

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

Field Experiences – Students in the elementary education program have multiple field experiences in PreK-12 schools, culminating in a full-time student teaching experience following the semester of the cooperating school.

Partnering with Community Organizations – The elementary education team partners with area communities to assist with food delivery to families. Students volunteer with Girls on the Run (<https://www.girlsontherunscwi.org/>), a program designed to inspire girls of all abilities to embrace their inner strength and to build healthy social, emotional, and physical skills.

Guest Speakers – The department brings in speakers from the Madison Metropolitan School District’s Restorative Justice, Welcoming Schools, and Mental Health and Wellness teams. Justice Everett Mitchell speaks to students about disrupting the Preschool to Prison pipeline, and Rudy Bankston has shared his story and his thoughts on teaching for social justice. The elementary education team partners with PBS Wisconsin by inviting guest speakers to share technology and teaching resources.

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 – Our students are encouraged to explore cultures other than their own by participating in one of Curriculum & Instruction’s exciting new study abroad (<https://studyabroad.wisc.edu/>) programs. The department offered two summer options in 2023, a 3-week summer course entitled, "Diversity and Community in the Galapagos Islands," and a 4-week class, "Social Foundations of Learning in Uganda."

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/>).