

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, BSE

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.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND THE WISCONSIN EXPERIENCE

Learning from Current Practitioners

Teacher candidates in the elementary education program have multiple field experiences in K-9 schools, culminating in a full-time student teaching experience sharing a classroom with a cooperating teacher. The connection between the teacher candidate, their field supervisor, and the cooperating classroom teacher in the Madison-area schools provides a high level of support for our students from the first day forward. Many of our graduates end up being offered teaching positions by the schools in which they did their fieldwork.

Partnering with Community Organizations

The elementary education team partners with non-profit organizations and area businesses. Our teacher candidates:

- Volunteer with Girls on the Run, a program designed to inspire girls of all abilities to embrace their inner strength and build healthy social, emotional, and physical skills.
- Work at the Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC)
- Conduct research at UW’s Child Development Lab
- Volunteer at local school fairs and activities
- Plan and run educational events and panels with schools and university professors
- Intern at the Boys and Girls Club, the Lussier Community Education Center, and the Goodman Community Center

Participation with Professional Organizations

Our teacher candidates attend and/or present at educational conferences such as

- American Educational Research Association (AERA)
- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- National K-8 Literacy and Reading Recovery Conference (LitCon)
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (<https://www.ascd.org/events/annual-conference/>)

Guest Speakers

Faculty in the Elementary Education Program bring speakers from a variety of community organizations into the classrooms and seminars:

- Teachers, principals, and superintendents from area school districts to share information about school life and provide tips on the interview process
- Madison’s Preschool to Prison pipeline with a focus on teaching for social justice
- PBS Wisconsin to share technology and teaching resources
- Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) to introduce programs such as “Ambassadors for Equity” and “Early Career Educators”
- WIDA to introduce English Language Development Standards and to practice administering the ACCESS for ELLs assessment to K-9 students who may need academic English language support

Seeking Out Community Experiences

We encourage our students to venture outside the classroom and get to know the families and communities of their pupils by attending a community activity such as a worship service or a community potluck. Students spend time in and around the attendance area of their schools to develop an understanding of the places, people, spaces, and experiences that influence their pupils and consequently are brought to school.

Field Trips

While completing field experiences, students enjoy trips to places in the Madison community, such as the Madison Children’s Museum (<https://madisonchildrensmuseum.org/>), Madison Public Library’s Play Lab (<https://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/kids/playlab/>), Allen Centennial Garden (<https://allencentennialgarden.wisc.edu/>), Centro Hispano (<https://www.micentro.org/>), and the Madison Literacy Network (<https://www.litnetwork.org/>).

Study Abroad

Teacher candidates are encouraged to explore cultures other than their own by participating in one of the School of Education’s exciting study abroad programs. The Curriculum & Instruction department offers a three-week course in June entitled “Diversity and Community in the Galapagos Islands” led by faculty in Elementary Education.

Additional Certifications, Majors, Minors, and Certificates

Many students in the K-9 elementary education program also complete programs in other areas of interest. Certification minors in Early Childhood Education and/or English as a Second Language can be combined with the core K-9 program. The most popular additional majors are in Spanish, Environmental Studies, Education Studies, Psychology, and History. Certificates in Educational Policy Studies, Disability Rights and Services, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, and Environmental Studies are very popular, as are minors in Social Studies, English Language Arts, Math, and Science. These options complement the skills and knowledge acquired through elementary education coursework.

Student Clubs and Organizations

Elementary education students have multiple opportunities to participate in related organizations and activities such as Aspiring Educators of Wisconsin (<https://www.facebook.com/AspiringEducatorsUWMadison/>) and Game Design and Development (<https://games.education.wisc.edu/lab/>).