

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION, BS: K4-12 SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education certification in the state of Wisconsin has undergone changes in the grade levels associated with specific licenses. The UWM Special Education program is adapting curriculum to prepare students to teach in K4-12 settings, including extensive fieldwork. This program prepares students to work in urban settings and takes place in close partnership with local school districts.

The UWM School of Education’s urban mission is upheld in the special education program’s commitment to preparing pre-service teachers to meet the needs of diverse populations. Students are admitted into the program upon admission to the University and completion of pre-professional coursework. It is possible to complete the program in four years. This is a field-based program involving gradual and extensive work in urban schools. Upon successful completion of all student teaching requirements, including state required assessments, students will be licensed to teach in special education.

Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
	General Education Requirements	30
	Program Requirements *	82
	Electives to graduate	8
Total Credits		120

* Some program-required courses are approved as GER

Preparatory Coursework

Based on individual placement results, some students may be required to complete preparatory coursework before enrolling in the courses listed here. This may include English language or composition preparation, developmental math, introductory chemistry, and/or student support courses for students participating in the First Year Bridge program.

General Education Requirements (GER)

UW-Milwaukee has General Education Requirements (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/policies/undergraduate-policies/#generaleducationtext>) that must be met in order to earn a bachelor’s or associate degree. They include at minimum 30 credits (10 courses) in six categories that are designed to assure basic student competencies and provide a broad body of knowledge as a context for specialization.

Some degree requirements may fulfill GERs. Please review the requirements and consult with your academic advisor.

Code	Title	Credits
General Education Categories and Credits		
	Civics and Perspectives (CP)	6
	Communication and Literacy (CL)	6
	Humanities and Arts (HA)	6
	Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning (MQR)	3
	Natural Science and Wellness (NSW/NSWL)	6

Social and Behavioral Science (SBS)	3
Total Credits	30

Advance to Professional Sequence

Students must meet certain criteria and apply to their specific licensure program in addition to admission to UWM. Please see information about minimum credits, GPA, and other requirements at Advance to Professional Sequence. (p. 4)

Program Core

Program core is comprised of foundational courses and should be completed prior to beginning the professional education semesters.

Code	Title	Credits
MATH 175	Mathematical Explorations for Elementary Teachers I	3
MATH 176	Mathematical Explorations for Elementary Teachers II (GER-MQR)	3
COMMUN 103	Public Speaking (GER-CL)	3
ED POL 375	Cultural Foundations of Education SR-3(b-f), SR-4	3
SOCIOL 224	Race and Ethnicity in the United States (GER-CP)	3
CURRINS 300	Introduction to Teaching: Colloquium and Fieldwork	3
ED PSY 330	Introduction to Learning and Development	3
Choose one:		3
EXCEDUC 300	The Exceptional Individual SR-7	
EXCEDUC 600	Survey of Special Education SR-7	
EXCEDUC 605	Child, Learner, Disabilities SR-7	
<i>Highly recommended (fulfills GER)</i>		
CURRINS 233	Introduction to Children’s and Young Adult Literature (GER-HA)	
CURRINS 234	Teachers as Writers (Preferred course; GER-CL)	
ART ED 130	Multicultural Art and Visual Learning in Elementary Education (Preferred course; GER-CP)	
COMSDIS 210	Survey of Communication Disorders (Preferred course; GER-SBS)	
Total Credits		24

SR-3(b-3)	Statutory Requirements-Equity (b-f)
SR-7	Statutory Requirements-Children with Disabilities
SR-4	Statutory Requirements-Conflict Resolution

Content Area

A cumulative grade point average of not less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in the following courses or equivalents meets the DPI content knowledge proficiency requirement.

