclinical experiences, include virtual observations of learning environments that involve parents and families in their children's education and an interview with an educational professional. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Educational Psychology and Human Development of Children and Adolescents 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 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.*
- *The graduate recommends evidence-based strategies that are appropriate to support the social and emotional needs of students grappling with situations affecting their home, school, or community.*

Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse Learners

Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse Learners is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course focuses on inclusive and responsive practices and interventions for meeting the needs of diverse populations of learners, including students with disabilities (INCLUDING DYSLEXIA), English language learners, and gifted and talented students. Candidates will apply practical strategies for differentiating instruction, partnering with parents, implementing a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and advocating for all students, particularly those impacted by provisions of IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, for the purpose of creating an accessible, equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning experience. The course will culminate in practical application of evidence-based multi-tiered intervention strategies to support positive behavior and learning in the classroom for diverse learners. 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 is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Schools as Communities of Care 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 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.*
- *The graduate analyzes why specific multi-tiered intervention strategies support positive behavior and learning in the classroom.*

Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments

Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course provides candidates with research-based strategies and approaches to establishing and maintaining a safe and productive learning environment that supports the success and well-being of all P-12 learners. Topics addressed include consistent routines and expectations, student engagement, positive behavior support, motivation and its effect on student achievement, active learning and self-direction, and fostering a sense of community through collaboration. Candidates will design a classroom management plan for their future classroom based on theory and high-leverage practices for meeting the diverse needs of learners in a productive and collaborative learning environment. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of current strategies to motivate and engage students in specific content areas. 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 is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse Learners 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 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.*
- *The graduate applies evidence-based strategies within their content area to motivate and engage students.*

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment is a key component of WGU's Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course provides candidates with theoretical foundations and strategies for creating engaging and standards-aligned lessons that meet the needs of all learners in the P-12 classroom. This course focuses on the interrelationship between curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with emphasis on the role of assessment and student data in planning, designing, delivering, and modifying instruction in accordance with diverse learner needs. This course will culminate in the application of evidence-based strategies related to the interdependence of and alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessment in student-centered P-12 teaching and learning. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences, which include conducting virtual classroom observations and recording a short teaching segment. Crosscutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for continued development. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments 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 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.*
- *The graduate analyzes the alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve instruction and support learning for all students.*

Using Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning

Using Educational Technology for Teaching and Learning is a key component of WGU's professional core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course presents strategies for integrating technology into classroom practices to improve instruction and student learning according to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. Candidates will evaluate digital tools and their potential classroom applications such as enhancing curriculum, enabling communication with students and families, and increasing student engagement. Topics covered include ethics, equity and 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 addressed. The course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of current standards, strategies, theories, or philosophical perspectives related to the use of technology in teaching and learning. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experience that include virtual observations of classroom practices incorporating technology to support educational goals. Crosscutting themes of technology and diversity are interwoven for further development. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of the Assessing Student Learning 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 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.*
- *The graduate applies evidence-based practices to articulate how technology supports teaching and learning in different learning environments.*

Special Education

Special Education Practices: Professional, Ethical and Legal Guidelines

Special Education Practices: Professional, Ethical and Legal Guidelines prepares candidates to apply 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. This course also explores the transition planning requirements in IDEA, which include development of an individualized transition plan and ensures that planning is initiated in elementary (such as from K to elementary), middle school and continued through high school and post-secondary education. Candidates will explore the legal foundations and case laws related to special education to gain understanding of how legislation influences teaching and learning. Candidates will advocate for improved outcomes for students with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Candidates will engage in three hours of preclinical experiences, which include an interview with a special educator to gain insight on how these topics affect and inform teaching practice. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Essential Practices for Supporting Diverse 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.*
- *The graduate explores pathways and opportunities for professional development to grow as an educator.*

Management Strategies for Academic and Social Behavior

Management Strategies for Academic and Social Behavior 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, and appropriate research-based intervention strategies, including positive behavior intervention and supports, multitiered systems of support (MTSS), applied behavior analysis, replacement behavior and reward strategies, culturally responsive practices, and data collection and assessment methods. 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 a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and the creation and monitoring of behavioral improvement plans (BIPs) in an authentic learning environment. The candidates will determine effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation and opportunities to respond, and enhance self-regulation of student learning. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Creating and Managing Engaging Learning Environments.

