Professional Education Concentration Requirements

The Professional Education Concentration leads to a North Carolina Birth-Kindergarten teaching license. The issuance of a teaching license by the North Carolina Department of Public Instructions (NCDPI) requires that the College of Education and Allied Professionals at Western Carolina University abide by the regulations set forth by NCDPI. In order to pursue the Professional Education Concentration, you must meet the Admission Criteria for the Teacher Education Program. A checklist which includes the Admission Criteria for the Teacher Education Program is included in the BK PROGRAM folder in BK 250. Please do not submit an Application to the Teacher Education Program until the criteria numbered 1-7 in that document are met.

During the semester you are enrolled in BK 250, you must:

- Take the Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Praxis I tests, and pass with a combined score of at least 522;
- Complete the Diversity Survey in TaskStream;
- Complete the M5 Personality Survey in TaskStream;
- Submit the required TaskStream assignment, and score at least “At Standard” on it.

If you are interested in pursuing the Professional Education Concentration, you should be admitted to The Teacher Education Program before you officially declare your major.

If you choose the Professional Education Concentration, please be aware that you will not be allowed to take some courses in the Professional Education Concentration until you are admitted to the Teacher Education Program. Those courses are:

- BK 312 – Kindergarten Curriculum
- BK 316 – Mathematics and Science
- SPED 313 – Assessment of the Young Child
- SPED 339 – Designing Classrooms as Responsive Learning Communities
- SPED 412 – Interagency Practicum
- SPED 427 – Teaching Reading to Individuals with Mild to Moderate Disabilities
- BK 482 – Internship I
- BK 483 – Internship II
- BK 496 – Internship Seminar

During the semester you are enrolled in BK 312-Kindergarten Curriculum, you will be required to spend time in a NC public school kindergarten classroom. Please make arrangements with your employer prior to the start of that semester, so that you will be available for your Kindergarten Curriculum lab experiences.

Internships

In the Professional Education Concentration, 2 semesters of Internship are required. These Internships are to be taken at the end of your course of study.

- You must complete all of your General Education Core or the WCU Liberal Studies requirements before you can apply for an Internship. If you are completing the General Education Core at a community college, WCU must have documentation of completion prior to
approving your Application for Internship. Your WCU degree audit must indicate that the Liberal Studies requirements are either “met” or “waived” prior to registering for an Internship.

- You cannot take Internship I and Internship II in the same semester. They are to be taken consecutively. Internship I requires 2 full days in an approved placement site. Internship II requires 5 full days in an approved placement site.
- You may take up to 6 additional hours of coursework at WCU during the same semester when you are enrolled in Internship I. You may not take any additional WCU coursework when enrolled in Internship II.

There are also expectations regarding your Internship placement site. Approved Internship Placement Sites include:

- Public school kindergarten classrooms,
- Public school preschool classrooms,
- More at Four classrooms,
- Head Start preschool classrooms.

It is VERY rare that we approve any Internship placement that does not meet one of the above descriptions. If you would like to propose an Internship placement site that does not meet one of the above descriptions, you should discuss that with your advisor. He/she will carry your request to the BK Program Director and the BK Council for consideration. Please be aware, exceptions are rarely granted.

During Internship II, you will take the Praxis II. In order to be considered “highly qualified” in NC, a licensed teacher must pass the Praxis II in their specific category of licensure.