

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION, BSE

HOW TO GET IN

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION (EESE)

Undergraduate students generally apply to the professional part of the Elementary Education and Special Education (EESE) degree program in their sophomore year. Selection is made during the spring semester. Currently, students are admitted to the program once a year, effective for the summer following selection. Once admitted, students typically spend four full semesters completing their remaining coursework.

ENTERING THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

NEW AND CURRENT UW-MADISON STUDENTS

New freshmen interested in EESE are admitted directly to the School of Education with a "pre-professional" classification. This classification indicates that a student is interested in a program offered by the school, but has not applied and been admitted to the professional program. Students interested in EESE receive the "pre-professional" classification of PSR.

On-campus students wishing to be admitted to the school while working on eligibility requirements and application can apply for admission to the school by completing a Pre-Professional Application (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>). A minimum GPA of 2.5, based on UW-Madison coursework, is required to transfer into the school. This GPA may be modified by the Last 60 Credits rule (detailed below (p.)). It is not necessary to be a "pre-professional" student before applying to a professional program.

It is strongly recommended that students interested in a School of Education program meet with an academic advisor in the School of Education Student Services office, 139 Education Building, 1000 Bascom Mall. Current students can schedule an appointment online through the Starfish app (<https://advising.wisc.edu/facstaff/starfish/starfish-student-resources/>) in MyUW. Appointments can also be made through email at soeacademicservices@education.wisc.edu, (soeacademicservices@education.wisc.edu) by calling 608-262-1651, or in person.

PROSPECTIVE TRANSFER STUDENTS

Applicants not already enrolled on the UW-Madison campus must be admissible to the University to enroll in a School of Education program. Admission to the campus has its own application, admission

process, and application deadlines; see UW-Madison Office of Admissions and Recruitment (<http://admissions.wisc.edu/>) for application information.

Students wishing to enter directly into EESE should complete both the on-campus program application and the UW-Madison application. All eligibility requirements must be met. Transfers who do not meet the program eligibility criteria will be admitted to UW-Madison with the Pre-Elementary Education and Special Education designation of PSR and apply to EESE at a later time.

Prospective transfer students are strongly advised to meet with an advisor in the School of Education Student Services office in advance of their application. Appointments are available in person, virtually, or via telephone; call 608-262-1651 or email soeacademicservices@education.wisc.edu to schedule an appointment with an advisor.

STUDENTS WITH A PREVIOUS DEGREE

Applicants who already hold a Bachelor's degree must be admissible to the University to enroll in a School of Education program. Admission to the campus has its own application, admission process, and application deadlines; see UW-Madison Office of Admissions and Recruitment (<http://admissions.wisc.edu/>) for application information.

Students wishing to enter directly into EESE should complete both the on-campus program application and the UW-Madison application. All eligibility requirements must be met. Applicants who do not meet the program eligibility criteria will be admitted to UW-Madison with a Pre-Elementary Education and Special Education designation and apply to the program at a later time.

An applicant with a previous undergraduate degree will be admitted to EESE as a second degree candidate or as a School of Education "Special Student," depending on their academic background.

Second degree candidates in the School of Education are changing their academic direction and wish to complete a degree that is unrelated to their first. A large number of credits are usually required to complete the new degree requirements and a second degree is awarded upon its completion; more information is available here (<http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationstext>). Most applicants to EESE will be second degree candidates.

Admission as an *Education Special Student* indicates that the student has an interest in pursuing teacher certification in EESE and studied this subject area extensively during their initial degree. A student enrolls in EESE as a Special Student to complete the requirements that were not taken during the first degree; these are assessed on a case by case basis. Another degree is not awarded for this "certification only" coursework.

All off-campus students are strongly encouraged to meet with an advisor in the School of Education Student Services office in advance of their application. Consultations are available in person, virtually, or via telephone; email soeacademicservices@education.wisc.edu or call 608-262-1651 to schedule an appointment.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Certification to teach Elementary Education and Special Education requires that a student be admitted into the professional part of the degree program. The School of Education admits students into the EESE program once a year, effective for summer following selection. In recent years the program has been able to accommodate all qualified applicants.

PROGRAM ADMISSION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements and selection criteria may be modified from one application/admission period to the next. Any changes to these criteria may occur up until the application period begins. Potential applicants should consult the School of Education's Undergraduate Admissions (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>) page for application deadlines and detailed information regarding current eligibility requirements and selection criteria prior to submitting an application.