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.*
- *The graduate determines effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation and opportunities to respond, and enhance self-regulation of student learning.*

Assessment and Evaluation Procedures in Special Education

Assessment and Evaluation Procedures 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. Candidates analyze informal assessments to determine how students access and demonstrate knowledge in the core curriculum. This course is designed to be taken by candidates after they have completed Special Education Practices: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Guidelines.

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.*
- *The graduate analyzes informal assessments to draw conclusions about student performance and its implications for future learning.*

Collaborative Techniques with Partners for Effective IEPs

Collaborative Techniques with Partners for Effective IEPs 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. Candidates will develop plans for transition services that focus on a coordinated set of student-centered activities designed to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education. 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. The candidates will actively seek information from and about families and take primary responsibility for maintaining respectful, ongoing, open communication to jointly identify and meet learning goals that are informed by assessment data. 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 Special Education Practices: Professional, Ethical and Legal Guidelines.

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, 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.*
- *The graduate reflects on learning based on a self-analysis of their professional performance in a collaborative setting.*

Special Education Methods of Instruction and Intervention

Special Education Methods of Instruction and Intervention 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 will also focus on the interrelationship between curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with emphasis on the role of assessment and student data in planning, designing, delivering, and modifying instruction in accordance with diverse learner needs. Candidates will know and understand how learning occurs, how students construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop disciplined thinking processes. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Mathematics Methods and Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities, and Language Arts Instruction and Interventions.

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.*
- *The graduate uses relevant research to build understanding of explicit instructional strategies for exceptional learners.*

Designing Instruction for Elementary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Designing Instruction 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, reading, and 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. Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject content specifically focusing on reading, writing, and math curricula of the general curriculum to inform instructional decisions for individual with exceptionalities. Candidates design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for individuals with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum curricula. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Special Education Methods of Instruction and Intervention.

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 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 that align to content standards and are appropriate to meet the needs of individual students.*
- *The graduate applies explicit, systematic instruction to teach content, strategies, and skills to clarify what a focus learner needs to do or think about while learning academic content in elementary settings.*
- *The graduate specifically designs instruction for individual students based on various types of formative and summative*

assessments to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet content goals for each individual student.

Designing Instruction for Secondary Learners with Mild to Moderate Exceptionalities

Designing Instruction 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 in math, reading and English/language arts. This course also promotes the achievement of Individualized Education Program (IEP) and transition goals for independent living, post-secondary education and career preparation through demonstration of strategies that increase students' self-awareness, self-regulation, self-management, self-control, and self-esteem. Because of the significant role that content specific subject matter knowledge plays at the secondary level, candidates will demonstrate a solid understanding of the subject matter content specifically focusing on math, reading, English/language arts to sufficiently assure that students with exceptionalities can meet state curriculum standards. Candidates design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for individuals with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of 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 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.*
- *The graduate demonstrates a foundational understanding of how their approach to instruction and assessment techniques have an impact on student learning, both academically and emotionally.*

Mathematics Content

Mathematics Methods and Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Exceptionalities

Mathematics Methods and Instruction for Students with Mild/Moderate Exceptionalities helps candidates learn how to implement effective math instruction in today's diverse classrooms in both the elementary and secondary settings. 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 for students 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 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 K-12 students.*
- *The graduate integrates tools that enhance student mathematics learning.*
- *The graduate evaluates student learning to measure K-12 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 K-12 students.

