

# EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

## *College of Education and Social Work*

The primary mission of the undergraduate educator preparation programs at West Chester University is to prepare professionals (hereafter "educator preparation") for the classrooms of Pennsylvania. The College of Education and Social Work's conceptual framework (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/missionVision.aspx>) guides the preparation of educators who can ensure strong academic achievement for PK-12 students in schools and other educational environments in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The University is committed to excellence in educator preparation by preparing candidates to exhibit content knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/dispositions.aspx>). Further, the University is committed to the preparation of exemplary professionals to assume roles and responsibilities as educators in a multicultural, global society; to pursue lifelong personal and professional development opportunities; to support the continuing improvement of schools; and to embrace opportunities for leadership in the education community.

West Chester University offers the following undergraduate degrees and certification programs (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/certificationPrograms.aspx>) for those who wish to become Pennsylvania-certified teachers.

## Teacher Candidacy

All candidates seeking either a degree or certification in teaching must apply for Teacher Candidacy, a process required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education that is different from being admitted to the University. This provision applies to those who have already received University admission to pursue majors in educator preparation. Achieving Teacher Candidacy enables educator preparation candidates to enroll in the advanced coursework required to complete degree and certification programs. According to the PDE guidelines for achieving Teacher Candidacy, effective August 1, 2015, candidates who complete 60 or more credits of college-level coursework may register for additional professional education courses as long as those courses are not designated as advanced-level professional education coursework (please contact your program chair or advisor for guidance).

The minimum standards for Teacher Candidacy to a WCU educator preparation program include the following:

1. Major in an educator preparation program or enrolled in an elective certification program
2. 48 semester-hour credits of college-level study
3. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.9 on all college-level work
4. Six semester-hour credits of college-level (100 level or above) mathematics, three semester-hour credits of college-level (100 level or above) English composition, and three semester-hour credits in literature taught in English
5. Recommendation by the department of the candidate's major. (Department recommendation may be contingent upon completion of additional and/or more rigorous requirements than the minimum described above.)
6. Act 55 of 2022 signed into law by Governor Wolf on July 8, 2022, requires the Secretary of Education to waive the requirement to satisfactorily complete the assessment of basic skills required under section 1207.3 and 22 Pa. Code § 49.18(c) (relating to assessment) for 3 years from July 8, 2022 through July 8, 2025. This applies to all students who enter preparation programs during this period as well as otherwise qualified candidates for licensure who make application during this period. After July 8, 2025 basic skills testing could be reinstated as a requirement for Teacher Candidacy.

WCU educator preparation candidates who achieve Teacher Candidacy must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.9 to retain Teacher Candidacy status. In most cases, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 must be earned to qualify for Pennsylvania certification. Each program has designated, for its own majors, its advanced professional courses. Only those candidates who have completed the Teacher Candidacy process are eligible to take these courses. The Office of Candidate Services processes all applications for Teacher Candidacy.

Candidates who have Teacher Candidacy status and later fall below the required cumulative GPA are permitted to repeat advanced professional education course work to improve their GPA to the required level (2.9). Such candidates will not, however, be permitted to register for additional advanced professional education course work in their programs until they again achieve the minimum cumulative GPA required for Teacher Candidacy (2.9).

## Early Field Experiences

Designated courses require early field experience to observe and work with PK-12 students in schools and other settings. Candidates must have a current TB test result, Pennsylvania State Criminal History Record, Federal Criminal History Report, and Department of Human Services Child Abuse Report before they can enter an early field experience setting. Under no circumstances may candidates complete field experiences without the proper clearances. Clearances must also be submitted to, reviewed, and verified by the Office of Candidate Services before candidates may enter the field. Please review the WCU policies on clearances as well as the courses that require clearances (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/clearances.aspx>). University policy gives the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work the authority to revoke enrollment in early field experience courses of any candidate who fails to provide criminal clearances.

## Requirements for Student Teaching

Student teaching is the culminating experience of the educator preparation program. Candidates must complete student teacher applications via the program's assessment system (Tk20 or Anthology) one year before the semester in which they intend to teach.

