Special Education Handbook  
AY 2017 – 2018  
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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 career. We hope this handbook will be helpful in providing some information that will guide you, not only as you begin your journey, but will inform you of important information throughout your time in Woodring. It is full of useful TIPS.

We have organized this handbook so that topics that are closely linked are grouped together. For instance, Plan of Study is located directly after Advising because these two topics have some commonality.

For the best result, read through the handbook before your initial mandatory 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 each academic year. Be sure you have the most up-to-date version.

As you read through this handbook, think about what ELSE you would like to know so that we can include the information in the next edition.

Woodring’s Mission and Vision

The Department agrees with and supports the mission and vision of Woodring College of Education. Please read this carefully.

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
• 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. Send an email back to Teacher Education Admission Office. You have ten days to respond.

- Contact Debbie Gramm (Debbie.gramm@wwu.edu) for your blue major card. This card MUST be filled out and submitted before you can register for classes. Ms. Gramm is in the main office (MH 201A), and additional contact information is under the section “Office Availability.”

- First quarter SPED courses are predetermined. You have already received information about registration for your first courses. 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.** The courses below are good choices for those students in the **SPED + ELED option:**
  - GURs that need to be completed
  - MATH 112 if requirements have not been met
  - SCED 201 if not completed previously
  - LING 201 if not completed previously

- If you are in the **SPED + Content** or **Early Childhood Special Education options,** contact Susan Cahill for further information. Her contact information is under “Office Availability.”

- If you are on campus before orientation, please stop by Debbie Gramm’s office in MH 201A and meet her. She will take your photo for your files in order for faculty to recognize you, especially when you ask for letters of recommendation. The photo is not used for any other purposes. (If you are not on campus before orientation, she can take your photo at orientation.)

Here is a checklist to make sure you have completed everything necessary to begin your program:
✓ Respond to your admittance email,
✓ Begin your necessary clearances,
✓ Contact Ms. Gramm for completion of your major declaration card,
✓ Visit with an advisor if necessary,
✓ Visit with Ms. Gramm for photos if you are on campus,
✓ Register for your courses (You will received overrides for your SPED courses. **If you are in a Teacher Preparation major you are not allowed to register for the SPED courses until your fingerprints have been cleared.**)
✓ Attend all three mandatory orientations,
✓ Take a deep breath and eat chocolate.

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 a mandatory orientation.

**About the Department**

The Department of Special Education and Education Leadership has three areas: (a) Special Education, (b) Educational Administration, and (c) Compass to Campus. You have been admitted into Special Education.

**Options in Special Education.** The Special Education Program has several Bachelor of Arts in Education (BAE) options:

a) Special Education + Elementary Education, BAE;
b) Special Education + Content, BAE;
c) Early Childhood Special Education P-3 + Early Childhood P-3, BAE; and
d) Exceptionality and Disability, BAE.

All options except the Exceptionality and Disability, BAE lead to teacher certification and endorsements.

We also offer a Special Education endorsement program for teachers who are already certified and a post-baccalaureate program for those who have already completed a BA or BS. The Endorsement and Post Baccalaureate are specialized programs, but much in this handbook will still apply.

If you want to read more about the various options, the program descriptions, as well as other important handouts, are located on the counter across from Miller Hall 201A.
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.
The office phone number is (360) 650-3330.
The fax number is (360) 650-4845.
General email: SpEd@wwu.edu
Open 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Program Manager. Susan Cahill
Office: MH 201D
Office phone: (360) 650-3981
Email: susan.cahill@wwu.edu

She is the go-to person for the following:
- Assist with problems in registration if your advisor is unavailable,
- Conduct degree evaluations if your advisor is unavailable,
- Provide brief advising,
- Schedule case conferences,
- Appointments with the chair.

Program Coordinator. Debbie Gramm
Office: MH 201A
Office phone: (360) 650-3330
Email: Debbie.Gramm@wwu.edu

She can help you with the following:
- Check out training materials,
- Complete major declaration cards (Blue Cards),
- File plans of study,
- Check out student files for advising appointments,
- Overrides for courses at the direction of faculty,

Ms. Gramm also has a stash of chocolates for stress reduction.

