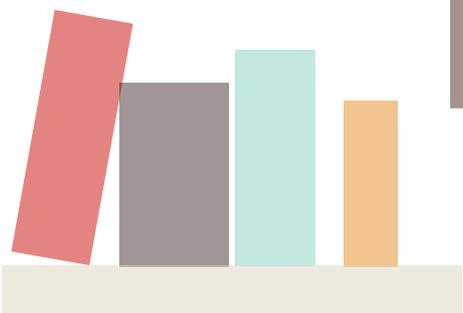
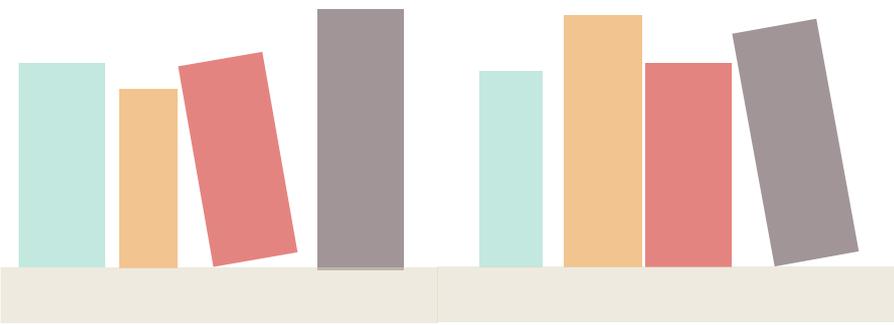


# SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENT HANDBOOK



ACADEMIC YEAR 2020 - 2021



**Special Education Handbook  
AY 2020 – 2021**

**Table of Contents**

WELCOME..... 2

Woodring’s Mission and Vision..... 2

What to do when you receive your admission letter ..... 2

Fingerprinting and Clearances ..... 3

Orientations ..... 4

About the Department..... 4

Office Availability ..... 5

Advising..... 6

Plan of Study..... 6

General University Requirements (GUR) and Prerequisites ..... 7

Professionalism..... 7

Students with Disabilities ..... 7

Additional Program Requirements..... 8

Program Expectations ..... 8

Case Conferences..... 10

Program Assessments ..... 10

Practica ..... 11

Final Block..... 13

Student Teaching/Internship..... 13

Graduation Applications/Residency Certification Application ..... 13

Scholarships..... 14

Grievances ..... 14

Policy..... 14

Frequently Asked Questions..... 16

## WELCOME

Congratulations upon acceptance into your program and a big welcome from all of us in Special Education! You have just made an important step toward an exciting, meaningful career.

We have organized this handbook so that closely linked topics are grouped together. For the best result, read through the handbook before your initial mandatory department orientation and then refer to it as you move from quarter to quarter and as questions arise. This is a helpful guide, but it does not include everything you will need to know about the Department and/or about your program.

*The handbook is updated regularly and kept online at:*  
<https://wce.wvu.edu/files/2020-04/SPED-StudentHandbook.pdf>

### Woodring's Mission and Vision

The Department agrees with and supports the mission and vision of Woodring College of Education.

**Mission.** Woodring College of Education facilitates life-long learning through exemplary teaching to prepare quality education, health, and human services professionals for democratic citizenship and meaningful careers. As a College that serves the state, nation, and world, we:

- Construct, transform, and convey knowledge by integrating research, theory, and practice;
- Cultivate student growth through extensive community and school engagement in collaboration with exemplary practicing professionals;
- Act with respect for individual differences, including taking a strengths-based view;
- Develop collaborative partnerships that promote the learning and well-being of individuals, families, and the community; and
- Evaluate processes and outcomes to ensure continual program improvements.

**Vision.** The vision of Woodring College of Education frames our future:

*Woodring College of Education fosters community relationships and a culture of learning that advance knowledge, honor diversities, and promote social justice.*

### What to do when you receive your admission letter

When you receive your admission email letter, do the following:

- ◆ Respond with your acceptance as soon as possible by sending an email back to the Teacher Education Admissions Office. You have ten days to respond.
- ◆ First quarter courses are predetermined. Information about registering for your first courses was listed in your admission letter. However, there may be room for an additional course or two, depending upon your program. **Check with an advisor before registering for any additional courses.**



Here is a checklist to make sure you have completed everything necessary to begin your program:

- Respond to your admittance letter.
- Begin your necessary clearances (see instructions below).
- Visit with a SPED advisor, if necessary.
- Register for your courses. You will receive overrides for your SPED courses. However, if you are in a Teacher Preparation major you are not allowed to register for SPED courses until your Fingerprints and PRC Clearance have been processed.
- Attend all three mandatory orientations.
- Sign up for the Special Education listserve (see final page).
- Take a deep breath, get some sleep, drink lots of water and eat healthy foods.



