

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education programs are built on the framework of “Educators as Builders of Community.” The programs call for future teachers and administrators to perceive their roles in education as developers of community. Grounded in a Benedictine, liberal arts tradition, the program advocates that the goals and means of the educative process are complementary and seek the pursuit of human dignity and social responsibility.

Undergraduate Education majors take an integrated course of study that includes a professional education core, a methods core, and a research and field experience core to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of professionally qualified educators. Beginning in their freshmen year, candidates will spend time in PreK-12th grade classrooms observing, practicing teaching, and learning alongside cooperating teachers to develop necessary competencies.

The School of Education offers Bachelor of Arts degrees for a major in Elementary Education, Special Education, or Secondary Education. Elementary majors are eligible to apply for a PreK-6th grade license after successfully fulfilling degree requirements. Special education majors double major in elementary and special education, and they are eligible to apply for a PreK-6th general education license and a K-12 special education endorsement at the completion of degree requirements. Secondary education majors double major in one of the following contents and secondary education: PreK-12th licensure areas: Art, French, Music, PE/Health, or Spanish and 6th-12th licensure areas: Biology, Chemistry, English, Math, Physics, Social Science, or Theology.

The School of Education offers a master’s degree in School Leadership (MASL) for licensed teachers seeking to obtain the knowledge and skills to be a K-12th grade school leader. After the completion of the 35-credit master’s degree and successfully passing the licensure exam, candidates can apply to add the School Leadership endorsement to their existing teaching license. The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) is a program designed for candidates with an undergraduate degree outside of Education who are seeking to obtain a teaching license. This 33-credit master’s degree is earned while the candidate is a full-time K-12 classroom teacher in either the elementary (PreK-6th grade) or secondary (6th-12th grade) track. After the completion of the program and successfully passing the content area exam, candidates can apply for their initial Kansas teaching license in the appropriate grade levels.

Teacher Education Program

In preparing teachers, the School of Education identifies three overarching goals for its programs, faculty, and students:

1. to build learning communities where students and teachers make meaningful choices, communicate and collaborate with others, think critically and conceptually, and act justly;
2. to model decision-making processes that are inquiry-based, equitable, and reflect the values of Benedictine communities; and
3. to actively involve the community as a partner in the educational process.

Guided by the goals, the program defines performance-based outcomes for future teachers as they become builders of community by developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions to:

1. Demonstrates knowledge of learner development and learner needs through the use of effective instruction and assessment to meet the needs of all learners.
2. Create a safe and productive learning environment in which to deliver content that promotes critical thinking, is informed by student needs, and respects and promotes diversity.
3. Create a learning environment that promotes collaboration, ownership of learning, engagement, and self-motivation.
4. Uses research-based practices, strategies, and tools in one’s discipline to plan and teach learners in the manner appropriate to the discipline.
5. Engages learners in critical thinking, inquiry, collaborative problem solving, and cross-curricular learning.
6. Utilizes various forms of assessment to monitor learner progress, engage students in their learning, and guide instructional decisions.
7. Plans instruction that includes high academic goals, cross-disciplinary connections, and knowledge of learner needs to promote learning.
8. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies (including technology tools) that support authentic student learning.
9. Participates in ongoing professional development, engages in reflective practices, and approaches constructive feedback as further opportunities for professional growth.
10. Establishes collegial and collaborative relationships with peers and stakeholders in order to best advocate and promote the needs of learners.

Progressing Through the Teacher Education Program/Professional Portfolios

Progress through the Teacher Education Program is determined by whether or not candidates meet standards adopted by the Committee on Teacher Education at three benchmark points. These points are as follows:

1. Admission into the Teacher Education Program;
2. Admission to Student Teaching; and
3. Completion of the Teacher Education Program.

At the three benchmark points, candidates must complete and submit an electronic professional portfolio. Detailed descriptions of the requirements for the professional portfolio are available in the *Teacher Education Handbook*, *Application to the School of Education Handbook*, and website. It should be noted that program requirements are updated on a regular basis and that candidates in the Teacher Education Program are responsible for becoming aware of and meeting these requirements. Because of frequent modifications in regulations promulgated by the Kansas State Department of Education, the School of Education reserves the right, without notice, to change the requirements for student progression through the Teacher Education Program, and the Master of Arts in School Leadership Program, and to change, without notice, the arrangement and contents of courses in said program.

Admission to Teacher Education and Student Teaching

Students must be formally accepted into the Teacher Education Program, which is required for enrollment in education courses higher than EDUC-2226 Characteristic of Indiv Exceptionalities. This application

process is typically initiated in the sophomore year and includes the following requirements:

1. Complete the "Candidate Information Sheet" and begin creating their electronic portfolio.
2. Submit all required artifacts for the portfolio, including: Educational Autobiography, Virtus certificate, Apple Teacher and Google Educator 1 certificates, and current transcript.
3. Satisfactory recommendations from three faculty members outside the School of Education indicating a belief that the applicant possesses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to do well as a member of the teaching profession. Transfer students may request two recommendations from faculty members at the institution from which they have transferred.
4. Satisfactory group interview led by members of the Committee on Teacher Education.
5. Have and maintain at all times during their time in the program a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75.