Work Study Students. Work-study students work in the lobby outside MH 201A and there to help you. They can accept assignments and materials for faculty. Usually a work-study student can assist you up until 5:00 p.m.
**Faculty.** Faculty members have many roles on and off campus. They usually are not available during summer or university breaks. If you want to visit with a faculty member, schedule time during their office hours to ensure they will be available or send them an email, requesting times that may be convenient for them.

**Department Chair.** Your department chair is Dr. Gail Coulter. She 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 ensure a specific time, please schedule an appointment through Ms. Cahill.

*The Department is a NO Fragrance Zone. The reason for this is that there are several people in the vicinity who are highly allergic to perfume or scents in oils and lotions. For the health of your friends, faculty, and staff, please adhere to this policy.*

*The workroom (MH201B) is for faculty and staff only. The reason for this is that it houses confidential information. Please respect this area. If you need something in the workroom, request it from Ms. Gramm or a work-study student.*

**Orientations**

**Mandatory Initial orientations.** There are a total of three mandatory orientations before you begin your program. For example, all students attend the Woodring Orientation, the SPED Program Orientation, and Service Learning Orientation.

The orientations are mandatory because they provide you with important information about the college and Washington State requirements. Some of the information will be more or less pertinent to your particular situation, depending upon your specific program. For example, all students will need some type of clearance to work in schools and agencies, but the specific type of clearance may be program dependent. Some of the topics covered that apply to all students regardless of the program are the following:

a) Blood-borne pathogens,
b) Sexual harassment prevention, and
c) Professionalism in the field.

If you cannot attend the required orientations, it could delay your program start date for up to a full quarter. Please, plan accordingly.

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

In addition, some orientations such as SPED 480 (Reading Practicum) are similar to a workshop and will provide you training for your practicum setting when you are enrolled in that course. 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 these courses.

**Fingerprinting and Clearances**

You are required to have up-to-date background checks, including appropriate fingerprinting and/or clearances before you begin your program as well as throughout the program. Candidates may not report to schools without the appropriate background checks even if they have had prior clearances. **It is your responsibility** to ensure that these clearances are in order at all times. The consequences of not having up-to-date background checks is that you will be removed from the practicum and could be dropped from the program.

Different programs require different background checks mandated by Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Early Childhood Special Education + Early Childhood Education requires an clearance by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) which must also be reported to OSPI. Please pay close attention to the type of clearances you need for your program. Endorsement and post-baccalaureate candidates also require OSPI clearances.

*Digital fingerprints require less time, about 1-2 weeks, for clearance than traditional methods*

*If you have difficulty with clearances or questions about clearances, contact Lisa Burn (360-650-3388) in the Woodring Certification Office MH 150.*

If you are not in a teacher certification program, the background check is usually done through the school or the public agency. If you are in a certification program and have questions about fingerprinting and/or the various clearances, you can contact Lisa.Burn@wwu.edu. If you are in the E & D, BAE and have questions about clearances, you can contact kate.foster@wwu.edu who works with WWU Service Learning.

*Your fingerprints and clearances expire after two years. It is up to you to know when your clearances expire and to take steps well in advance of that date to ensure no lapse. Remember, it can take up to a few months to get fingerprints and clearances.*

*Often fingerprints and clearances just before Final Block. Be sure to check to ensure no lapse during internships.*

**Advising**

Advisor. 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 through the program. Your advisor will assist you in tracking the additional program requirements. Make an appointment with your advisor each quarter. Set this appointment up well in advance.
You will be assigned an advisor at orientation. This advisor is the only advisor you need and will help you with your plan of study as well as provide information for all of your courses, even courses in math, science, or humanities.

Before contacting anyone else about any issue, visit with your advisor first. If you need additional assistance, your advisor can direct you to the appropriate contact. If your advisor is not available and you need immediate assistance, contact Ms. Cahill, and she will direct you to the appropriate person.