To be eligible to complete a student teaching experience, candidates (undergraduates and post-baccalaureates) must have:

- Completed the prerequisite course requirements,
- Met the grade point average (2.90) or higher,
- Satisfied the requirements for Teacher Candidacy

All candidates for certification must take all required licensure tests (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/patests.aspx>) prior to student teaching. Please review all testing information for specific details regarding the testing requirements for your area of certification.

See program listings and advising sheets for specifics and any additional program requirements. Candidates should contact their departments for specific requirements. A candidate must earn an academic grade of C or better in both student teaching assignments and graduate with the state-mandated minimum grade point average (3.0) or higher to qualify for a Pennsylvania teaching certification.

Candidates are assigned a student teaching placement in schools with which the University has a formal agreement.

To graduate from an educator preparation program with a baccalaureate degree, that is, to be a program completer, candidates must have:

- Completed the required course work
- Earned at least minimum grades in courses specified by their program
- Achieved and maintained Teacher Candidacy
- Earned an overall GPA of at least 3.0
- Achieved grades of at least C in both student teaching courses

## Deadline to Apply for Student Teaching

### Fall Student Teaching Placement

Candidates seeking to student teach during the fall semester should submit all appropriate information no later than **\*February 15th of the previous academic semester. Completed applications submitted on or before this date will have priority over incomplete or late applications.** We encourage candidates to submit their applications as early as possible to ensure a placement within a school district:

- Attend the Pre-Registration meeting one year in advance (previous fall semester)
- February 1st - Submit the student teaching application
- February 15th - Completed applications are submitted to school districts

**Late applications or those that were returned because they were incomplete can be submitted no later than \*February 23rd to be considered for student teaching in the fall semester.**

- Applications not completed by this date will not be considered for student teaching during the fall semester.

### Spring Student Teaching Placement

Candidates seeking to student teach during the spring semester should submit all appropriate information no later than **\*September 15th of the previous academic semester. Completed applications submitted on or before this date will have priority over incomplete or late applications (see below).** We encourage candidates to submit their applications as early as possible to ensure a placement within a school district:

- Attend the Pre-Registration meeting one year in advance (previous spring semester)
- July 1st - Submit the student teaching application
- September 15th - Completed applications are submitted to school districts

**Late applications or those that were returned because they were incomplete can be submitted no later than \*September 23rd to be considered for student teaching in the spring semester.**

- Applications not completed by this date will not be considered for student teaching during the spring semester.

\*If this date falls on the weekend, the completed application is due the following work day.

## Applying for Pennsylvania Certification

Candidates apply for certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) in conjunction with the University's Certification Office. The application is submitted online through the PDE's Teacher Information Management System (TIMS). For more information about Pennsylvania certification, review the Certification Information (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/certificationinfo.aspx>) and the PDE website (<http://www.education.pa.gov/pages/default.aspx>).

Applicants for the certificate must be citizens of the United States. A non-citizen must declare the intent to become a citizen of the United States and possess a permanent resident visa to qualify for a teaching certificate.

Candidates pursuing initial Pennsylvania Instructional Level I Certification must meet the passing score on the examinations required by the PDE at the time of certification application. Current examinations can be found in PA Tests (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/patests.aspx>).

## Higher Education Opportunity Act - Title II Praxis Test Results for Completers of the Traditional Teacher Preparation Program

For Higher Education Opportunity Act - Title II test results, please review the College of Education and Social Work's accreditation webpage (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/assessmentAccreditation/accreditation.aspx>).

Questions related to these tests should be directed to West Chester University's Professional Testing Center (PTC) (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/testingcenter.aspx>). The PTC administers these tests throughout the calendar year according to the dates established by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

## Instructional I Certificate

A candidate who completes one of the University's educator preparation programs and passes all licensure tests required by the state qualifies for an Instructional I Certification, which is issued by the PDE. This certification is valid for six years of teaching in Pennsylvania. Recommendation for the certification is made by the Dean of the College of Education and Social Work, who serves as the certifying officer of the University.

