

SPECIAL EDUCATION, BSE

Special Education is for students who want to work with children and youth, particularly those with disabilities. Graduates of the program have almost 100% job placement, with opportunities in Wisconsin and nationwide.

Watch what students in Special Education have to say about the program (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsRvdf1bmao>).

Students pursuing Special Education can choose from four certification options, all completed in a four-semester sequence that includes coursework, field experiences, and starts each fall.

CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

Special Education Cross-Categorical K-12 (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-special-education-cross-categorical-K-12-bse/>)

This program prepares educators to serve as resources and advocates for individuals with disabilities and their families. Graduates will be equipped to lead, collaborate, and work creatively within and outside of schools to create inclusive educational experiences that improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families. Coursework and field experiences focus on elementary, middle, and high school settings, supporting students with a wide range of abilities, including those with severe disabilities.

Elementary Education K-9 and Special Education K-12 (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/elementary-education-special-education-bse/>)

This program trains educators to work with all children, especially those from diverse backgrounds or with disabilities. Graduates will focus on inclusion and work with students across various disability categories, such as learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disorders. The program emphasizes collaboration and provides training in both Elementary and Special Education; graduates will obtain certification in both Elementary Education (K-9) and Special Education (K-12).

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-early-childhood-special-education-birth-grade-3-bse/>)

This certification prepares educators to support young children who have, or are at greater risk of developing, disabilities. The program emphasizes early intervention and collaboration with families, schools, and community organizations. Graduates can work in settings like Early Head Start, Head Start, and childcare centers, in addition to classrooms through grade 3.

Early Childhood Special Education and Special Education Cross-Categorical K-12 (including 4K) (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-early-childhood-special-education-special-education-dual-certification-birth-grade-12-bse/>)

This combined certification prepares educators to support students with disabilities from birth through grade 12. Students will be certified in both Early Childhood Special Education and Special Education Cross-Categorical K-12.

THE TEACHER PLEDGE

UW-Madison offers a financial program called the Teacher Pledge (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/teacher-pledge/>). The school covers in-state tuition for Special Education students who agree to teach at a Wisconsin PreK-12 school for 3-4 years after graduation.

MADISON COLLEGE TRANSFER AGREEMENT

Madison College students can transfer to UW-Madison's School of Education and Special Education through a guaranteed admission (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/become-a-teacher/uw-madison-school-of-education-transfer-agreement/>) agreement.

HOW TO GET IN

HOW TO GET IN SPECIAL EDUCATION DECLARATION OVERVIEW

Students typically enter UW-Madison as Pre-Special Education students (PSR) and spend the first two years completing liberal studies, general education, and some professional education requirements. The Special Education major is declared during the sophomore year for the final two years on campus.

On-campus students starting at UW-Madison in other majors can move to Pre-Special Education by completing a Pre-Professional Declaration (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>). A GPA of 2.5, based on all UW-Madison coursework or the last 60 credits (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationstext>), is required to transfer into Pre-Special Education. It is not necessary to be a Pre-Special Education student before declaring the major.

Note: Students cannot complete the Certificate in Disability Rights and Services in conjunction with this program.

ELIGIBILITY TO DECLARE SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education currently accepts declarations once a year, usually from December 1 – February 1. This period may be extended if additional spaces are available after the initial deadline. The on-campus declaration form is located on the School of Education's Undergraduate Admissions (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>) page, along with information about the declaration period, deadline, and current eligibility requirements. Students should consult this site prior to submitting a declaration as this information may be modified from one declaration year to the next.

Off-campus students wishing to transfer directly into Special Education should complete the on-campus declaration and must also be admitted to UW-Madison. See Transfer Students and Students with a Previous Degree, below.

Current Eligibility Requirements

- Complete at least 40 transferable college-level credits by the end of the fall semester of the declaration year.
- Successfully complete RP & SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities by the end of the summer of the declaration year.
- Earn a minimum 2.5 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale on all transferable college-level coursework attempted.¹
- Submit all program declaration form(s), transcripts, and other related declaration materials by the deadline specified on the School of Education's Undergraduate Admissions (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>) page.