Your advisor can be an important person in your life, especially if you want a letter of recommendation. He or she can provide important program information and information about the college, university, and any support that may be available. Your advisor is the main person to talk to about any areas of concern, including courses that may be challenging or life circumstances that interfere with your education. In fact, before taking any action that could delay your education, such as dropping a course or leaving school, consult with your advisor.

**Changing advisors.** There are some circumstances in which a change can be helpful. For example, if you determine that you want to switch programs, a different advisor may have more information about the new program than did your initial advisor. Additionally, sometimes you may find that you have a common interest with a different faculty member. In such cases, visit Susan Cahill.

*Meet with your advisor at least once per quarter.*

**Plan of Study**

If you have been admitted to the Special Education and Elementary Education, BAE, you will have a plan of study at the Special Education orientation. You do not need to fill out an additional plan because the program courses follow a logical sequence and build upon each other. For your benefit, follow the course sequence for special education courses in your plan of study as closely as possible. Of course, we know that life circumstances do happen. In those cases, your advisor can help you adjust your plan.

The Exceptionality and Disability, BAE; the SPED plus Content, BAE; and Special Education Early Childhood is somewhat different. You will have an outline 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 endorsement is more individualized.

*Follow the plan of study for the SPED courses as close as possible. If you need to deviate from the plan, ask assistance from your advisor!*

*Any change to your Plan of Study must be filed with Ms. Gramm. After you and your advisor have agreed upon a change, take the revised plan to Ms. Gramm. She will make a copy for you, update her master record, and put the new plan in your file.*
All SPED courses require overrides. Your plan of study must be up-to-date and filed in order to receive the correct overrides.

You are ultimately responsible for ensuring that your plan of study includes all required courses, so double check your plan.

Professionalism

You are entering a profession that requires knowledge and skills of working with teachers, students, families, and administrators. You will need a high degree of professionalism to interact in so many different capacities. 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. You can find the professional documents that you are required to sign at your initial orientation. These professional documents are enforced throughout your program. You can find the Professionalism Document as well as the Rubric used for professional under Documents located on the Special Education Homepage.

Students with Disabilities

We welcome students with disabilities into Special Education programs. This is because many teachers with disabilities often have a unique understanding of the abilities and difficulties that children with disabilities may encounter in the school system. ADA and Section 504 require that programs make reasonable accommodations in order for students with disabilities to meet program requirements. In order to access these supports, students with disabilities must go through DisAbility Resource Center (DRS). You can find contact information at http://www.wwu.edu/drs/

The process in order to set up accommodations follows:

1. The student first seeks assistance from DRS.
2. DRS meets with the student for the purpose of identifying reasonable accommodation for didactic coursework.
3. The student determines who are the instructors. 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. The student logs into MyDRS and requests faculty notification emails.
5. It is the student’s responsibility to set up a meeting with the instructor if necessary for didactic courses.
6. Instructors may not provide accommodations that have not been authorized by DRS.
7. If the course is a practicum or a field experience, advance notice is required. Students with disabilities must contact DRS by the second week of the preceding quarter to request accommodations for practicum or field experience. DRS will facilitate an interactive process between the student and the department.
8. Arranging for DRS support in a timely manner is a professional responsibility.
Additional Program Requirements

Special Education programs are guided by the standards for 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 because they are major themes emphasized by CEC. Therefore, the programs have additional requirements. The requirements are the following: (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. Failure to do so can result in dismissal from the program or a delay graduation. The document can be located under Documents located on the Special Education Home Page.

Program Expectations

Communication

Oral communication. Students are expected to communicate orally, clearly and concisely, using Standard English. In the field of education, students will use oral communication in a professional manner almost on a daily basis. It is important to hone communication skills at each opportunity.