To be eligible for admission to the professional program, applicants must:

- complete at least 40 transferable college-level credits by the end of the fall semester before application.
- successfully complete RP & SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities (3 cr) by the end of the summer semester of the application year.
- earn a minimum 2.5 grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale on all transferable college-level coursework attempted.¹
- submit all program application form(s), transcripts, and other related application materials by the application deadline specified on the School of Education's Undergraduate Admissions (<http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/academics/undergraduate-students/academic-program-admission/>) page.

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A comprehensive cumulative GPA of all college-level, transferrable coursework attempted on both the UW-Madison campus coursework and coursework taken at any other colleges or universities may be calculated for the exclusive purpose of establishing an applicant's eligibility for consideration. Both the comprehensive cumulative GPA and the comprehensive cumulative GPA based on a student's last 60 credits may be calculated. See Last 60 Credits Rule (detailed below). If admitted, students must earn the minimum cumulative GPA for UW-Madison coursework established by their program and the School of Education each semester after admission.

Last 60 Credits Rule

Two grade point averages will be calculated to determine candidates' eligibility for program consideration. GPAs will be calculated using

- all transferable college level coursework attempted, and
- the last 60 credits attempted.

The higher GPA of these two will be used for purposes of determining eligibility. If fewer than 60 credits have been attempted, all credits will be used to calculate the GPA. Graded graduate coursework will also be used in all GPA calculations. ("Attempted" coursework indicates coursework for which a grade has been earned.) More information on this rule is

available here (<http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/education/#policiesandregulationstext>).

PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA

The faculty will review all completed applications that meet eligibility criteria. When reviewing an application, the faculty want to learn as much about the applicant as possible and will make every effort to take into account the whole person. Applicants are encouraged to provide, in writing, whatever they would want to share in a face-to-face interview.

The selection committee members will consider several factors when selecting students for the program. Although the grade point average (GPA) is considered an important indicator of success, it is not the only basis on which applicants will be selected for admission. Trends in the applicant's grades, difficulty of course load, and outside work load will be considered (see factors 1, 2, and 3 below).

In addition to the GPA, faculty will consider the following factors:

- **College grading and course selection pattern.** Transcripts will be examined individually. Account will be taken whether an applicant has clearly followed an unusually easy or difficult pattern of courses or if the GPA reflects a poor grade in an exceptionally difficult subject area.
- **Trends of college grades.** An applicant who started very poorly or showed a decline in their early phases of college, but performed strongly in later college years, may be judged more favorably than another with the same GPA but level or declining record.
- **Diversity of experience or background.** Work/life experience, college activity, political activity, and other experiences or background that adds a diverse perspective to the Elementary Education and Special Education student body may work in the applicant's favor. Volunteer or paid work with people with disabilities will be taken into account in the selection process. Volunteer or paid work with people from a background different than the applicant's may also be taken into account in the selection process.
- **Writing sample (Statement of Purpose).** Application materials must include an essay in which the applicant gives reasons for becoming an elementary education and special education teacher. Writing is so important in the professional life of teachers and in the teacher education program that the quality of the applicant's writing will be taken into account in making admissions decisions.
- **Letters of recommendation.** Recommendation letters will play an important role in helping the selection committee judge the applicant's prospects for academic success in the program. Careful, thoughtful letters from mentors, teachers, or employers will provide information about the applicant's intellect, imagination, or prospects for becoming a successful teacher. Working with people with disabilities will be taken into account in the selection process. Working with people from a background different than the applicant's may also be taken into account in the selection process.
- **Other factors.** The program's quest for diversity leads the selection committee to take into account fully qualified applicants from under-represented groups.

Race, ethnicity, cultural, geographic background, and economic disadvantage are among the factors that will be considered, taking into account the needs of the schools. A full-time or extra heavy part-time work load will be considered a factor in close cases.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Pursuant to State of Wisconsin law PI 34.018(2), the School of Education is required to administer a background check on all students entering teacher education programs. 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 frequently conduct background checks on teacher education students prior to the start of their in-classroom field work, and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will also conduct a background check on each applicant for a Wisconsin educator license.

Students should be aware that 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.

Note: Students cannot complete the Certificate in Disability Rights and Services in conjunction with this program.