¹ Last 60 Credits Rule - Two grade point averages may be calculated to determine a candidate's eligibility to declare. A GPA may be calculated using (1) UW-Madison and all other all transferable college level coursework attempted and (2) the last 60 credits attempted. The higher GPA of these two calculations will be used for determining eligibility. Once declared, students must earn a semester GPA of 2.75 each semester after declaration. More information on this rule is available here (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationtext>).

TRANSFER STUDENTS AND STUDENTS WITH A PREVIOUS DEGREE

Transfer students and students who already hold a Bachelor's degree must be admitted to UW-Madison to enroll in a School of Education program. Admission to the campus has its own application, admission process, and application deadlines; see Office of Admissions and Recruitment (<http://www.admissions.wisc.edu>) for campus application information.

Students wishing to enter directly into Special Education should complete both the on-campus declaration and the UW-Madison application. All eligibility requirements must be met. Transfers who do not meet the declaration eligibility criteria will be admitted to UW-Madison with the Pre-Special Education designation.

An applicant with a previous undergraduate degree will be admitted to Special Education as a second degree candidate or as a School of Education "Special Student," depending on their academic background.

Second degree candidates in the School of Education are changing their academic direction and wish to complete a degree that is unrelated to their first. A large number of credits are usually required to complete the new degree requirements and a second degree is awarded upon its completion; more information is available here (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationtext>). Most applicants to Special Education will be second degree candidates.

In rare cases a student may be admitted as an Education Special Student. Admission with this designation indicates that they have an interest in pursuing teacher certification in Special Education and have already studied this subject area extensively during their initial degree. A student enrolls as an Education Special Student to complete the requirements that were not taken during the first degree; these are assessed on a case by case basis. Another degree is not awarded for this "certification only" coursework.

All off-campus students are strongly encouraged to meet with an advisor in the School of Education Student Services office in advance of their declaration. Consultations are available in person, virtually, or via telephone; email studentservices@education.wisc.edu or call 608-262-1651 to schedule an appointment.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Pursuant to State of Wisconsin law PI 34.018(2), the School of Education is required to administer a background check on all students entering teacher education programs. This check is intended to determine if the applicant has engaged in any behavior that endangers the health, welfare, safety, or education of PK-12 pupils. Local school districts frequently conduct background checks on teacher education students prior to the start of their in-classroom field work, and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will also conduct a background check on each applicant for a Wisconsin educator license.

Students should be aware that background checks may be initiated by other agencies or organizations when they are seeking employment or a professional license. School administrators have the authority to determine the appropriateness of a student placement and may choose not to permit a placement based on a student's background check results.

An individual who has been deemed ineligible to participate in field or clinical experiences based on the results of their background check may not be able to complete the requirements for their degree or certification. Students with questions about these processes should contact the Teacher Education Center, tec@education.wisc.edu.

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatetext>) section of the Guide.

General Education	• Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
	• Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
	• Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
	• Communication Part A & Part B *
	• Ethnic Studies *
	• Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION LIBERAL STUDIES REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to complete a minimum of 40 credits of Liberal Studies (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#requirementstext>) coursework. This requirement provides an opportunity to do some academic exploration beyond the scope of the major. Students take courses in areas of particular interest and also have an opportunity to sample the wide selection of courses offered across the university. Coursework is required in humanities, social studies, science, and cultural and historical studies. Some elective coursework is also needed to reach the required number of credits.

The School of Education's Liberal Studies Requirements automatically satisfy most of the University General Education Requirements outlined above, including ethnic studies, humanities/literature, social studies, and science. Students pursuing most School of Education degree programs may also complete Communication Part B, Quantitative Reasoning Part A, and Quantitative Reasoning Part B through courses required by their degree program. If a student cannot complete a General Education Requirement within the curriculum of their chosen School of Education program, academic advisors can offer suggestions for courses that meet the requirement and augment the student's primary area of study.

A basic outline of the liberal studies is included below. Students must consult the detailed version of the requirements (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#requirementstext>) for information about course selection and approved course options.