Written communication. Written papers submitted for courses should follow Publication Manual for 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. If a special education teacher does not have these skills mastered, s/he cannot teach it to students. 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 or conventions and/or organization of content, you are expected to aggressively seek assistance and remediate the problems at the earliest opportunity. 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 writing seems problematic for the student and the issue is raised across courses, faculty may address it with a plan of assistance.

Email. 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 for the author of emails to think carefully about how the message sounds and is likely to be received.
Press send only after reviewing emails carefully for tone, accuracy, content, and mechanics.

Review your presence on social media. Principals and district administrators often check social media, especially during the hiring process.

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 most 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 is 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 miss only a total of 20% of any class without being dropped from the course. This policy includes summer courses. In addition, faculty have the option of lowering grades for missed sessions. Therefore, if you have vacation plans or important life events, please plan accordingly.

Grades

Grading Scale. The expert knowledge and skills that a teacher needs in order to teach children with disabilities and children at risk for school failure exceed the demands of the standard grade point average. 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. This standard ensures that candidates are gaining the necessary expertise to pass stringent national and state assessments as well as to teach children who require expert teaching. The approved grade scale is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93 – 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90 – 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>86 – 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>84 – 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>82 – 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>80 – 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>75 – 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>73 – 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**GPA.** Your grade point average (GPA) must be 2.75 or above for any quarter, including the quarter in which a student is accepted in the program. If your grade point average falls below a 2.75 the first time, you may petition to remain in the program. If the GPA falls a second time below 2.75, you are automatically dropped from the program and must 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 falls below C, the course must be taken again. This could cause a delay in your program, so please see your advisor immediately for guidance.

Be aware that Western has a no grade replacement policy for repeating classes. That means that the registrar’s office will still factor in the low grade for your overall GPA even after you retake the class and receive a better grade.

**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:

- Bellingham campus students must successfully complete SPED 420, SPED 440, AND SPED 460 before being allowed to take subsequent teacher education courses.
- Students repeating a course or practicum must wait until Phase III to register and will be allowed to register ONLY if space and/or 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 for the benefit of the student. If a case conference is called, **your attendance is required.** Your advisor is invited, as well as the instructor who called 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. The office arranges case conferences.

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

There are assessments throughout your program and at the end of the program. These assessments are *required by Washington State and our national accreditation bodies* to ensure program quality. We are discussing these assessments with you so that you are aware of them and will not be surprised.

The courses and experiences will help prepare you to take the assessments. **Candidates’ pass rates for programs are above the state average. We do not expect that you will have difficulty with these assessments, but you will want to pay attention in your courses to prepare for them.**

**Program Assessments**

Our national accreditation bodies and Washington State require that we administer multiple assessments at various times throughout the program to ensure that you are meeting program outcomes.

**Content Signature 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 will given an assessment with 100 words and you will match the words to the definitions. You are **NOT** expected to know very many of the terms when you first begin your program, but you are expected to know more and more terms as you proceed from quarter to quarter. This assessment does **NOT** factor into any course grade, but you will want to do your best since faculty use this assessment to inform them about students’ progress and identify those who may need additional assistance.

**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. Included in this is the Disposition Assessment. This is filled out by faculty and cooperating teachers at various times throughout your program. This measure focuses upon professionalism.

**CEC Program Assessments.** The Council for Exceptional Children, our primary guiding professional body, requires a number of assessments throughout Special Education programs. These assessments are already part of your program and are linked to course assignments; therefore, you are not expected to do anything additional. If you do not pass an assignment that is a program assessment at least at the sufficient level, your advisor will be notified, and you will be required to complete the assignment again. Passing program assessments are an expectation for program completion. Not passing a required CEC program assessment could impact time to degree.
Licensure Assessments for those in certification programs (End of program assessments) Washington State requires a variety of assessments at the end of your program. These assessments are specific to the type of certification you are seeking. For example, there are three exams for licensure for those in the SPED + Elementary Education, BAE. Two tests are through National Evaluation Series (NES). The other is the Washington Educator Skills Test – Endorsement (WEST –E). Your advisor will help you select the correct tests.

Finally, you must pass the performance assessment called the Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA). This is completed during your special educator internship (student teaching).

