

# SPECIAL EDUCATION, BSE

## CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

### ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

**Note: In August of 2018, the Department of Public Instruction issued new administrative rules governing educator licensing. Changes in certification requirements and also the license types and levels will occur as program areas implement the new requirements.**

Students must complete all requirements and also obtain the endorsement of the program faculty to receive certification through UW–Madison. These requirements include those required by UW–Madison, the Department of Public Instruction, and those mandated by state statutes. While most of these requirements are embedded in course content, some (e.g., the Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test) are not related to course enrollment.

Students pursuing certification should be aware of the following requirements. See the Teacher Education Center website (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/>) for additional information/requirements.

Certification requirements should be monitored 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.

#### Disclosure Statement and Criminal Background Investigation Disclosure Statement

Applicants to School of Education programs that involve a practicum, internship, or other field placement must complete a disclosure statement indicating (1) whether they have been admitted to, then withdrawn from, asked to withdraw from, or been dropped from a student teaching, clinical experience, or other intern/practicum program, and (2) if they have ever been placed on probation or disciplined by any college or university for academic dishonesty.

#### Criminal Background Investigation (CBI)

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required by law to conduct a background check on each applicant for a Wisconsin educator license. 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 also will conduct criminal background checks routinely on teacher education students prior to the start of in-classroom fieldwork.

Students should be aware that criminal 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](mailto:tec@education.wisc.edu).

#### Environmental Education

This licensing requirement is mandatory for all UW–Madison students in Elementary Education, Secondary Science and Secondary Social Studies certification programs. Students with previous degrees in their subjects must also monitor and complete this requirement for certification and licensure.

Depending on the program area, students meet this requirement through their methods courses or by taking an environmental studies course.

#### Student Teaching and Assessment

Students in teacher education programs are required to complete a significant performance assessment prior to certification and eventual licensure. This assessment demonstrates the candidate's preparedness to teach. Until recently, the edTPA was the required assessment tool; it is no longer the only option. Additional tests may also be required, although this varies by certification area.

Detailed information related to these requirements, along with fee and registration information can be found on the Teacher Education Center website; see the Exams section of *Become a Teacher* (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/become-a-teacher/>). A brief description of these tests and assessments is provided below.

#### Content Proficiency

Students completing professional education programs must demonstrate proficiency in their content area. This is accomplished a number of ways, varying by certification area. For example, Elementary Education students must have a major GPA of 3.0. World Language Education students must have a 3.0 in their major or minor area, meet an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview requirement, and also pass the ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT). A student may be required to take and pass an approved examination in their content area, usually the appropriate Praxis II: Subject Assessments/Specialty Area Tests through the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

#### Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test

As of January 31, 2014, individuals seeking an initial Wisconsin license to teach in kindergarten through grade 5 or in special education, an initial Wisconsin license as a reading teacher, or an initial Wisconsin license as a reading specialist, must take and pass the Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test. Students in Special Education have an additional portfolio option that can be used as a substitute for the WFORT. Undergraduate programs impacted by this requirement are Elementary Education and Special Education.

This test is for Wisconsin licensing purposes **only**. Students who choose not to pursue Wisconsin educator licensing need not take and pass this test.

#### Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA)

Until recently, students were required to pass the edTPA to be recommended for licensure. Students may still elect to use it as an assessment tool, but it is no longer required. The edTPA is a subject

area-specific, performance-based assessment for pre-service teacher candidates, which is centered on student learning. Evidence of candidate teaching proficiency in the areas of planning, engagement and instruction, and assessment is drawn from a subject-specific learning segment, 3–5 lessons from a unit of instruction. Assessment artifacts include video clips of instruction, lesson plans, student work samples, analysis of student learning, and reflective commentaries. These artifacts will be taken together and scored by trained evaluators using the standardized set of edTPA rubrics.

### Field Experiences

School-based field experiences are a critical part of students' professional preparation for teaching. Under Wisconsin State regulations, students seeking teaching certification from UW–Madison are required to complete at least one pre-student teaching practicum and at least one full semester of student teaching. Most programs at UW–Madison require students to complete additional field experiences.

#### Pre–Student Teaching Practicum

The pre–student teaching practicum gives students firsthand knowledge of the classroom environment and the teacher's role. For many students, the practicum is the initial encounter with the real world of teaching. Practicum students do not assume the degree of classroom responsibility they do during student teaching. Under the supervision of an experienced teacher, practicum students observe classroom activities, assist the teacher with day-to-day classroom management tasks, interact one-to-one with students, and instruct small groups. The cooperating teacher and university supervisor use the practicum to assess the student's readiness for the student teaching experience.

#### Student Teaching Experience

Student teaching, the culminating field experience, is a full-time, school district semester assignment that places a university student under the guidance of an experienced, qualified cooperating teacher. After an orientation period, the student teacher gradually assumes more responsibility for planning, instruction, and overall classroom management. Student teachers follow the daily schedule of the cooperating teacher and the building policies of the school, and function as regular staff members in arrival and departure times and attendance at school events.

The student teaching experience follows the calendar of the local school district. A fall semester assignment will typically begin the latter part of August and end the latter part of January. A spring semester assignment will begin the latter part of January and end mid-June. Holiday breaks follow the school district calendar. Carrying other formal course work during the student teaching semester is strongly discouraged.

Detailed policies and regulations regarding field experiences can be found on the Teacher Education Center website (<https://tec.education.wisc.edu/resources/>). Students and staff are responsible for knowing and complying with the Field Experience policies. Many professional programs have their own separate handbooks and specific policies; students are also responsible for those policies and procedures.