Humanities, 9 credits

All students must complete a minimum of 9 credits to include:

- Literature
- Fine Arts
- Humanities Electives

Social Studies (Social Science)

All students must complete a minimum of 9 credits. Teacher certification programs and Kinesiology have unique requirements in this category.

Science

All students must complete a minimum of 9 credits to include:

- Biological Science
- Physical Science
- Laboratory Science
- Science Electives

Cultural and Historical Studies

All students must complete three requirements (9 credits) met by separate courses. Any of these courses can also be used to meet the Humanities or Social Studies (Social Sciences) requirements if it has the relevant breadth designation.

- Ethnic Studies
- U.S./European History
- Global Perspectives

Complete Liberal Studies Electives (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#requirementstext>) to total 40 Credits.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Special Education program has four primary components:

- *Liberal studies* courses expose students to a broad range of academic disciplines. The university-wide *General Education* requirements also encourage this breadth of study.
- *Professional education* coursework includes an examination of the schools' relationship to our society and the processes by which students grow and learn.
- *Core Requirements* offer an in-depth study of Special Education, including a four-semester *professional sequence* of teaching methods coursework and field experience in schools. This sequence is designed so that students can complete the program in four years.
- *Elective* coursework is taken to reach the required minimum of 120 credits.

SPECIAL EDUCATION OPTIONS - SELECT ONE

View as listView as grid

- **SPECIAL EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION BIRTH - GRADE 3, BSE** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE/EDUCATION/REHABILITATION-PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIAL-EDUCATION/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-BSE/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-EARLY-CHILDHOOD-SPECIAL-EDUCATION-BIRTH-GRADE-3-BSE/](https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-early-childhood-special-education-birth-grade-3-bse/))
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION/SPECIAL EDUCATION DUAL CERTIFICATION BIRTH-GRADE 12, BSE** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE/EDUCATION/REHABILITATION-PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIAL-EDUCATION/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-BSE/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-EARLY-CHILDHOOD-SPECIAL-EDUCATION-SPECIAL-EDUCATION-DUAL-CERTIFICATION-BIRTH-GRADE-12-BSE/](https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-early-childhood-special-education-special-education-dual-certification-birth-grade-12-bse/))
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION: SPECIAL EDUCATION CROSS CATEGORICAL K-12, BSE** ([HTTPS://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE/EDUCATION/REHABILITATION-PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIAL-EDUCATION/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-BSE/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-SPECIAL-EDUCATION-CROSS-CATEGORICAL-K-12-BSE/](https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-bse/special-education-special-education-cross-categorical-k-12-bse/))

ELECTIVE COURSEWORK

Complete additional coursework to reach the minimum of 120 credits.

GPA AND OTHER GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete all requirements and also obtain the endorsement of the program faculty advisor(s) to receive certification through UW–Madison. The State of Wisconsin requires that anyone wishing to teach in a public K–12 setting hold a valid teaching license issued through the Department of Public Instruction. In addition to completing a certification program, students must submit a separate application for this license. Requirements below are based on UW–Madison coursework.

- 2.75 cumulative grade point average. This may be modified by the Last 60 Credits Rule (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationstext>).
- 2.75 cumulative grade point average across all professional education courses (excluding practicum and student teaching).
- 2.75 cumulative grade point average in the major.
- Minimum 120 credits (degree candidates only). Most students will need more than the minimum to complete all requirements.

- Major residency: Degree candidates must complete at least 15 credits of upper-level major coursework (numbered 300–699) in residence on the UW–Madison campus.
- Senior residency: Degree candidates must complete their last 30 credits in residence on the UW–Madison campus. Student teaching and practicum are considered part of the 30 credits.

DEGREE AUDIT (DARS)

UW–Madison uses “DARS” to document a student's progress toward the completion of their degree, including any additional majors and certificates. A DARS (Degree Audit Reporting System) report shows all the requirements for completing a degree and, against courses that are planned or completed, shows the requirements that have been met, and those that are unmet. A report can offer suggestions about courses that may be taken to meet specific requirements and can assist in the academic planning and enrollment process. Students can access a DARS report in the Course Search & Enroll app or Student Center via My UW.