Code	Title	Credits
English - 2 courses, such as:		
COMMUN 103	Public Speaking (GER-CL)	6
CURRINS 234	Teachers as Writers (GER-CL)	
ENGLISH 102	College Writing and Research (GER-CL)	

Or course with equivalent content		
Math - 2 courses, such as:		6
MATH 175	Mathematical Explorations for Elementary Teachers I	
MATH 176	Mathematical Explorations for Elementary Teachers II (GER-MQR)	
Or course with equivalent content		
Social Studies - 1 course, such as:		3
ANTHRO 213	American Indian Peoples of Wisconsin (GER-CP)	
HIST 263	North American Indian History Since 1887 (GER-CP)	
SOCIOL 224	Race and Ethnicity in the United States (GER-CP)	
Or course with equivalent content		
Science - 1 course, such as:		3
CES 210	Introduction to Conservation and Environmental Science (GER-NSW)	
Or course with equivalent content		

Professional Sequence

Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 and a C or better in all professional sequence courses.

Code	Title	Credits
<i>Year 1 - Fall</i>		
CURRINS 306	Initial Clinical Experience in Elementary and Middle Education	1
CURRINS 330	Teaching of Mathematics 1	3
CURRINS 536	Literacy 1: Assessing and Teaching Early Literacy ^{SR-6}	3
CURRINS 556	Professional Linking Seminar 1	3
EXCEDUC 586	Teaching Experience I ^{SR-8}	1
EXCEDUC 635	Individualized Planning & Instructional Methods	2
<i>Year 1 - Spring</i>		
CURRINS 331	Teaching of Mathematics 2	3
CURRINS 377	Wisconsin Foundations of Reading	1
CURRINS 537	Literacy 2: Assessing and Teaching Literacy through Early Adolescence	3
EXCEDUC 586	Teaching Experience I ^{SR-8}	1
EXCEDUC 636	Curriculum Accommodations I: High Incidence Disabilities	3
TCH LRN 612	Collaborations for Teachers with Families, Schools, and Communities	3
<i>Year 2 - Fall</i>		
EXCEDUC 483	Foundations of Reading Alternative Preparation (Only if needed)	
EXCEDUC 532	Assessment and Monitoring	3
EXCEDUC 587	Teaching Experience II ^{SR-8}	3
EXCEDUC 601	Behavioral Supports ^{SR-4}	3
EXCEDUC 679	Critical Issues in Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities	3
CURRINS 541	Principles and Methods of Teaching ESL ^{SR-3(b-f)}	3

<i>Year 2 - Spring</i>		
EXCEDUC 488	Linking Seminar: Professional Development	1
EXCEDUC 588	Teaching Experience III ^{SR-5, SR-8}	9
EXCEDUC 574	Curriculum Accommodations II: Low Incidence Disabilities	3
Total Credits		55
SR-8	Statutory Requirements-Professional Responsibilities	
SR-6	Statutory Requirements-Reading and Language Arts	
SR-4	Statutory Requirements-Conflict Resolution	
SR-3(b-f)	Statutory Requirements-Equity (b-f)	
SR-5	Statutory Requirements-Teacher Responsibilities	

Requirements for Graduation

For information on credit, GPA, and other requirements for graduation, see UWM Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/policies/undergraduate-policies/>).

Second Degree or Post-Baccalaureate, One Year Pathway

For individuals with a bachelor's degree and previous teacher certification.

Professional Requirements

Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 and a C or better in all professional sequence courses.

Code	Title	Credits
<i>Summer 1</i>		
ED POL 534	Students Placed At Risk: Deconstructing Risk, Defining Promise	3
or ED POL 535	Educating Students Placed At Risk: Pedagogies of Engagement	
TCH LRN 612	Collaborations for Teachers with Families, Schools, and Communities	3
<i>Fall 1</i>		
CURRINS 536	Literacy 1: Assessing and Teaching Early Literacy ^{SR-6}	3
CURRINS 556	Professional Linking Seminar 1	3
EXCEDUC 586	Teaching Experience I	1
EXCEDUC 601	Behavioral Supports ^{SR-4}	3
EXCEDUC 635	Individualized Planning & Instructional Methods	2
EXCEDUC 679	Critical Issues in Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities	3
<i>Spring 1</i>		
CURRINS 537	Literacy 2: Assessing and Teaching Literacy through Early Adolescence	3
EXCEDUC 588	Teaching Experience III ^{*, SR-5}	3
EXCEDUC 636	Curriculum Accommodations I: High Incidence Disabilities	3
or EXCEDUC 574	Curriculum Accommodations II: Low Incidence Disabilities	

EXCEDUC 483	Foundations of Reading Alternative Preparation (If needed) †	
Total Credits		30

* An additional 1-3 credits of EXCEDUC 588 may be required in the following fall semester for students who do not demonstrate consistent levels of performance in their field placement.