*One of the first courses you will take in your program is SPED 310. This course has a service-learning component that requires time outside of class, so leave room in your schedule. Service learning is in a school or professional setting, and the time and place is arranged for you. You will hear more about service learning at new student orientation.*

### Fingerprinting and Clearances



Different programs require different types of background checks. Teacher education program clearances are mandated by Washington State through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Early Childhood Special Education + Early Childhood Education also requires clearance by the Washington Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Exceptionality and Disability majors will need to get clearances that comply with the requirements of different community agencies.

You are required to have up-to-date background checks and/or clearances before you begin your program and maintain them throughout. Candidates may not report to schools or work online with K-12 students without valid background checks, even if you have had prior clearances. Please pay close attention to the type of clearances you need for your program and ask Woodring staff if you have questions. Endorsement candidates may also require clearances.

**It is your responsibility** to ensure that these clearances are valid at all times. The consequences of not having up-to-date background checks is that you will not receive your overrides for SPED courses and may be removed from any non-SPED practicums.

Additional Information:

- Character and Fitness website: <https://wce.wvu.edu/cert/character-and-fitness>
- Fingerprints and clearances expire after 2 years. You will be notified by Woodring staff that your prints are expiring.
- Get your prints redone as soon as you are notified to ensure you get course overrides and your clearance doesn't lapse.

## Orientations

### Mandatory New Student Orientations

There is a total of three mandatory new student orientations that are held the day before classes start:

- Woodring Orientation
- Special Education Orientation
- Service-Learning Orientation

The orientations are mandatory because they provide important information about Department, College and Washington State requirements. Please, plan accordingly.



- ◆ We will take your photo for our files. The photo is **NOT** used for any other purpose.

**Other Mandatory orientations also occur throughout the program.** Each practicum, as well as internship, has a mandatory orientation. These orientations will provide information that you will need as you begin to teach in the schools.

Some orientations, such as the one for SPED 480 (Reading Practicum), are similar to a workshop and will provide training for your practicum setting. You will be notified in advance as to when the mandatory orientations are scheduled. Again, if you cannot attend an orientation, your absence could impact when you are eligible to take the course.

## About the Department

The Special Education and Education Leadership Department has four programming areas:

- (1) Special Education (including the Ershig Assistive Technology Center),
- (2) Education Administration (Masters in School Administration, Principal Certification & Superintendent programs),
- (3) Teacher Education and Outreach Programs (TEOP) Teacher preparation in Everett and Bremerton, and
- (4) Compass to Campus: K-8 tutoring and mentoring program.

Special Education has four Bachelor of Arts in Education (BAE) options:

1. Special Education and Elementary Education
2. Special Education plus Content endorsement
3. Early Childhood Special Education and Early Childhood
4. Exceptionality and Disability



All majors except the Exceptionality and Disability lead to teacher certification with two endorsements. Endorsements reflect the subject and grade level in which someone is prepared to teach.

We also offer a Special Education endorsement program for teachers who are already certified. Our programs can be completed by students who have already earned a Bachelor's degree. Both the Endorsement and Post Baccalaureate are specialized programs, but much of this handbook will still apply.

## Office Availability

We are here to help and to facilitate the hard work that you will do in your program. The Special Education offices are on the second floor of Miller Hall.

The main office is MH 201A.

**Program Coordinator**, Summer Mitchell

Email: [Summer.Mitchell@wwu.edu](mailto:Summer.Mitchell@wwu.edu)

Office phone: (360) 650-6630.