Final approval for admission to the Teacher Education Program is determined by the Committee on Teacher Education. Students should understand that completion of the above requirements does not in and of itself necessarily qualify them for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Students shall be admitted to the Teacher Education Program only if the above requirements are met; and if, in the judgment of a majority of the members of the Committee on Teacher Education, the student has the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be successful as a teacher. Occasionally when students are not able to meet the requirements of the Teacher Education Program, they will elect to pursue a non-licensure education major. This requires the same curriculum as an elementary education, special education, or secondary education major with the exception of the final practicum, which is a modified teaching experience. Students in this situation enroll in EDUC-4497 Modified Teaching Experience, for EDUC-4492 Supervised Student Teaching Elem School, EDUC-4496 Supervised Student Teach Secondar School, or EDUC-4491 Superv Stud Teach Indiv Exceptionalities, provided that a majority of School of Education faculty votes in favor of the substitution. Students who complete the modified teaching experience are not eligible for teacher licensure.

Candidates apply to student teach in the semester prior to their planned student teaching experience. Application is made by updating the candidate's electronic portfolio with the required documents obtained since the initial application. Student teaching candidates must also have a 2.75 GPA for acceptance. The Committee on Teacher Education will formally consider all student teacher applicants, based on the following:

1. Maintaining satisfactory performance on all Teacher Education Program requirements. (GPA 2.75, meeting the minimum scores on field experience evaluations, and updating candidate portfolio with required documentation).
2. Meeting all criteria for student teaching as described in the *Professional Portfolio Guide*, *Teacher Education Handbook*, K.S.A. 72–5213 Certification of Health for School Personnel requirements, and other School of Education publications.

Students shall be admitted to student teaching only if the above requirements are met; and if, in the judgment of a majority of the members of the Committee on Teacher Education, the student has the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be successful as a teacher. Following Committee on Teacher Education approval of a student's admittance into student teaching, the candidate must maintain

satisfactory performance on all program requirements. All program-required courses for the major(s) or the general education curriculum and any required proficiencies must be completed and denoted on the student's transcript prior to the beginning of the student teaching semester. Failure to complete program requirements will result in delaying student teaching until the next semester.

Application forms and materials may be obtained from the education advisor or the School of Education office. Students who do not fulfill the qualifications for admission to the Teacher Education Program, admission to student teaching or completion of the Teacher Education Program are extended the right of a due process hearing before the Committee on Teacher Education. Following this, if necessary, an appeal may be made to the dean of the college.

Successful completion of the professional education examinations approved by the Kansas State Department of Education is a requirement for licensure in Kansas. The student is responsible for the costs of these tests. Students are also responsible for transportation to and from education field experiences for the duration of their time in the program. The School of Education at Benedictine College does not assume any liability for cost or safety in the completion of course requirements.

Transfer students must take a minimum of 50% of pre-student teaching education coursework at Benedictine College.

Due Process Procedures

Admission to the Teacher Education Program, admission to student teaching, and approval for completion of the Teacher Education Program are decisions made by the Committee on Teacher Education (CTE). If a student wishes to contest a CTE decision, the following procedure is followed:

1. The student consults with the chair(s) of the CTE.
2. The student writes a letter of appeal to the CTE explaining his or her reasons for the appeal.
3. The CTE reviews the case and communicates its decision in writing to the student.
4. If still unsatisfied, the student may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College.

Additional due process procedures for resolving other student grievances are described in detail in the *School of Education Policies and Procedures*. These include termination of field experience/student teaching decisions and general complaints.

Technology Proficiency

Education majors must demonstrate proficiency in educational technology. Candidates applying to the School of Education must complete the *Apple Teacher and Google Educator Level 1* certifications for acceptance. These proficiencies form the basis for instruction in future methods courses. Fees associated with these trainings are the responsibility of the candidate.

Diversity Proficiency and Diverse Field Experiences

The School of Education maintains a commitment to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction that incorporates the histories, experiences and representations of students and families from diverse populations. Education majors must also demonstrate

proficiency in understanding, accepting and supporting students from diverse backgrounds. Although all education courses emphasize this, one particular course, EDUC-3312 School As Community/EDUC-3313 School As Community Rsch & Field Exper, is specifically devoted to the development of this competency. Student teaching candidates also engage in a two-day diversity placement during the student teaching semester to learn from the diverse academic, personal, emotional, and cultural experiences of students in designated settings.