† Students should attempt the WIFoRT test once.

SR-6 Statutory Requirements-English and Language Arts

SR-4 Statutory Requirements-Conflict Resolution

SR-5 Statutory Requirements-Teacher Responsibilities

Second Degree or Post-Baccalaureate, Two Year Pathway

For individuals with a bachelor's degree and no previous education certification.

Professional Requirements

Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 and a C or better in all professional sequence courses.

Code	Title	Credits
<i>Summer 1</i>		
EXCEDUC 605 or EXCEDUC 600	Child, Learner, Disabilities ^{SR-7} Survey of Special Education	3
TCH LRN 612	Collaborations for Teachers with Families, Schools, and Communities	3
<i>Fall 1</i>		
CURRINS 536	Literacy 1: Assessing and Teaching Early Literacy ^{SR-6}	3
CURRINS 556	Professional Linking Seminar 1	3
EXCEDUC 586	Teaching Experience I	1
EXCEDUC 635	Individualized Planning & Instructional Methods	2
<i>Spring 1</i>		
CURRINS 377	Wisconsin Foundations of Reading	1
CURRINS 537	Literacy 2: Assessing and Teaching Literacy through Early Adolescence	3
EXCEDUC 586	Teaching Experience I	1
EXCEDUC 636	Curriculum Accommodations I: High Incidence Disabilities	3
<i>Summer 2</i>		
ED POL 534 or ED POL 535	Students Placed At Risk: Deconstructing Risk, Defining Promise Educating Students Placed At Risk: Pedagogies of Engagement	3
<i>Fall 2</i>		
EXCEDUC 483	Foundations of Reading Alternative Preparation (If needed)	
EXCEDUC 532	Assessment and Monitoring	3
EXCEDUC 587	Teaching Experience II	3
EXCEDUC 601	Behavioral Supports ^{SR-4}	3
EXCEDUC 679	Critical Issues in Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities	3
<i>Spring 2</i>		

EXCEDUC 488	Linking Seminar: Professional Development	1
EXCEDUC 574	Curriculum Accommodations II: Low Incidence Disabilities	3
EXCEDUC 588	Teaching Experience III ^{SR-5}	3
Total Credits		45

SR-7 Statutory Requirements-Children with Disabilities

SR-6 Statutory Requirements-English and Language Arts

SR-4 Statutory Requirements-Conflict Resolution

SR-5 Statutory Requirements-Teacher Responsibilities

Additional Requirements for Certification

- Passing score on the Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test (WIFoRT) or successful completion of the WIFoRT alternative is also required for endorsement to be licensed to teach in the State of Wisconsin. Students who currently hold a Wisconsin Tier II or higher teaching license in any subject do not complete this requirement.
- Successfully complete the content knowledge requirement for your program through one of the following:
 - Minimum 3.0 GPA in content coursework.
 - Passing score on the Praxis Subject Assessment Exam: Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science).
 - Successful completion of a content-based portfolio.
- Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 in all UWM and transfer courses.
- Demonstrate successful completion of the Pedagogical Knowledge Assessment (PKA).
- Meet all applicable Wisconsin statutory and testing requirements.
- Complete approved coursework in the history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of American Indian tribes and bands located in Wisconsin, met through one of the following:

Code	Title	Credits
AIS 276	Introduction to American Indian Literature: (topic: History, Literature & Sovereignty of Wisconsin Tribes (GER-CP) ^{SR-3(a)}	3
ANTHRO 213	American Indian Peoples of Wisconsin (GER-CP) ^{SR-3(a)}	3
ENGLISH 276	Introduction to American Indian Literature: (topic: History, Literature & Sovereignty of Wisconsin Tribes (GER-CP) ^{SR-3(a)}	3
HIST 263	North American Indian History Since 1887 (GER-CP) ^{SR-3(a)}	3
ACT 31: History, Culture and Sovereignty Rights of Wisconsin Indians Workshop ^{SR-3(a)}		
Or an approved equivalent		