Department email: [Special.Education@wwu.edu](mailto:Special.Education@wwu.edu)

Department phone: (360) 650-3330

**Open 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday**



**You may also visit our Program Manager**, Susan Cahill

Office: MH 201D

Office phone: (360) 650-3981

Email: [Susan.Cahill@wwu.edu](mailto:Susan.Cahill@wwu.edu)

### **Summer Mitchell can help you with the following:**

- Check out educational materials,
- Monitor Plans of Study,
- Check out your file for advising appointments,
- Input overrides for courses at the direction of faculty,

### **Susan Cahill is the go-to person for the following:**

- Assist with problems in registration, if your advisor is unavailable,
- Complete degree evaluations, if your advisor is unavailable,
- Provide advising regarding registration and course load,
- Schedule case conferences,
- Make appointments with the Department Chair,
- And anytime Summer is not available.

**Work Study Students.** Students working in the lobby outside MH 201A are there to help you too. They can accept assignments and materials for faculty, help you checkout training materials, etc.

**Faculty.** Faculty members have many roles on and off campus. They usually are **not** available during summer or university breaks. If you want to meet with a faculty member, schedule time during their office hours or send them an email, requesting times that may be convenient for both of you.

**Department Chair.** Your department chair is Dr. Charles Lambert. He has many duties within the college and across campus that require flexible hours. When the door is open, the chair is available (MH 201E). During the times when the door is open, please just stop by to say hello or to discuss an issue. You are more than welcome. If you need to secure a specific time, please schedule an appointment through Ms. Cahill (MH 201D).

## Advising

You will be assigned a faculty advisor at orientation. Your advisor will help with your Plan of Study as well as provide program information and career guidance.

**You are REQUIRED to meet with your advisor once per quarter.** The connection you make with your advisor is very important for your successful progress. Your advisor will assist you in tracking program requirements, GURs and prerequisites. Try to schedule an appointment with your advisor early and often.

Your advisor will be an important person in your life, especially if you want a letter of recommendation. They can also provide important information about the College, University, and other support that may be available. Your advisor is the person to talk to about any concerns you may have, including courses that may be challenging or life circumstances that affect your education. Before taking any action that could delay your education, such as dropping a course or leaving school, consult with your advisor.

If your advisor is not available and you need immediate assistance, contact Ms. Cahill, and she will help you or direct you to the appropriate person.

**Changing advisors.** There are times when a change of advisor can be helpful. For example, if you switch programs, a different advisor may have more information about the new program. Or you may find that you have a common interest with a different faculty member. In such cases, visit Ms. Mitchell.

## Plan of Study

If you have been admitted to the Special Education and Elementary Education or Special Education Early Childhood and Early Childhood, follow the course sequence in your Plan of Study as closely as possible. Of course, we know that “life happens.” In those cases, your advisor can help you adjust your plan. You are ultimately responsible for ensuring that your Plan of Study includes all required courses, so double check your plan.

The Exceptionality and Disability and Special Education plus Content programs are somewhat different. You will be given a Plan of Study that includes your SPED courses at orientation, but you will need to meet with your advisor to develop the rest of your plan because each program is individualized.

**ALL SPED courses require overrides.** Your Plan of Study must be up to date in order to receive the correct overrides. Overrides can also be delayed if your clearances and/or prerequisites are not met. You will receive email notifications titled “Official Notice – Special Education” please respond to these as soon as possible to avoid delays.

## **General University Requirements (GUR) and Prerequisites**

Your Plan of Study does not include GURs and/or prerequisites. Several courses in the Special Education majors require prerequisites. For example, Math 381 requires Math 112 or an equivalent; SCED 480 requires SCED 201 **and** all your natural science GURs (to include two lab science courses); IT 443 requires completion of IT 344. It is your responsibility to complete your GURs and prerequisites in a timely manner.

It is recommended to complete prerequisites at least two quarters before you're scheduled to take the program course. This way you won't be delayed at registration time and the potential risk of not getting a seat.

## **Professionalism**

You are entering a profession that requires knowledge and skills to work with teachers, students, families and administrators. You will need to maintain a high degree of professionalism to interact with so many different people. For this reason, we, in the Department and across the college, stress professional attitudes and competencies.

You have signed two professionalism documents, one for the College and one for the program. These professional documents are enforced throughout your program. You can find the Professionalism document as well as the Rubric used for professionalism under Current Students / Forms, on the Special Education homepage: <https://wce.wvu.edu/sped/forms>.