Dispositions

To complete the teacher education program at Benedictine College, all candidates must demonstrate appropriate “dispositions.” This term means the values and professional ethics the college student brings to becoming a teacher. The dispositions we expect candidates to demonstrate may be summarized in the phrase, “Professionally Responsible Builder of Community.” (See the School of Education *Policies and Procedures Handbook* for a full description of these dispositions.)

Governance Including Committee on Teacher Education

The chair (or co-chairs, if so appointed) of the School of Education is a member of the faculty appointed by the Dean of the College to administer the affairs of the department. An important responsibility of the chair is maintaining program and unit accreditation with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). Primary responsibility for maintaining accreditation with KSDE resides with the chair; appropriate delegation to other faculty members is acceptable.

The School of Education is the governing unit that has primary responsibility for the Teacher Education Program (TEP), the Master of Arts in School Leadership (MASL) program, and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program at Benedictine College. The department operates within the governance structure of the college that includes the Board of Directors, Dean’s Council, Faculty Committees (undergraduate programs), and the Graduate Studies Committee (graduate programs).

Educational Advisory Committee

The School of Education solicits guidance for program improvement from its Education Advisory Committee, comprised of undergraduate and graduate candidates and program completers, and PK–12 partnership school administrators and teachers. Members of this advisory group are committed to the concept of preparing “Educators as Builders of Community” and know and understand goals and policies of both the TEP and graduate programs. The committee meets regularly to review data and make recommendations for program improvement. EAC members may act as a pilot in helping test out initial change endeavors in the program.

Assessment System

The School of Education’s assessment system provides regular and comprehensive data on program quality, unit operations, and candidate performance at each stage of its programs, extending into the first year of actual teaching. These data are regularly and systematically compiled, aggregated, summarized, and analyzed. In addition to regular monthly discussions of anecdotal data, the unit conducts—at a minimum—two data retreats/ extended meetings each semester at which time all relevant quantitative and qualitative data bearing on unit, program, and candidate performance are reviewed. The chair of the School of Education also meets at least annually with representatives of other Benedictine College departments with programs leading to teacher

licensure to consider data specific to these licensure areas. Assessment data bearing on program quality, unit operations, and candidate performance are shared with the larger professional community and general public by being posted annually on the Benedictine College website.

Waivers

Under exceptional circumstances, and after conferring with their advisor, students may request a waiver to School of Education policy. Students obtain a waiver request from the department office or their advisors. Waiver requests require the advisor’s recommendation and approval of a committee of departmental faculty and signature of the department co-chairs.

Student Teaching Block

Students preparing for elementary and/or secondary teaching enroll in a special professional block for one semester. The semester is directed toward completion of the professional education requirements. All KSDE program-required general education, education, and secondary education content coursework must be completed and passed prior to beginning the student teaching semester. Enrollment in other academic courses is not permitted during student teaching. Students preparing for special education enroll in a second semester block in the form of an advanced special education practicum to meet program standards for special education licensure. Placement for student teaching is ordinarily in partnership schools within a thirty-mile radius of Benedictine College. Partnership schools are established in the following ways:

1. formal partnership agreements between Benedictine College and a school/school district are signed,
2. partnership agreements for the duration of student teaching are signed by the president of Benedictine College and the respective school district.

Students are responsible for transportation to partnership schools. The School of Education and its school partners jointly determine the selection of cooperating teachers and other specifics regarding the placement of student teachers. Student teachers are supervised by cooperating teachers, clinical supervisors, and higher education faculty. In addition, each student teacher is observed and evaluated at least once by a School of Education faculty member.

Licensure Program

Students who have completed a bachelor’s degree at an accredited institution and are seeking teacher licensure are eligible to apply for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Students pursuing this option must provide evidence of fulfilling state requirements for the licensure area, fulfill School of Education requirements, take the majority of their pre-student teaching education coursework at Benedictine College, be admitted into teacher education and student teaching, and successfully complete the teaching block. In exceptional cases where the student has had a full-time teaching contract in an accredited school, the student teaching experience may be modified.

Section 207 of Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA) requires teacher preparation programs enrolling students who receive federal assistance under Title IV of the HEA to make available the following basic information about program performance. During the 2021–2022 academic year, 99 students had been formally accepted into the Benedictine College teacher preparation program; 46 of these students completed program requirements in 2021–2022. Ninety-seven percent of

these graduates who took all tests required for Kansas licensure passed all assessments, including professional knowledge tests. In 2021–2022, the statewide aggregate pass rate on various professional knowledge exams was 79% to 100%. The total number of hours required of students participating in supervised student teaching in these programs is 496. Questions regarding the teacher preparation program should be directed to the chair of the Benedictine College School of Education.

Programs

Bachelor

- Elementary Education (BA)
- Secondary Education (BA)
- Special Education (BA)

Minor

- Education Minor

Graduate

For graduate programs, please visit our Graduate Programs page.