To qualify for a Pennsylvania Certificate candidates must:

1. Complete an approved education preparation program at the Bachelors, Graduate or Post Baccalaureate level in your subject area. Your initial teacher preparation program must include a student teaching experience.
2. Meet all Certification Testing requirements (<https://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/CertTestingRequirements/Pages/default.aspx>) established by the PA State Board of Education.
3. Meet all other requirements established by the PA Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators.
4. Submit an online application for certification via PDE's TIMS - MyPDESuite (<https://www.mypdeapps.pa.gov/wfTims.aspx>) - with the state-mandated minimum grade point average of 3.0 or higher
5. Receive the recommendation of your preparing college/university.

The PA Department of Education considers the PDE430, (<https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Certifications/Fees%20and%20Forms/PDE%20430.pdf>) the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice, which is part of the WCU Professional Education Unit-wide assessment, necessary for certification. WCU translates this content into the Assessment Management Software through the Danielson Framework evaluation, the Unit-wide assessment, and Candidate Signature Page. WCU University supervisors must complete the Danielson Framework evaluation so that candidates can review and complete the Candidate Signature Page assignment. Final ratings must be satisfactory, which means a minimum of 2 (Basic) in each category. Completion and minimum scoring requirements for both the Danielson Framework evaluation and Candidate Signature Page are required to earn an institutional recommendation for certification.

\*Note: assessments are subject to change within the time span of one's University career due to changing requirements at national, state, and local level; and candidates may still be required to meet requirements.

## Instructional II Certificate

This certification requires three years of successful teaching in Pennsylvania under the Instructional I Certification, successful completion of an Induction Plan approved by the PDE, and the satisfactory completion of 24 credits of additional coursework completed at a baccalaureate-granting institution, after issuance of the baccalaureate degree. This certification is a valid license to teach in Pennsylvania.

All or part of the educational requirements for this credential may be obtained through approved, in-service programs. Effective July 1, 2000 (Act 48) the state requires all certified teachers and administrators to engage in continuing professional development activities. WCU coursework is an acceptable option for the six hours of college credit (or its equivalent) required for teachers and administrators every five years.

## Candidate Professional Dispositions Expectations & Evaluation

The educator preparation programs at West Chester University have developed professional dispositions and requirements essential for the profession. These dispositions are based on the 2011 Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards (<http://www.ccsso.org/resource-library/intasc-model-core-teaching-standards/>). Candidates have the opportunity to demonstrate dispositions in courses (assignments, interactions with others) and out in the field with mentor teachers and students in PK-12 settings. Please review information regarding professional dispositions and the evaluation process (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/assessment/Accreditation/dispositions.aspx>) for further details.

## Fees and Other Expenses

All candidates pursuing certification in Pennsylvania can expect to spend \$300 on required licensure tests, \$60 per year on criminal clearances, an average of \$30 for TB testing, \$200 on the Pennsylvania certification application, and \$18 per year on an Anthology Portfolio account. If licensure testing or clearances must be repeated for any reason during the candidate's enrollment at WCU, the candidate will incur additional expenses. It is preferred that the TB testing must be updated every two years for all early grades preparation PK-4 majors entering early childhood centers.

*Note: Fees and other expenses are subject to change within the time span of a student's University career due to changing requirements at national, state and local levels.*

## Assessment Management Software

The educator preparation programs at West Chester University use Anthology Portfolio (hereafter "Anthology"), a web-based software, as a comprehensive data management system for assessments of student learning outcomes and tracking of field placements and clinical experiences. Anthology establishes electronic documentation for continuous improvement of the educator preparation programs and accreditation. Students use the system to complete key unit and program course assignments/assessments, field experience evaluations, applications, and portfolios.

All students enrolled in an educator preparation program accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) are required to have an Anthology account. This includes initial-level licensure programs, the MEd in Literacy and Reading Specialist Certification program, and the Certificate in Autism program. Students who do not have an active account are required to buy one for \$18 per year via credit card, money order, or cashier's check from the Bursar's Office (in-person or online (<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialwork/forms/anthologySubscription/>)). Anthology is accessible for one year after the date of account activation.

*Note: Fees and other expenses are subject to change within the time span of a student's University career due to changing requirements at national, state, and local levels.*