## **Students with Disabilities**

We welcome students with disabilities into Special Education programs. Teachers with disabilities often have a unique understanding of student abilities, and the difficulties that children with disabilities may encounter in the school system. ADA and Section 504 require that programs make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities to meet program requirements. In order to access these supports, college students with disabilities must go through the Disability Access Center (DAC). You can find contact information at <http://disability.wvu.edu>

To set up accommodations please use the following steps:

1. Seek assistance from DAC: <https://disability.wvu.edu/>.
2. DAC will meet with you to identify reasonable accommodations.
3. Make a list of who your instructors are. Instructors are not limited to just those who are the instructor of record. Instructors may be working together, especially if the courses are block courses, meaning that they share content and responsibilities.
4. Log into MyDAC and request faculty notification emails.
5. Set up a meeting with the instructor, as necessary.
6. Instructors are not allowed to provide accommodations that have not been authorized by DAC.
7. If the course is a practicum or field experience, advance notice is required. Students with disabilities must contact DAC by the second week of the preceding quarter to request accommodations for practicum or field experience. DAC will facilitate an interactive process between the student and the department.
8. Arranging for DAC support in a timely manner is a professional responsibility.

## Additional Program Requirements

Special Education programs are guided by the standards of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). These standards provide a framework for preparing exceptional teachers to work with children from underrepresented populations. Some of these standards cannot be met through coursework alone. Therefore, the programs have additional requirements. The requirements follow these themes: (a) Professional Activities, (b) Professional Dispositions, (c) Pathways to Equity and Inclusion, (d) Assistive Technology, and (e) Variety of Field Placements.

You will be expected to fulfill these requirements and track them with your advisor. You will receive a copy of the “Additional Program Requirements” document at Orientation. The document can also be located under Current Students / Forms located on the Special Education homepage: <https://wce.wvu.edu/sped/forms>.

## Program Expectations

### Communication

**Oral communication.** Students are expected to communicate clearly and concisely, using standard English. In the field of education, students will use oral communication in a professional manner on a daily basis. It is important to practice and improve upon your communication skills at each opportunity.

**Written communication.** Written papers submitted for courses should follow the American Psychological Associate (APA) format. You should use APA’s Publication Manual 6th Edition. You can find it on loan in the library or purchase it from the bookstore. Please pay particular attention to the first section of the manual on sentence structure, mechanics, grammar, and usage.



Writing is an essential skill in Special Education because teachers and leaders communicate through writing to parents, administrators, and other professionals. In addition, special educators often teach writing to students with disabilities. Given this, candidates are expected to have mastered the skill of writing by the time they are admitted into the program. If you have difficulty with grammar, conventions and/or organization of content, you are expected to aggressively seek assistance and remediate the issue. The university and the college have many resources. If this is an area of concern, address it with your advisor and get the help you need as soon as possible. If faculty notice that your writing seems problematic and the issue is raised across courses, faculty may address it with a Plan of Assistance.

**Email.** University assigned student email accounts shall be one of the official means of communication of the University with all students (POL-U7100.02). Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their University assigned email account. Students who choose to forward messages from their University email account to another account are still responsible for all the information (including attachments) that was sent to the University email account. The University expects that such communications will be received and read in a timely fashion.

Email is a form of professional communication. You will want to frame all emails in a thoughtful manner. Remember that communication through email can often have a negative tone because the reader cannot hear the author’s inflection or see body language. Because of this, it is best to think carefully about how the message sounds and is likely to be received.



*When emailing staff with questions or requests, please include your W#.*

## Course Conduct

**Electronics in the classroom.** Special Education requires the full attention of *each student* during class time in order to prepare to work with our vulnerable populations. Students learn best in an environment free from distractions in which each and every student is participating and learning. Surfing the web or checking email during class time is not appropriate and may be cause for a case conference (*See below*). The program discourages the use of laptops or tablets during class time unless they are required as an accommodation through disability services. Check with your instructor about laptops for individual courses.

## Attendance

Attendance is critical for students in Special Education programs. Candidates may only miss a maximum of **20%** of any class without risking being dropped from the course. In addition, faculty have the option of lowering grades for missed sessions. Some courses require attendance because of the structure of the course and/or type of the content: therefore, some faculty may stipulate a more stringent attendance policy. Check the syllabus for the attendance policy. If you have vacation plans or important life events, please plan accordingly.