If you want to read more about assessments for certification in general, please see the following: http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/teacher/teachertesting.aspx.

Practica

Field experiences occur at various times throughout the program and include service-learning, informal visits to schools, practica, and internships. Some informal field-work is often included in other courses (e.g., ELED 424, MATH sequence, Art 398) and are subject to change; therefore, be alert and flexible.

There are six official practica and field experiences for candidates in SPED endorsement programs, about one per quarter. In addition, Science Education 490 is a practicum for Science Education 480. Students in E & D, BAE also have practica (e.g., SPED 442).

Transportation to practica is arranged by the candidate. The program does encourage car-pooling. In most cases students without transportation can arrange to car pool. If there is a problem with transportation, please see the course instructor.

If you are in an endorsement program, you will be required to track location of your field experience, setting, and type of students. This requirement is a Council for Exceptional Children requirement to ensure that you have experiences across all types of disabilities and in a variety of settings. It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you have completed all the required settings. Not having the variety of experiences could delay your graduation. 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 E & D, BAE, you will arrange 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 one of the endorsement programs.
Because practica are centered in schools in the community or in agencies rather than on campus, it's important to include travel time in your schedule when taking a practicum. As long as you don't register for a class that is scheduled immediately before or immediately following your practicum, you'll have time. For example, if your practicum is from 9:00-1:00 on Monday and Wednesdays, don't register for an 8:00 class or a 1:00 class on those days. A brief outline of the practica for some of the certification courses are listed below.

**SPED 310 – Service Learning** (Included as part of a course)
- Time Requirements: Two hours per week
- Orientation: Service Learning Orientation
- Focus: Experience working with students from underrepresented populations in middle school settings
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 310
- Placements: Arranged by the Service Learning

**SPED 440 – Practicum I General Education** (4cr)
- Time Requirements: Thursdays 8:30 – 3:30
- 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** (1cr)
- Time Requirements: Two hours per week to be arranged
- Orientation: SPED 474
- Focus: Observation of different types of services for students across types of disabilities and location
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 472
- Placements: Arranged by Practicum Placement Supervisor

**SPED 480 Special Education Practicum III: Individual/Group Intervention, Reading** (3cr)
- Time Requirements: Monday – Thursday 1.5 hours per day; 2 – hour Friday seminar
- Orientation: First week of quarter Friday and Saturday workshop
- Focus: Small group reading instruction, one to two lessons per day small group management skills
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 483, SPED 472
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor
- Note: Avoid scheduling other morning courses
SPED 477 – Practicum IV – Behavior Assessment and Interv. (1cr)
- Time Requirements: Two hours per week
- Orientation: SPED 472
- Focus: Observation for behavior plan
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 472
- Placements: Arranged by instructor

SPED 489 Practicum VI – Individual/Group Interventions (3cr)
- 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 484, SPED 485, SPED 486
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor
- Note: No other courses may be scheduled.

**Final Block**

Final Block. If you are in an endorsement program, you will take Final Block. Final Block is scheduled during the last quarter before student teaching. Before enrolling in Final Block courses, you are required to have your clearances current through your student teaching. Our program manager checks to ensure all clearances are current through internships before overrides are provided.

Final Block is a very busy quarter because it prepares you for your internships. Final Block includes a practica that will look similar to student teaching and two rigorous courses. Furthermore, Final Block includes Case Studies SPED 486. Case Studies is a course that provides information and practice for your Washington State qualifying assessment for your endorsement, edTPA (See more about edTPA). Because of the amount of work required in Final Block, no other courses may be taken during that quarter. There is a culminating project in Final Block that requires you to assess, teach, and report the progress of the child to a team. 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 for you. Only a couple of more quarters and you are a TEACHER! Internship is NOT automatic. You must apply by the due dates posted by the Office of Field Experiences on their website at wce.wwu.edu/ofe. Usually students apply for internship two quarters in advance of their expected start date. You can find student teacher applications on their website.