DARS also has a “what-if” function. This feature makes it possible to request a DARS report as if pursuing another program, major, or certificate. It is an excellent tool if considering a new or additional area of study. School of Education students in a pre-professional classification such as Pre-Elementary (PRE) or Pre-Kinesiology should request a “what if” DARS report of their professional program of interest.

More information on how to request a DARS report is available on the Office of the Registrar's website (<https://registrar.wisc.edu/dars/>).

DARS is not intended to replace student contact with academic advisors. It creates more time in an advising appointment to discuss course options, research opportunities, graduate school, or issues of personal interest or concern to students.

DARS is used as the document of record for degree program, major, and certificate completion in the School of Education.

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLYING FOR A LICENSE

In addition to completing UW–Madison's program requirements, students must also complete Wisconsin statutory requirements and certification requirements established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Many of these requirements are embedded within the program's requirements and require no additional attention. The endorsement of the program coordinator/faculty is also required to receive certification through UW–Madison.

The State of Wisconsin requires that anyone wishing to teach in a public K–12 setting hold a valid teaching license issued through the Department of Public Instruction. In addition to completing a certification program, students must submit a separate application for this license.

Detailed information about certification requirements and applying for a license is available under Certification/Licensure. (p. 6)

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree	To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.
Residency	Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.
Quality of Work	Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. (Professionalism) Adhere to professional ethical standards and conduct her or himself in a courteous and professional manner.
2. (Collaboration and Communication) Collaborate and effectively communicate with students their families, other educators, related service providers and members of the community to address the needs of students with disabilities.
3. (Assessment) Collect information on student backgrounds, learning characteristics and achievement that can be used to determine students' present level of performance and guide instruction.
4. (Special Education Evaluation and Individualized Educational Planning) To the maximum possible the teacher candidate will participate in the Educational Evaluation and Individualized Educational Planning process.
5. (Instructional Planning) Plan instruction that meets the needs of students, is consistent with State and local standards and provides access to the general education curriculum.
6. (Instructional Presentations) Present lessons and units of instruction that gain and maintain student attention and are consistent with students' interests and IEP goals.
7. (Classroom Management) Create and maintain a safe, positive and supportive learning environment that is conducive to learning and the mental health of the students.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

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Refer to the available named options for more information on the four-year plans.

ADVISING AND CAREERS

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SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ADVISING

Students not yet admitted to special education meet with their assigned advisor in the School of Education Student Services office, Room 139 Education Building, 1000 Bascom Mall (see below). Students are assigned an additional departmental advisor when admitted to the professional component of their degree program.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ADVISING

Academic Advising in the School of Education

Dedicated to supporting and promoting student success, academic advisors (<https://education.wisc.edu/academics/undergrad-majors/academic-advising/>) are here to assist students with the adjustment to college, understanding their degree and career goals, and connecting them to resources. Advisors support prospective and current School of Education students in all programs through:

- Course selection
- Mentoring and advocacy for underrepresented and international students
- Understanding degree requirements and progression
- Interpreting academic policies
- Helping students recognize their strengths and suggesting ways to expand their skills
- Expanding learning through activities such as study abroad, volunteering/work/internship, and by assuming leadership roles

To schedule an appointment: Current students can schedule an appointment online through the Starfish app (<https://advising.wisc.edu/facstaff/starfish/starfish-student-resources/>) in MyUW. Appointments can also be made through email at studentservices@education.wisc.edu, by calling 608-262-1651, or in person.

Career Advising in the School of Education

Through individual appointments, events, courses, and online resources, the Career Center provides students and alumni with the tools needed to be successful in their career development.

Career and Internship Advisors are prepared to help students with:

- Exploration of career and academic pathways (<https://careercenter.education.wisc.edu/explore-career/>)
- Resumes
- Cover letters
- Job/Internship search
- Interview preparation
- Mock interviews
- Graduate school search, applications and decisions
- Negotiating job or internship offers
- Professional networking
- Connecting with employers

Students are encouraged to meet with their Career and Internship Advisor early in their college experience to take full advantage of the resources and support available.

To make an appointment: log into Starfish (<https://wisc.starfishsolutions.com/starfish-ops/>) from the MyUW dashboard.