## Grades

**Grading Scale.** Faculty in SPED have agreed upon an approved grade scale across all courses with a SPED prefix. This grade scale does not apply to courses outside the department. The approved grade scale is below:

A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	88 – 89
B	83 – 87
B-	80 – 82
C+	78 – 79
C	75 – 77
C-	70 – 74
D+	67 – 69
D	65 – 66
D-	60 – 64
F	Below 60



**GPA.** Your grade point average (GPA) must be 2.75 or above for any quarter. If your grade point average falls below a 2.75 the first time, you must meet with your advisor or the Program Director and petition to address how you will improve your performance in the future. If your GPA falls a second time below 2.75, you must attend a case conference and you may be dropped from the program and be required to reapply. See your advisor if you have questions or concerns.

**C- grades.** Courses in the program must be passed with a grade of C or better. If a grade is below C, the course must be taken again. This could cause a delay in your program completion, so please see your advisor immediately for guidance.

**Grade-related policies.** The following policies are in place to help ensure student success as well as the success of P – 12 students by ensuring they have qualified teachers:

- Students repeating a course or practicum must wait until Phase III to register and will be allowed to register **ONLY** if space and/or a placement is available.
- Students may not repeat a course or practicum more than once.

### Case Conferences

On occasion, a student may have some difficulty (e.g., grades, communication, professional issue). At such times, a case conference may be arranged. The purpose of a case conference is to problem-solve and to determine a plan of action. If a case conference is called, **your attendance is required**. Your advisor is invited, as well as the instructor who called for the conference. In most cases, this is a positive experience that helps the student along the road to becoming a teacher. As part of this case conference, the student will complete and adhere to a contract.

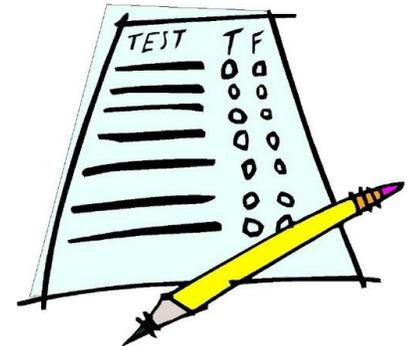


*If called, approach a case conference with a positive, problem-solving attitude. Expect that your faculty is working in your best interest.*

### Program Assessments

There are assessments throughout your program and at the end of the program. These assessments are **required by Washington State and our accreditation** to ensure program quality.

**Vocabulary Assessment.** This assessment matches vocabulary definitions with terms and is given **once each quarter**. It is used to measure your progress in content knowledge as you progress through your program. You are **NOT** expected to know very many of the terms when you first begin your program. The expectation is that you will know more and more terms as you proceed from quarter to quarter. This assessment does **NOT** factor into a course grade, but you will want to do your best since faculty use this assessment to inform them about student progress and program improvement.



**Performance Signature Assessment.** This assessment measures teaching skills you have gained as you move from one practicum to another. It is aligned with the edTPA (See below). As you learn to teach, your supervisors will fill out the rubric at the end of each practicum as to the degree of competence you have demonstrated across these skills. We have deliberately aligned the performance assessment with the edTPA in order to give you as much feedback about your teaching skills as possible so that you can have the skills necessary to pass the edTPA.

**Washington State Endorsement Content Tests:** Content tests must be taken **before** you start your internship(s). These assessments are specific to the endorsements you are earning. For example, there are three exams for those in the Special Education + Elementary Education program. Elementary Education content is covered by two sub-tests within the National Evaluation Series (NES). The other is a Special Education test and is called a Washington Educator Skills Test – Endorsement (WEST–E). Your advisor can help you select the correct tests.

**Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA).** The edTPA is a licensure assessment for those in certification programs: It is completed during your special education student teaching internship.

If you want to read more about assessments for certification, please see the following: Content Test Resource Site: [wce.wvu.edu/cert/content-test-resource-site](http://wce.wvu.edu/cert/content-test-resource-site); edTPA internship testing: [wce.wvu.edu/ofe/teacher-performance-assessment](http://wce.wvu.edu/ofe/teacher-performance-assessment)

## Practica

Special Education field experiences occur at various times throughout the program and include service-learning; informal visits to schools; practica; and internship. Some fieldwork may be included in non-SPED courses too (e.g., SCED 201, ELED 424, MATH 383, Art 398).