SR-3(a) Statutory Requirements-Equity (a)

Advance to Major Advance to Professional Sequence

- At least 45 credits completed.
- Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5.
- Grade of C or better in CURRINS 300 and a positive field evaluation or equivalent.
- Grade of C or better in MATH 175.
- Earning a passing grade in ENGLISH 102 (or equivalent); or placing out of taking ENGLISH 102 by earning a suitable score on a test as determined by the English Department.
- Math Placement Level 30, or a grade of C or higher in any 100-level Math course (excluding MATH 194 or MATH 199) or MATH 111/PHILOS 111.
- Successful application and interview.
- For post-baccalaureate and second degree candidates, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

Criminal Background Check

Criminal Background Check (CBC). For all students, a background check shall be completed no more than 6 months prior to the date of admission (advance to professional sequence) into the educator preparation program. The background check shall include a review of criminal conduct at the state and federal levels.

Benchmarks Student Teaching

Students must complete an application to request/be assigned a student teaching placement. To determine your deadline (February or April), visit the Office of Clinical Experiences website (<https://uwm.edu/education/academics/clinical-experiences/>).

Portfolio/Performance Reviews

Conducted at the end of each semester and formal portfolio review at the end of Year 1. A favorable performance review is required to continue in the certification program.

Evidence of pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge related to teaching reading

- CURRINS 536 with a grade of B- or better;
- Feedback and coaching from an expert of reading instruction;
- Portfolio of evidence demonstrating competence in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading, comprehension, and fluency.

Student Advising and Support Services

At the College of Community Engagement and Professions (CCEP), your success is our priority. Our dedicated student advising and support services team is here to help you navigate your academic journey, from your first semester through graduation.

Whether you're exploring majors, planning your course schedule, or preparing for your career, our advisors offer personalized guidance tailored to your goals. You'll also find a range of support services designed to help you thrive—academically, personally, and professionally. We're committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive environment where every student feels seen, supported, and empowered to succeed.

For more information, visit the [CCEP Student Advising & Support Services website \(https://uwm.edu/community-engagement-professions/about/student-advising-support-services/\)](https://uwm.edu/community-engagement-professions/about/student-advising-support-services/).

Email: ccep-advising@uwm.edu | Phone: 414-229-4707

Graduate Advising

If you are a School of Education graduate student, you may schedule an appointment with your faculty advisor by contacting your faculty advisor directly. Faculty contact information can be found in the Directory (<https://uwm.edu/education/directory/>). Your faculty advisor will be listed in your PAWS account.

Accelerated Program Option

This program is offered as part of an accelerated graduate program. For more information, see Accelerated Graduate Degrees (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/opportunities-resources/accelerated-graduate-degrees/>).

Honors in the Department of Teaching and Learning

Departmental Honors are granted to students who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.500 or above, based on a minimum of 40 graded UWM credits earned prior to the final semester.

College of Community Engagement and Professions Dean's Honor List

GPA of 3.750 or above, earned on a full-time student's GPA on 12 or more graded credits in a given semester.

Honors College Degree and Honors College Degree with Distinction

Granted to graduating seniors who complete Honors College requirements, as listed in the Honors College (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/honors-college/>) section of this site.

Commencement Honors

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.500 or above, based on a minimum of 40 graded UWM credits earned prior to the final semester, will receive all-university commencement honors and be awarded the traditional gold cord at the December or May Honors Convocation. Please note that for honors calculation, the GPA is **not** rounded and is truncated at the third decimal (e.g., 3.499).

Final Honors

Earned on a minimum of 60 graded UWM credits: Cum Laude - 3.500 or above; Magna Cum Laude - 3.650 or above; Summa Cum Laude - 3.800 or above.