

PA PRE-K-4 TEACHER CERTIFICATION

MASTER OF EDUCATION PROGRAM (39 CREDITS)

This post baccalaureate teacher certification program will prepare candidates for Pennsylvania public school teaching from grades prekindergarten through four, pending passing of the PA PreK-4 competency exam (PA basic skills exams are not required for certification at the masters level). Through comprehensive coursework that explores subject content, pedagogy, and professional skills from a Christian perspective, graduates will be prepared to teach all subjects in the early childhood and elementary public school setting. Individuals with baccalaureate degrees in fields other than education who wish to enter the teaching profession may do so through completion of this program.

The Master of Education leading to PK-4 teacher certification will be offered in online format in seven-week semesters in the fall, spring and summer. All courses and field experiences will be taught and supervised by UVF education faculty who are highly qualified in their area of instruction. The PK-4 Teacher Certification program culminates in 14 weeks of student teaching that will take place over two seven week semesters. Teacher candidates presently working as paraprofessionals in public school settings may complete some or all field experiences in that setting. Up to nine undergraduate credits that meet PA teaching competencies may be applied to this degree program if applicable. The PK-4 Teacher Certification program is designed to be completed in two to three years. A non-degree, certification only track is available for applicants with prior credits in the field of early childhood/elementary education. Special Education PK-12 certification may be added with the addition of four 15 week online classes (12 credits) and with passing of special education competency exams. Based on student’s undergraduate transcript evaluation, undergraduate coursework or the equivalent in college writing, literature, fine arts, history, math, and science may be required.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

EDU	501	Multicultural Education and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	3 cr
EDU	502	Assessment: Issues, Trends, and Best Practice	3 cr
EDU	503	Curriculum Theory and Design	3 cr
EDU	513	Foundational Theories of Education and Human Development	3 cr
EDU	543	Professional Practice in and out of the Classroom	3 cr
EDU	602	Language Development & Literacy Foundations	3 cr
EDU	603	Literacy Methods & Differentiated Reading Interventions	3 cr
SPE	613	Teaching Students with Exceptionalities in Inclusive Settings	3 cr
EDU	633	Methods of Teaching Math	3 cr
EDU	640	Methods of Teaching English Learners	3 cr
EDU	663	Inquiry Methods for Science and Social Studies	3 cr
EDU	671	Student Teaching	3 cr
EDU	672	Student Teaching	3 cr

TOTAL 39 CREDITS

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

EDU 501 Multicultural Education and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy 3 credits

This course consists of an in-depth study of the educational implications of race, gender, language, and social class in American schools. Based on the biblical mandate to minister to people from all backgrounds, this course will encourage teacher candidates and in-service teachers to consider the experience of diverse groups of students with understanding and compassion, and to develop skills in practicing culturally responsive pedagogy in diverse educational settings.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Communicate effectively, orally and in writing, for a diverse audience within educational settings.
2. Access, evaluate, and utilize current educational research and literature based on knowledge of best practices and academic standards.
3. Establish and maintain professional demeanor and relationships with students, colleagues, parents, and supervisors in educational settings.
4. Articulate a philosophy of education that is consistent with a Christian worldview and integrate Christian principles into professional practice.
5. Design, implement, and reflect upon instruction that is aligned with best practices and academic standards and that meets the educational needs of diverse learners.

EDU 502 Assessment: Issues, Trends, and Best Practice 3 credits

This course explores major concepts, principles, and methodologies related to assessment. Students will analyze the political and social atmosphere that produced legal actions such as No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, Common Core Standards and Every Student Succeeds Act and their effect on students, educators, and administrators. Then, students will investigate formal and informal assessments and learn how to use the data generated from them to improve learning for students of all backgrounds and ability levels.

EDU 503 Curriculum Theory and Design 3 credits

Through this course, in-service teachers and teacher candidates will examine theoretical perspectives in curriculum theory and design and will plan instruction that utilizes best practices, with emphasis on the Understanding by Design model of unit and lesson planning as well as methods of differentiation. Candidates will consider how technology in the classroom both aids and hinders instruction, and will apply the Danielson Framework domains of planning, preparation, and instruction to curriculum construction.