Students in the Exceptionality & Disability major also have practica (e.g., EXCE 442, 495).



Practica includes the scheduled number of hours per quarter at your site while you are engaged in your course work. The time for transportation to and from the site is not included in the number of hours. Transportation to practica is arranged by the candidate. The program encourages carpooling. In most cases students without transportation can arrange to carpool. If there is a problem with transportation, please see the course instructor.

Woodring programs may require the use of video observation tools in practicum and internship courses. If a video program is required, you will be advised to purchase a license through the WWU AS Bookstore. The current product used across several colleges is GoReact.

GoReact is an interactive platform for feedback, grading, and critiquing of video assignments.

If you are in a certification program, you will be required to track the location of your field experience, the setting, and the type of students. This is a CEC requirement to ensure that you have experience with various types of disabilities and in a variety of settings. You will also be required to track all of your hours and what you do during the **practicum and the designated service-learning courses**. You will hear more about tracking your hours during your initial orientations.

If you are in the Exceptionality & Disability major, you will arrange some of your own practicum with the assistance and approval of your advisor. You are not required to track your hours in the same manner as a student in a certification program.

**SPED 310 – Service Learning** (Included as part of the course requirements)

- Time Requirements: Two hours per week
- Orientation: Service Learning Orientation
- Focus: Experience working with students from underrepresented populations in middle school settings
- Placements: Arranged by the Woodring Service Learning Coordinator

**SPED 440 – Practicum I General Education** (4 cr)

- Time Requirements: Thursdays 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Orientation: First Thursday of the quarter
- Focus: Whole class instruction, one lesson per week, management skills, active participation in classroom
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 420, SPED 460
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor

**SPED 476 – Practicum II – Service Delivery Models** (1 cr)

- Time Requirements: Two hours per week to be arranged
- Orientation provided in SPED 474
- Focus: Observation of different types of service delivery models for students across different types of disabilities and locations
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 474
- Placements: Arranged by instructor

**SPED 480 - Special Education Practicum III: Reading Interventions** (3 cr)

- Time Requirements: Monday – Thursday 1.5 hours per day; 2 – hour Friday
- Orientation: First week of the quarter
- Focus: Small group management and reading instruction, 1-2 lessons per day
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor

**SPED 452 – Practicum IV – Behavior Assessment and Intervention**

- Time Requirements: Two hours per week
- Orientation: During class
- Focus: Observation for behavior planning
- Placements: Arranged by instructor

**SPED 489 Practicum VI – Individual/Group Interventions** (3 cr)

- Time Requirements: 8:00 – 12:30 two mornings per week.
- Orientation: First week of the quarter
- Focus: Whole class and small group instruction
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 486, SPED 487, SPED 488 (Final Block)
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor

## Final Block

If you are in a certification program, you will take Final Block. Final Block is the last quarter before student teaching and is usually SPED 486, 487, 488 & 489. Because of the amount of work required in Final Block, no other courses may be taken during this quarter.

Final Block includes a practica that will look similar to student teaching and three other rigorous courses. SPED 486: Case Studies is a course that provides information and practice for the Washington State edTPA. There is also a culminating project in Final Block that requires you to assess, teach, and report the progress of a child to a team of your peers. This project brings together all that you have learned throughout your program.

## Student Teaching/Internship

Congratulations, if you are thinking about internship, you are almost THERE! This is very exciting time. In only a quarter or two, you will officially be a teacher. Internship is NOT automatic. You must apply by the due dates posted by the Office of Field Experiences on their website at <https://wce.wwu.edu/ofe/sped/apply>. Usually students apply for internship two quarters in advance of their expected start date. You can find student teacher applications on the website. Pay close attention to due dates and procedures in preparation for internship.

**Please note all Special Education placements must be in Whatcom or Skagit counties.** If you are completing the SPED + ELED program you will have two, quarter-long internships. You will do your first quarter internship in a SPED placement, where you will complete the edTPA. Then you will complete an elementary education internship the next quarter.