For more information, visit the School of Education Career Center website (<https://careercenter.education.wisc.edu/>) or reach out at career-center@education.wisc.edu.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Students interested in special education may also want to consult the following resources:

- Read about the relationship between Special Education and regular education programs (<https://www.cec.sped.org/Policy-and-Advocacy/CEC-Professional-Policies/Special-Education-in-the-Schools/>).
- Watch a Video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XsaK3pWyll>) describing the work of Special Educators.

WISCONSIN EXPERIENCE

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UW–Madison’s vision for the total student experience, the Wisconsin Experience (<https://wisconsinexperience.wisc.edu/about/>), combines learning in and out of the classroom. Tied to the Wisconsin Idea (<https://www.wisc.edu/wisconsin-idea/>) and steeped in long-standing institutional values – the commitment to the truth, shared participation in decision-making, and service to local and global communities – the Wisconsin Experience describes how students develop and integrate these core values across their educational experience.

UW–Madison encourages students to mindfully engage in four core concepts throughout their time on campus: Empathy & Humility, Relentless Curiosity, Intellectual Confidence, and Purposeful Action (<https://wisconsinexperience.wisc.edu/intellectual-confidence/>).

Since its inception, the School of Education has embraced the concepts of the Wisconsin Experience, providing opportunities for students to learn in venues beyond the traditional classroom. Our students also independently seek out related activities and experiences, thus creating their own unique Wisconsin Experience.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND THE WISCONSIN EXPERIENCE

Community-Based Learning

RP & SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities includes a field-based experience where students engage in work that supports individuals with disabilities. Every year, hundreds of students are placed at a variety of sites in the Madison area. This experience allows students to gain hands-on experience working in the community.

Guest Speakers

The Special Education major emphasizes bringing guest speakers into the classroom. These experts offer diverse perspectives on the daily experiences of individuals with disabilities. Students also hear directly from community organizations that advocate for and support people with disabilities.

Additionally, a wide range of guest speakers participate in Special Education practicum and student teaching seminars. These guests may

include school district personnel, parents and family members, teachers, and individuals with disabilities.

Field Experiences

Students in our teacher education programs participate in multiple field experiences, including practicum and student teaching, throughout their professional sequence. These hands-on experiences provide students with numerous opportunities to apply what they are learning in the classroom to real-world teaching in schools and communities.

Clubs and Organizations

Special Education students have many opportunities to participate in clubs and organizations. Popular options include Special Olympics, Aspiring Educators, and Camp Kesem.

Additional Majors and Certificates

Many students choose to pair their Special Education program with another major or certificate. Popular second majors include Education Policy Studies, Spanish, and Psychology, but students can select from a variety of majors and certificates that align with their academic and professional goals.

Community Employment

The Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education has strong connections with the community. Students in the department often find both paid and volunteer opportunities in school and community organizations that serve children with disabilities and their families. Examples include the Schools of Hope Tutoring Program, Madison School and Community Recreation, and Gio’s Garden.

Study Abroad

Special Education students are encouraged to explore study abroad opportunities, including popular faculty-led short-term programs hosted by the School of Education. The Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education offers two key programs: Disability Rights & Access in Australia (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/program/?programId=330353>) and Disability, Access & Inclusion in Belize (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/program/?programId=330420>). These programs provide hands-on learning experiences in global contexts. Students are encouraged to explore all available options through the School of Education to enrich their academic journey and gain valuable international perspectives.

CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Students interested in certification must, in addition to completing UW–Madison’s program requirements, also complete Wisconsin statutory requirements related to teacher education and certification requirements established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Students must complete all requirements and also obtain the endorsement of the program faculty to receive certification through UW–Madison. For additional certification requirements and information about applying for a license, see the Mary T. Kellner Teacher Education Center (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/current-students/>).

APPLYING FOR A TEACHING LICENSE

The State of Wisconsin requires that anyone wishing to teach in a public K–12 setting hold a valid teaching license issued through the Department of Public Instruction. In addition to completing a certification program,

students must submit a separate application for this license. Students intending to complete a teacher certification program should monitor program requirements carefully. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) periodically implements regulations that affect all certification programs; teacher certification candidates are responsible for having up-to-date information about certification requirements.