#### Withdrawing From/Failing Field Experience Assignments

Withdrawing from a field experience has serious implications for the student's progress in the program. Students who

withdraw or receive an unsatisfactory grade (including a "D") from a field experience may not repeat such experiences without approval from the program coordinator. Students withdrawing from or receiving an unsatisfactory grade in field experiences in one major or program may not enroll in another major or program without written permission from the program coordinator. Because of the consequences that withdrawal from a confirmed assignment may have on a student's future progress in the teaching certification program, a student who contemplates such action is strongly urged to consult with the program coordinator to fully understand the implications of such action and the options available.

### Minority Group Relations and Conflict Resolution

#### Minority Group Relations

Wisconsin State teacher education regulations require students to complete a section titled *Minority Group Relations*. The rules identify Minority Group Relations as

- The history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of American Indian tribes and bands located in Wisconsin.
- The history, culture and contributions of women and various racial, cultural, language and economic groups in the United States.
- The philosophical and psychological bases of attitude development and change.
- The psychological and social implications of discrimination, especially racism and sexism in the American society.
- Evaluating and assessing the forces of discrimination, especially racism and sexism on faculty, students, curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the school program.
- Minority group relations through direct involvement with various racial, cultural, language and economic groups in the United States.

UW–Madison teacher education programs address these areas through course work and experiences in each professional education program. Students who successfully complete their professional program will have satisfied each of the areas of Minority Group Relations.

#### Conflict Resolution Requirement

Wisconsin State teacher education regulations require all individuals pursuing teacher certification to have formal training in conflict resolution. This includes

- Resolving conflicts between pupils and between pupils and school staff.
- Assisting pupils in learning methods of resolving conflicts between pupils and between pupils and school staff, including training in the use of peer mediation to resolve conflicts between pupils.
- Dealing with crises, including violent, disruptive, potentially violent or potentially disruptive situations that may arise in school or activities supervised by school staff as a result of conflicts between pupils or between pupils and other persons.

All teacher certification programs include conflict resolution training in their required course work.

### Phonics

As of July 1, 1998, the State of Wisconsin requires that all persons seeking initial and renewal licenses to teach reading or language arts in grades Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 (PK–6) must have successfully completed instruction in teaching reading and language arts using appropriate instructional methods, including phonics. "Phonics" means a method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning the phonetic value of letters, letter groups and syllables.

The Phonics requirement applies to students completing Elementary Education and Special Education certification programs. UW–Madison students fulfill this requirement through the successful completion of courses that are already required, so no additional course work is needed to meet this statutory requirement.

### Cooperatives

This licensing requirement is mandatory for secondary Social Studies Education certification. Students with previous degrees in their subjects must also monitor and complete this requirement for certification and licensure.

Students typically complete the cooperatives requirement after being admitted to the Secondary Social Studies program and should consult with the program coordinator regarding its completion.

### Teacher Standards

UW–Madison teacher education students must meet all state licensing requirements for initial teaching certification in Wisconsin. These requirements, sometimes referred to as administrative rules "PI 34," mandate that individuals demonstrate proficiency on state-approved teaching standards. Each teacher education institution in Wisconsin has adopted a set of teacher education standards that meet state guidelines. These standards must be met by all students completing a licensing program.

Program graduates of UW-Madison demonstrate their knowledge and skills in five broad standard areas: (1) learner and learning environment, (2) planning, (3) engaging/instructing, (4) assessing, and (5) behaving in professional and ethical ways. Guided by Foundational Knowledge (Content) Standards (<https://merit-www.education.wisc.edu/tec/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2020/06/Knowledge-Standards-3.27.20.pdf>), programs provide the knowledge and skills needed to meet the Performance Standards (<https://merit-www.education.wisc.edu/tec/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2020/06/Performance-Standards-3.27.20.pdf>).

## 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 licensing options are offered at UW–Madison.

- The Elementary Education program currently offers two licensing levels: *Early Childhood* and also *Middle Childhood through Early Adolescence*. The new licensing levels will be *Early Childhood* and also *Kindergarten through Grade 9*.
- The Special Education program currently certifies students at both the *Middle Childhood through Early Adolescence* level and also at the *Early Adolescence through Adolescence level*. The Special Education/Elementary Education dual major option certifies students only at the *Middle Childhood through Early Adolescence* level.
- Secondary Education programs currently certify students to teach their subject area at the *Early Adolescence through Adolescence* level. The new licensing level will be *Grades 4 through 12*.
- Students currently completing Language Education programs will be licensed at the *Early Childhood through Adolescence* level. The new licensing level will be Prekindergarten through Grade 12.
- Students in special fields such as Art, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Music, and Physical Education are currently licensed at the *Early Childhood through Adolescence* level. The new licensing level will be *Prekindergarten through Grade 12*.

### 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 Criminal Background Investigation (CBI) 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, 139 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 (1) all certification requirements are met; (2) student teaching (following the school district calendar) is completed; (3) final grades are posted and reviewed; (4) the degree is "posted" by the registrar's office (four to five weeks after graduation); and (5) a recommendation for certification is received from the program faculty. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction may require an additional 6 to 12 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 Student Services Office at 139 Education Building, 1000 Bascom Mall, or by email (mlpatton@wisc.edu) to be completed. If the form requests information about practicum and student teaching assignments (names of schools, grade levels, dates, etc.), this information must be completed before sending the form to Student Services.

## **PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE DISCLOSURE (NC-SARA)**

The United States Department of Education requires institutions that provide distance education to disclose information for programs leading to professional certification or licensure about whether each program meets state educational requirements for initial licensure or certification. Following is this disclosure information for this program:

### **The requirements of this program meet Certification/Licensure in the following states:**

Wisconsin

### **The requirements of this program do not meet Certification/Licensure in the following states:**

Not applicable

### **The requirements of this program have not been determined if they meet Certification/Licensure in the following states:**

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wyoming, District of Columbia; American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands