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Special Education Student Handbook
AY 2018 - 2019

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 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. Send an email back to the Teacher Education Admission Office. You have ten days to respond.
- Contact Debbie Gramm ([Debbie.gramm@wwu.edu](mailto:Debbie.gramm@wwu.edu)) to fill out a 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 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 email,
- Begin your necessary clearances, (see instruction on the next page)
- Contact Ms. Gramm for completion of your major declaration card,
- Visit with an advisor if necessary,
- 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,
- Sign up for the Special Education listserve (see page 19)
- 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 new student orientation.

Fingerprinting and Clearances

You are required to have up-to-date background checks, including appropriate fingerprinting and/or clearances before you begin your program and maintain them 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 valid 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. Teacher education programs clearances are 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 may also require clearances.

Digital fingerprints require less time, about 1-2 weeks, for clearance than the traditional ink and paper method.

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 the E & D, BAE and have questions about clearances, you can contact 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.
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 four 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 majors except the Exceptionality and Disability, BAE lead to teacher certification and two 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 Bachelor’s degree. Both the Endorsement and Post Baccalaureate are specialized programs, but much of this handbook will still apply.

If you want to read more about the various options, the program descriptions are on our website ([https://wce.wwu.edu/sped/special-education](https://wce.wwu.edu/sped/special-education)) as well as 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.

**Program Coordinator**, Debbie Gramm  
Email: Debbie.Gramm@wwu.edu  
The office phone number is (360) 650-3330.  
The fax number is (360) 650-4845.  
General email: Special.Education@wwu.edu  
**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
Susan 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 brief advising,
- Schedule case conferences,
- Make appointments with the Department Chair.

Debbie 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,
- Input 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 are there to help you. They can accept assignments and materials for faculty, and help you checkout training materials.

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 both of you.

Department Chair. Your department chair is Dr. Chuck 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 ensure a specific time, please schedule an appointment through Ms. Cahill (MH 201D).

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 and 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. If you need something in the workroom, request it from Ms. Gramm or a work-study student.
Orientations

**Mandatory New Student Orientations.** There are a total of three mandatory orientations before you begin your program. They are held the day before classes start. All new students attend the Woodring Orientation, the SPED Program Orientation, and the Service Learning Orientation.

The orientations are mandatory because they provide important information about Department, College and Washington State requirements. Some of the information will be more or less pertinent to your particular situation and program. For example, all students will need some type of clearance to work in schools and agencies, but the specific type of clearance is program dependent.

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

- We will take your photo for our 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.

**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.

In addition, 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 these courses.

Advising

Advisor

You will be assigned a faculty advisor at orientation. Your advisor 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.

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 also assist you in tracking additional program requirements. Make an appointment with your advisor each quarter. Set this appointment up well in advance.

Before contacting anyone else about any issue, visit with your advisor. 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 help you or
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 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 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 switch programs, a different advisor may have more information about the new
program than your initial advisor. Additionally, sometimes you may find that you have a
common interest with a different faculty member. In such cases, visit Ms. 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, or
Special Education Early Childhood and Early Childhood, BAE you will be given 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 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; and SPED plus Content BAEs 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.

Follow the Plan of Study 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 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 professionalism under Admitted Students / Additional Program Documents located on the Special Education Homepage.

Students with Disabilities

We welcome students with disabilities into Special Education programs. This is because 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 for Students (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 the 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. 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 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. Failure to do so can result in dismissal from the program or a delay graduation. You will receive a copy of the “Additional Program Requirements” document at Orientation. The document can also be located under Admitted Students / Additional Program Documents located on the Special Education Homepage.

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 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. If a special education teacher does not have these skills mastered, they 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, 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 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 only miss up to 20% of any class without being dropped from the course as a department policy. This policy includes summer courses. 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. The syllabus will guide the attendance criteria for any particular class. 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93 – 94</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.

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.
Program 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 well 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.

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 be 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 a 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 a 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, 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 endorsement(s) you are seeking. For example, there are three exams for those in the Special Education + Elementary Education, BAE. Two tests are regarding Elementary Education content and are administered by National Evaluation Series (NES). The other is a Special Education test and is called a 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, please see the following: Additional State endorsement testing information can be found here: wce.wwu.edu/cert/content-test-resource-site Information on internship testing is found here: wce.wwu.edu/ofe/teacher-performance-assessment

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. Students in Exceptionality & Disability, BAE also have practica (e.g., SPED 442, 495).

Practica includes the scheduled number of hours per quarter at your site while your 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 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 a certification program, you will be required to track the 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 Exceptionality & Disability, 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 or community agencies rather than on campus, it's important to include travel time in your schedule when taking a practicum. Try not to register for a class that is scheduled immediately before or immediately following a practicum. 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 some of the practica are following.

**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
- Placements: Arranged by 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 and first Friday and Saturday workshop
- Focus: Small group reading instruction, one to two lessons per day small group management skills
- Concurrent Courses: SPED 479
- Placements: Arranged by the instructor
- Note: Avoid scheduling other morning courses
SPED 452 – Practicum IV – Behavior Assessment and Interv. (1cr, included as part of the SPED 452)
- Time Requirements: Two hours per week
- Orientation: During class
- Focus: Observation for behavior plan
- 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

If you are in a certification program, you will take Final Block. Final Block is scheduled during the last quarter before student teaching.

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 other two rigorous courses. Final Block also includes Case Studies - SPED 486. Case Studies is a course that provides information and practice for the Washington State 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 time. 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/office-field-experiences. Usually students apply for internship two quarters in advance of their expected start date. You can find student teacher applications on their website.

Please note all SPED 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 and then you will complete an elementary education internship the next quarter.
If you are in SPED + Content, you have one internship in a SPED placement. 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/apply-student-teach.

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

- 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 out of the area or even internationally.
  Contact Laura Wellington, Director Office of Field Experience. International placements must have departmental approval.

**Certification.** Before the start of your internship, if you are in a licensure program, 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, contact the Woodring Director of Certification, Peter Johnson at peter.johnson@wwu.edu.

**Graduation Applications/Residency Certification Application**

Information about graduation is on the university website. Generally you need to for your degree about 2 quarters before you will complete your program. You will need a degree evaluation from your advisor or from Ms. Cahill. Information and application for graduation information is posted at this link: www.wwu.edu/registrar/degree_info/index.shtml

**Scholarships**

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

And many other scholarships are available through Western at 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.
Grievances

Student complaints and grievances. Grievances have several steps and timelines are determined by the university. Procedures can be found in the WWU Catalog, Appendix F: https://catalog.wwu.edu/content.php?catoid=14&navoid=2895

When parents, friends 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, 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. 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

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 Resources for Students at 360-650-3844 or 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.

To **subscribe** to the special ed listserv:
Send an e-mail to:  listproc@lists.wwu.edu
No Subject
Message: subscribe sped Yourname Lastname
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 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?
Due to changing 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 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 a certification 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, they may extend your time to degree or you may need to take the GURs during the 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 that cost 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.wwu.edu
No Subject
Message: unsubscribe sped Yourname Lastname
Example: unsubscribe sped Susan Cahill