You may petition to complete your elementary education internship out of the area: [https://esign.wwu.edu/forms/Woodring/wce\\_ofe\\_oaa\\_stu\\_teach\\_petiton\\_5.aspx?valid=true&ticket=ST-162632-cZihBWzy-UtIDLyVqQdhT9KqSyE-52ef9b783c65](https://esign.wwu.edu/forms/Woodring/wce_ofe_oaa_stu_teach_petiton_5.aspx?valid=true&ticket=ST-162632-cZihBWzy-UtIDLyVqQdhT9KqSyE-52ef9b783c65).

If you are in SPED + Content or SPED Early Childhood + Early Childhood, you have one, quarter-long internship in a Special Education placement.

If you are in the E & D major, you will arrange your internship through your faculty advisor. You will spend at least one quarter with an agency or organization.

**WA State Teacher Certification.** Before the start of your internship, if you are in a certification program, you will receive information regarding Washington State Teacher Certification. If you have additional questions or concerns, contact the Woodring Director of Certification, Peter Johnson at [peter.johnson@wwu.edu](mailto:peter.johnson@wwu.edu).

## Graduation Applications/Residency Certification Application

Information about graduation is on the university website. Generally you need to apply for your degree about 2 quarters before you will complete your program. You will be sent a degree/senior evaluation from SPED staff. Information and application for graduation information is posted at this link: [www.wwu.edu/registrar/degree\\_info/index.shtml](http://www.wwu.edu/registrar/degree_info/index.shtml)

## Scholarships

There are many scholarships available for students interested in becoming teachers. Many of these scholarships are through Woodring College of Education [wce.wwu.edu/scholarships/woodring-scholarships](http://wce.wwu.edu/scholarships/woodring-scholarships).

And many other scholarships are available through Western at [www.finaid.wwu.edu/scholarships/](http://www.finaid.wwu.edu/scholarships/). Please contact the Office of Financial Aid in order to find lists of scholarships available. Education is expensive and you deserve as much help as possible.

## Grievances

**Student complaints and grievances.** The grievance process has several steps and strict timelines. Procedures can be found in the WWU Catalog, Appendix F: <https://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=16&navoid=3744>

**When parents, friends or spouses get involved.** Sometimes, parents or spouses contact staff or a faculty member with a question or a complaint. Sometimes, this contact comes at the request of the student; other times, someone will contact the program without the student's knowledge. Please be aware that even though a parent may be paying college expenses, faculty and staff are prohibited by federal law from discussing you and/or your progress with **anyone** without signed permission. The federal law is called Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). If you wish for your parent to have contact with faculty, you may fill out a form. Please be aware that the form is not a blanket release. It allows for only the one contact. Each contact requires a new form. Please see Ms. Cahill regarding this form if you need it. If you would like to know more about FERPA, you can find that information at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html>

## Policy

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

Western Washington University students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the policy and procedures regarding academic dishonesty as set forth in the WWU Academic Honesty Policy and Procedure, see Appendix D of the University Catalog or WWU Policy PRO-U2100.02: <https://policy.wwu.edu/POL-U2100.02-Ensuring-Academic-Honesty.pdf>

### **Diversity Statement**

Western Washington University is an institution that stands for equality of educational opportunity and it reaffirms its commitment to creating a campus environment free of discrimination and bias. It therefore expects all faculty, staff, and students, when representing the university to its public, to show respect and appreciation for human diversity. Any actions or language that reinforce inappropriate, outdated, or demeaning attitudes or assumptions about persons or groups based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, marital status, or sexual orientation are not acceptable.

### **Reasonable Accommodation Policy**

It is the policy of Western Washington University to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical, sensory, or mental limitations of qualified individuals except where such accommodation would impose undue hardship on the institution. To request accommodation, students must contact WWU Disability Access Center at 360-650-3844 or <https://disability.wwu.edu/>

**Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It is illegal and prohibited by both federal and state laws. Western Washington University is committed to providing an environment in which students can work and study free from sexual harassment or sexual intimidation. Any student who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment, whether on campus or while representing the University off campus, is encouraged to report incidents to the course instructor, supervisor, or the Center for Equal Opportunity (OM 375, 650-3306). All students should be aware that the University is prepared to take action to prevent and eliminate such behavior.

**Religious Holidays**

Western's student body includes representation from more than 37 countries. This reflects the global diversity in its population. One of the ways this variety in cultures can be represented is through religion. It is important for students and instructors to be sensitive to individual student's religious obligations regarding holidays. Faculty and students are expected to work together to make reasonable accommodations for work or class time that may be missed because of holiday observances.