Licensing Levels

The following undergraduate teacher licensing options are offered at UW–Madison.

- The core Elementary Education licensing level will be Kindergarten through Grade 9. Early Childhood, and English as a Second Language Kindergarten through Grade 12, can be added to the K-9 option.
- Special Education will offer licensing at the Early Childhood level, Kindergarten through Grade 12 level, and a program option that licenses in both Early Childhood Special Education and K-12 Special Education.
- The new Elementary Education and Special Education degree certifies students in both Special Education Kindergarten through Grade 12 and Elementary Education Kindergarten through Grade 9.
- Students in special fields such as Art, Music, and Physical Education will be licensed at the Kindergarten through Grade 12 level.
- Health licenses at the Kindergarten through Grade 12 level.

Wisconsin State Licensing

The State of Wisconsin issues an initial teaching license to certified teachers. The current fee is \$125. An online license application is available through the Department of Public Instruction (<http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/elo/>). A background check will also be conducted by DPI. Information about fingerprint submission, when necessary, is available through the Department of Public Instruction (<http://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/fingerprint/electronic-submission/>).

Before applying for a license, DPI requires the electronic submission of "Endorsed Candidate for Licensure" (ECL) data by the certifying officer of the institution where the teacher preparation was completed. For UW–Madison teacher certification students the endorsement will come from the School of Education, L139 Education Building, 1000 Bascom Mall. Once this information has been submitted to DPI, students are notified by email that they may begin the application online.

Before endorsing a student, UW–Madison requires that

- all certification requirements are met;
- student teaching (following the school district calendar) is completed;
- final grades are posted and reviewed;
- the degree is posted (<https://registrar.wisc.edu/posting-of-degrees/>) by the Registrar's Office (which can take up to four to six weeks after the degree conferral date); and
- a recommendation for certification is received from the program faculty.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction may require an additional six to eight weeks for license processing.

Licensing Outside of Wisconsin

To apply for a license in a state other than Wisconsin, first check out the application requirements of that state. The University of Kentucky has a website (<https://education.uky.edu/accreditation/certification/states/>) that provides links to teacher licensing agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Many states have a verification form that needs to be signed by a UW–Madison certification officer. This form verifies that a state-approved licensing program has been completed. These forms should be sent to the School of Education's Mary T. Kellner Teacher Education Center at L139 Education Building, 1000 Bascom Mall, Madison, WI 53706, or by email (educatorlicensing@education.wisc.edu) to be completed. You must complete your personal information on the form before sending it to the Teacher Education Center. If the form requests information about practicum and student teaching assignments (names of schools, grade levels, dates, etc.), this information must also be completed before sending the form to the Teacher Education Center.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE DISCLOSURE (NC-SARA)

The United States Department of Education (via 34 CFR Part 668 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-668/?toc=1>)) requires institutions that provide distance education to disclose information for programs leading to professional certification or licensure. The expectation is that institutions will determine whether each applicable academic program meets state professional licensure requirements and provide a general disclosure of such on an official university website.

Professional licensure requirements vary from state-to-state and can change year-to-year; they are established in a variety of state statutes, regulations, rules, and policies; and they center on a range of educational requirements, including degree type, specialized accreditation, total credits, specific courses, and examinations.

UW–Madison has taken reasonable efforts to determine whether this program satisfies the educational requirements for certification/licensure in states where prospective and enrolled students are located and is disclosing that information as follows.

Disclaimer: This information is based on the most recent annual review of state agency certification/licensure data and is subject to change. All students are strongly encouraged to consult with the individual/office listed in the Contact Information box on this page and with the applicable state agency for specific information.

The requirements of this program meet certification/licensure requirements in the following states:

Wisconsin

The requirements of this program do not meet certification/licensure requirements in the following states:

Not applicable

Updated: 1 June 2025

RESOURCES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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Information about scholarships, academic and career advising, study abroad opportunities, student diversity services, and other resources for students in the School of Education can be found on the school's Resources (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#resourcestext>) page.