EDU 513 Foundational Theories of Education and Human Development 3 credits

This course examines the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children and adolescents through consideration of the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to children and youth. Teacher candidates will explore multiple influences on development such as family, culture, gender, media, and the importance of play. In addition, candidates will investigate historical foundations of education and the resulting educational approaches as they exist today.

EDU 543 Professional Practice in and out of the Classroom 3 credits

This course focuses on teaching essential skills and strategies for designing and maintaining productive learning environments that are supportive, respectful, and challenging for all students in the public school setting. Teacher candidates will apply Danielson’s Framework, Pennsylvania’s Code of Conduct, and NAEYC’s Code of Ethical Conduct to management strategies with emphasis on the classroom environment and professionalism outside the classroom. Candidates will explore strategies to foster communication and collaboration with families. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

EDU 602 Language Development & Literacy Foundations 3 credits

This course explores the theories of language development with particular emphasis on the cognitive, linguistic, and socio-cultural factors that influence language and literacy learning. Students will demonstrate knowledge of key concepts with assignments designed to provide practical application of course content on a variety of topics such as the benefits and impact of literacy, how literacy serves as a tool of social equity, and strategies to support family literacy and literacy programs. Students will develop pedagogical skills in assessing, modifying, and implementing curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, with emphasis on language and reading comprehension, expressive skills, phonological development, word level instruction, and reading-writing connections.

EDU 603 Literacy Methods & Differentiated Reading Interventions

This course includes an in-depth examination of literacy assessment and instruction in reading and writing. Focused on balanced and comprehensive literacy, students will study topics related to how children learn to read and write such as reading processes, miscue analysis, reading fluency, comprehension, literary response and writing. Both directed and guided reading instruction, as well as the role of phonics in reading and spelling, will be addressed to design effective instruction for the diverse needs in today’s classroom. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

SPE 613 Teaching Students with Exceptionalities in Inclusive Settings 3 credits

This course provides an overview of the basic characteristics and unique educational needs of individuals who have been determined to be exceptional in the areas of, but not limited to, learning disabilities, mental impairment, emotional and/or behavioral disorders, mental health disorders and multiple and severe disabilities. Students will explore the theoretical basis and practice of inclusion of students who are eligible to receive special education services under IDEA guidelines in the general education classroom. Students will identify the role and legal rights of families of individuals with exceptionalities, and will examine best practices for inclusion, assessment, and collaboration within the educational setting. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

EDU 633 Methods of Teaching Math 3 credits

Through this course, teacher candidates will study the “teaching for, about, and through” problem-solving model of mathematics instruction. Candidates will gain experience in designing and delivering equitable learning for all students (including special needs and linguistically diverse students) and in helping students build both conceptual and procedural knowledge of mathematics. The course will also address arts, technology and children’s literature integration in the math classroom. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

EDU 640 Methods of Teaching English Learners 3 credits

This course will provide teacher candidates with knowledge of language systems, language development and the stages of language acquisition. Candidates will demonstrate understanding of teachers’ professional obligations, cultural competency, and assessment of English Learners. Through course assignments, candidates will show proficiency in planning and implementing instruction that is aligned with Pennsylvania Language Proficiency Standards for English Learner Pre-K-12 and Pennsylvania academic standards. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

EDU 663 Inquiry Methods for Science and Social Studies 3 credits

This course is designed to provide teacher candidates with the tools and strategies to plan, implement, and assess instruction in the content areas of social studies and science. Candidates will utilize constructivist learning theory and the inquiry-based approach in designing and delivering effective classroom experiences for students, and will design integrated curriculum based on Pennsylvania’s Standards Aligned System that will be differentiated for English Learners and other special populations. This course includes a 10 hour field experience.

EDU 671/672 Student Teaching 6 credits

Candidates will apply theory to practice in this culminating 14 week (two semester) student teaching experience. Through placement with an experienced mentor teacher in a public school classroom and under the supervision of a university supervisor, candidates will plan and implement instruction with appropriate accommodations and adaptations, assess and analyze learning, and maintain a positive and productive learning environment for students. Candidates will demonstrate ethical and professional behaviors toward students, cooperating teachers and other school personnel, and families. Candidates will complete a Teacher Work Sample during one of the student teaching semesters.