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 do the edTPA and then you will do the next quarter in an elementary placement. If you are in SPED + Content, you have one internship. In either case, you will work closely with the staff in the
Office of Field Experiences. Please be prepared for orientations and lots of information. For more information about internships and opportunities, please see the following: https://wce.wwu.edu/ofe/internship-materials.

If you are in the E & D, BAE, you will arrange your internship through your advisor. You will spend one full-time quarter in one agency or organization and learn the ropes. This is an exciting time for you. You are almost THERE!

**Pay close attention to dates. It is absolutely necessary to follow all dates and procedures for preparation for internship.**

**Check your email every day for important notifications.**

**Make sure that you attend the Mandatory Internship Orientation. This is absolutely crucial to prepare for success.**

**Elementary student teaching can be completed internationally. If you are interested and qualify, contact Laura Wellington, Director Office of Field Experience. International placements must have departmental approval.**

**Certification.** Before the start of your internship, you will receive information about certification. Refer to your Student Teaching Handbook that you will receive at Internship Orientation. If you have additional questions or concerns, then contact the Certification Office, Peter Johnson at peter.johnson@wwu.edu.

**Graduation Applications/Residency Certification Application**

Information about graduation is on the university website. Again, there are many dates to consider. You will need a degree evaluation from your advisor or from Ms. Cahill. Information and application for graduation is posted at this link: http://www.wwu.edu/registrar/bach_information/index.shtml. An on-line degree application can also be found at this site.

**Scholarships**

There are many scholarships available for students interested in becoming teachers. Some of these scholarships are through Woodring College of Education. Many other scholarships are available through Western at http://www.finaid.wwu.edu/scholarships/. Some students are not even aware that these scholarships exist. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid in order to find extensive lists of scholarships available. Education is expensive and you deserve as much help as possible.

For more information about scholarships in Woodring, please see the following: https://wce.wwu.edu/scholarships/woodring-scholarships.
Grievances

**Student complaints and grievances.** Grievances have several steps and timelines determined by the university. The link is included for more information. [http://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=2093](http://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=2093).

**When parents or spouses get involved.** Sometimes, parents or spouses contact a faculty member with a question or a complaint. Sometimes, this contact comes at the request of the student; other times, a parent or spouse 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 parents or anyone without signed permission. This 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](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 Bulletin). [http://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=1521](http://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=1521).

**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 Resources for Students at 360-650-3844 or [www.wwu.edu/depts/drs/](http://www.wwu.edu/depts/drs/)

**Sexual Harassment**
Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It is illegal, and is 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 and emotional
health care.

**SPED Listserv**
Attention all Special Education majors:
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 practica changes, and special
events is posted on the listserv.

**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 begin to frame your future career, requiring professional courtesies, you 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?
Declaring a major is important because you cannot register for classes until the “Blue Card” is filed. See Ms. Gramm for the Blue Card and for assistance.

Can I graduate between internships?
No. This option is no longer available due to Washington State requirements.

What happens if I fail a class?
If you fail a class or have 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 all of our faculty that you have every opportunity for success. Sometimes, this means relevant and timely feedback. If there is a reason for concern, the instructor/supervisor/advisor will contact you either in person and/or by email and copy sent to the program coordinator. 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 as you gain the professional skills necessary to become a teacher.

How many practica do I have?
This depends upon your program. See a discussion about practica above.

Do I have to have my own transportation?
You will need transportation to the school sites. In many cases, a number of students are going out to the same school for a practicum at the same time. Sometimes you can arrange to carpool.

Can I choose my practica placements?
If you are in an endorsement program, this is not possible because these courses are arranged through districts. If you are in the E & D, BAE, yes 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 before I begin the program?
The short answer is no. However, there is a caveat. If you have GURs remaining, it may extend your time to degree or you may need to take the GURs during the summer quarter.
Your program is compact with many 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. Therefore, you must maintain and check that account regularly. Faculty 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 that are expensive to purchase. In addition, many of the materials are lost or damaged just 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 that cost down.