- *The graduate applies models and representations to support and enhance the interpretation, organization, recording, and communication of mathematics.*

Elementary Education Methods

Language Arts Instruction and Intervention

Language Arts Instruction and Intervention helps students learn to implement effective language arts instruction and intervention in the elementary classroom. Topics include written and spoken English, student knowledge expansion, literature-rich environments, differentiated instruction, technology for reading and writing, assessment strategies for reading and writing, and strategies for developing academic language. This course is designed to be taken after successful completion of Introduction to Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary 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 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 Reading Methods and Interventions

Elementary Reading Methods and Interventions provides students seeking initial teacher licensure in elementary education with an in-depth look at best practices for developing the reading and writing skills of all students. Course content examines the stages of literacy development, the balanced literacy approach, differentiation, technology integration, literacy-assessment, and 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 OR Instructional Planning and Presentation in Elementary 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 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, balanced 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 in to 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.*

Effective Teaching Practices

Secondary Reading Instruction and Interventions

Secondary Reading Instruction and Intervention explores the comprehensive, student-centered Response to Intervention (RTI) assessment and intervention 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 has no prerequisites.

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.*

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 elementary content areas and the specialized reading practices needed to comprehend text in a specific discipline.*
- *The graduate integrates discipline-specific literacy instruction to help elementary 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 at the elementary level.*
- *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.*

Demonstration Teaching

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 1 and 2

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 1 and 2 involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate provides developmentally appropriate instruction that supports the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.*
- *The graduate establishes a safe and productive learning environment that supports individual learning, collaborations, and positive social interaction.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the resources, students, procedures, and routines of the classroom.*
- *The graduate designs instruction that effectively integrates understanding of subject matter, curriculum goals, cross-disciplinary skills, pedagogy, and students.*
- *The graduate integrates multiple methods of assessment that engage students in their own growth, document student progress, and inform ongoing planning and instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process and encourage deep understanding of content and development of the skills needed to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the delivery of lesson content.*
- *The graduate integrates appropriate central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline to make content accessible and meaningful for all students and to assure mastery.*

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 3 and Midterm

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 3 and Midterm involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate provides developmentally appropriate instruction that supports the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.*
- *The graduate establishes a safe and productive learning environment that supports individual learning, collaborations, and positive social interaction.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the resources, students, procedures, and routines of the classroom.*

- *The graduate designs instruction that effectively integrates understanding of subject matter, curriculum goals, cross-disciplinary skills, pedagogy, and students.*
- *The graduate integrates multiple methods of assessment that engage students in their own growth, document student progress, and inform ongoing planning and instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process and encourage deep understanding of content and development of the skills needed to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the delivery of lesson content.*
- *The graduate integrates appropriate central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline to make content accessible and meaningful for all students and to assure mastery.*

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 4 and 5

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 4 and 5 involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate provides developmentally appropriate instruction that supports the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.*
- *The graduate establishes a safe and productive learning environment that supports individual learning, collaborations, and positive social interaction.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the resources, students, procedures, and routines of the classroom.*
- *The graduate designs instruction that effectively integrates understanding of subject matter, curriculum goals, cross-disciplinary skills, pedagogy, and students.*
- *The graduate integrates multiple methods of assessment that engage students in their own growth, document student progress, and inform ongoing planning and instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process and encourage deep understanding of content and development of the skills needed to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the delivery of lesson content.*
- *The graduate integrates appropriate central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline to make content accessible and meaningful for all students and to assure mastery.*

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 6 and Final

Supervised Demonstration Teaching in Special Education, Obs 6 and Final involves a series of classroom performance observations by the host teacher and clinical supervisor that develop comprehensive performance data about the teacher candidate's skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *The graduate provides developmentally appropriate instruction that supports the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students.*
- *The graduate establishes a safe and productive learning environment that supports individual learning, collaborations, and positive social interaction.*
- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the resources, students, procedures, and routines of the classroom.*
- *The graduate designs instruction that effectively integrates understanding of subject matter, curriculum goals, cross-disciplinary skills, pedagogy, and students.*
- *The graduate integrates multiple methods of assessment that engage students in their own growth, document student progress, and inform ongoing planning and instruction.*
- *The graduate integrates a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process and encourage deep understanding of content and development of the skills needed to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.*

- *The graduate integrates effective strategies to manage the delivery of lesson content.*
- *The graduate integrates appropriate central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline to make content accessible and meaningful for all students and to assure mastery.*

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 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 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 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>.