**Counseling, Health, and Wellness**

Being a healthy college student means having confidence and energy to live each day to its fullest. In part, good health is up to you: how you live your life and care for your mind and body. Counseling, Health and Wellness Services is dedicated to supporting your efforts to keeping well and to caring for you when you are sick. Their goal is to teach students ways to care about their own health and to maintain their own well-being so that they may achieve their academic, personal, and career goals. There are a variety of services available to students, which you are encouraged to utilize, that are dedicated to providing quality physical, mental and emotional health care.

**SPED Listserv**

If you haven't already done so, join the free "sped" E-mail listserv. This is a requirement for all majors in special education programs and should be done upon acceptance in the program. Important information regarding advising, meetings, class and practicum changes, and special events are posted on the listserv.

To **subscribe** to the SPED listserv:

Send an e-mail to: [listproc@lists.wvu.edu](mailto:listproc@lists.wvu.edu)

No Subject

Message: subscribe sped First name Last name

Example: subscribe sped Susan Cahill

**WWU Email: Policy Statement**

University assigned student email accounts shall be one of the official means of communication of the university with all students. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via the university assigned email account. Students who choose to forward messages from the university email account are still responsible for all the information (including attachments) that was sent to the university email account. Official university email accounts are created for all enrolled students. A student must activate his/her account in order to access university correspondence.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I address faculty?

In order to prepare for your future career, which requires professional courtesies, address faculty by their title and surname if they hold a doctorate, for example, Dr. Brown. If the faculty has a master's degree, then it is Ms. or Mr., for example, Ms. Smith.

### How do I declare a major?

When you accept your offer of admission you will be entered into that major. If you change majors you may be asked to fill out a Major Declaration Card. See Ms. Mitchell for assistance.

### Can I graduate between internships?

Due to teacher certification rules at the State level, you will not be eligible to graduate before you complete your entire program, including both internships if you are in the SPED + ELED Dual Endorsement Program.



### What happens if I fail a course in my program?

If you are in a teacher certification program and you fail a class or earn a grade below a C, you are required to retake the class. If this occurs, see your advisor for help to rearrange your Plan of Study.

### What happens if a note for improvement is in my file?

It is very important to our faculty that you have every opportunity for success. Sometimes, this means relevant and timely feedback. If there is a reason for concern, you will be contacted. If there is another or a repeat concern, your advisor will be notified for follow-up. This is meant to provide assistance in moving forward in the program and gain the professional skills necessary to become a teacher.

### Do I have to have my own transportation?

You will need transportation to the school sites. In some cases, if several students are going out to the same school for a practicum at the same time and you can arrange to carpool.

### Can I choose my practicum placements?

If you are in a certification program, this is not possible because these course placements are arranged through school district administrators. If you are in the Exceptionality & Disability major, you may arrange your own practicum with the advice and approval of your advisor.

### Can I choose my own internship placements?

You may request an internship placement. This is not guaranteed.

### Do I have to have completed all my GURs and Pre-Requisites before I begin the program?

The short answer is no. However, if you have several GURs remaining, they may extend your time to degree or you may need to take the GURs during summer quarter. Your program is full of required courses, and there is little room for other courses if you want to finish on time.

### Can I use my private email account?

University policy is that all university business is conducted through the WWU email accounts. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via the university assigned email.

account. Students who choose to forward messages from the university email account are still responsible for all the information (including attachments) that was sent to the university email account. The Department will send out information to the WWU account only.

**Why do I have to pay so many fees for education courses?**

Unfortunately, learning to become a teacher is expensive. Many courses use materials or services that are expensive to purchase. In addition, many of the materials that are used for teaching are damaged because of heavy use from quarter to quarter. Without fees, you would not have access to quality materials for your use. We are very conscious of the cost to you and do our best to keep costs down.

**How do I unsubscribe to the listserv after I've completed my degree program?**

To **unsubscribe** to the special ed listserv:

Send an e-mail to: [listproc@lists.wvu.edu](mailto:listproc@lists.wvu.edu)

No Subject

Message: unsubscribe sped First name Last name

Example: unsubscribe sped Susan Cahill