

Bluefield College



Graduate Handbook

Revised July 2017

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FOREWORD

This handbook serves as a guide in outlining policies, procedures, and guidelines used in Bluefield College's Teacher Education Program, which is designed to prepare competent, caring, and qualified teachers who are reflective practitioners. The Bluefield College Teacher Education Program is awarded TEAC accreditation by the Inquiry Brief Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for seven years, from 10/24/2016-12/31/2023. The accreditation does not include individual education courses that the EPP offers to P-12 educators for professional development, re-licensure, or other purposes. This accreditation certifies that Bluefield College's Teacher Education Program has provided evidence that their program adheres to TEAC's quality principles.

Bluefield College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Bluefield College.

All programs have been reviewed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), realigned to the course competency matrices, and were given re-approval by the VDOE on November 17, 2011. Actions by the General Assembly of Virginia, the Virginia State Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, or Bluefield College may dictate changes in teacher education policies and regulations. Please keep in close contact with your advisor in the School of Education to become aware of any changes.

If there are questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please bring them to our attention.

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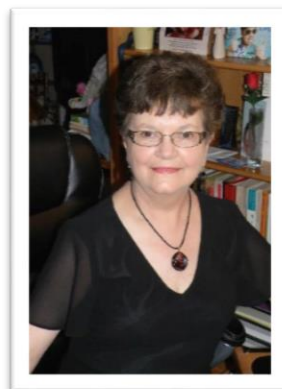
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INTRODUCTION and PHILOSOPHY

The Teacher Education Program has a long history at Bluefield College graduating highly qualified teachers since 1977. Bluefield graduates have pursued careers with distinction and have provided outstanding leadership and service to their communities.

Teacher education is a vital part of Bluefield College and supports the mission of the College:

Bluefield College is an inclusive Christ-centered learning community developing transformational servant leaders.

- *We are a community committed to Christ-centered learning and affirm our Baptist partnerships.*
- *We are a community committed to academic excellence and lifelong inquiry through the liberal arts and professional studies.*
- *We are a community characterized by integrity, mutual respect, support, and encouragement.*
- *We are a compassionate, globally-minded community that serves to transform the world.*

(Retrieved July 26, 2017, from www.bluefield.edu)

Undergraduate Teacher Education Program

The Teacher Education Program works within a conceptual framework of preparing *competent, caring, and qualified* teachers to be reflective practitioners and is built on a foundation of subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skills. Strands of technology, diversity, and leadership permeate the core areas, and all aspects of the program culminate in meeting licensure requirements. Students in the Teacher Education Program major in liberal arts or science area and receive either the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree.

Field experiences in public schools and professional education courses are woven throughout the undergraduate experience. In addition to providing valuable opportunities for students to apply theories presented in the college classroom and to engage in a continuous reflection in their approach to teaching, students begin to form a teaching identity as they pursue content knowledge in their major courses. Through field experiences in local public schools and pedagogical coursework, students apply educational theories and instructional strategies as they interact with diverse student populations.

Because we have a low faculty-student ratio and caring professors, we can establish a learning community that understands and values all individuals whose differing life experiences provide a rich background for learning. As the art of teaching and collegiality is modeled in courses by the professors and the students, the students translate those skills into their own teaching identity. The learning community extends beyond commencement as the graduates of our program seek our help in job placement, graduate school choice, and other professional decisions.

The cooperative involvement of the total college faculty and public school practitioners is built into the planning, administering, and evaluation of the Teacher Education Program. Students who have been admitted to the program are evaluated continuously to maintain eligibility for the program and to assure that teacher candidates who exit the program meet the highest standards.

Bluefield College's Teacher Education Program is nationally accredited by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) by the Inquiry Brief Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The teacher education programs have been aligned with the Virginia *Standards of Learning* (SOLs) and have been reviewed and approved by the Bluefield College liberal arts and sciences faculty. The programs have been reviewed and approved by the Virginia State Board of Education.

Bluefield College offers bachelor's degrees with teacher licensure in the following endorsement areas:

Bachelor of Science

Career and Technical Education: Business Information Technology 6-12
Health and Physical Education PreK-12
Mathematics 6-12
Science-Biology 6-12
Science-Chemistry 6-12

Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies

Elementary Education PreK-6
Special Education: General Curriculum K-12

Bachelor of Arts

Music Education—Vocal/Choral preK-12
Music Education—Instrumental preK-12
Theater Arts preK-12
Visual Arts preK-12
English 6-12
History and Social Sciences 6-12

Add-on endorsements are available in the following areas:

Journalism
Mathematics-Algebra I
Speech Communication

Information relative to the required courses for each of the teaching areas can be found in the School of Education. **Through advising sessions and course assignments, students learn that licensure requirements exceed graduation requirements.**

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Teacher as a Reflective Practitioner

The Reflective Teaching Model is the basis for the conceptual framework of the Bluefield College Teacher Education Program. This structure is supported by three knowledge constructs:

- ❖ Subject Matter Knowledge
- ❖ Pedagogical Knowledge
- ❖ Caring Teaching Skills

In all courses, the emphasis is placed on the following attributes to develop an educator who is a reflective practitioner:

- Technology
- Diversity
- Leadership
- Licensure
- (Graduate) Research



Graduate Education Program

In August 2013, the School of Education at Bluefield College developed the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) degree with a specialization in Teaching Excellence. Building on its 40-year history of successful program graduates, the MAEd degree program offers a program which emphasizes research that enhances teaching/learning. Licensed teachers, individuals with an inactive teaching license wishing to earn credits for renewal, individuals teaching on a provisional license hoping to complete required courses, and senior level undergraduate students who meet the necessary criteria, may apply to the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd).

Beginning in August 2015, the School of Education at Bluefield College offered the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) degree with Virginia teacher licensure. The Virginia State Department of Education approved the Bluefield College School of Education to offer teacher licensure with our MAEd degree program for the following endorsement areas:

- Biology
- Career & Technology Education: Business & Information Technology
- History & Social Sciences
- Music Education-Instrumental PreK-12
- Music Education-Vocal/Choral PreK-12
- Theater Arts PreK-12
- Visual Arts PreK-12

Individuals who possess a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a major in, or strongly related to, one of the areas listed above may apply to the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) with teacher licensure program. Course work in the content area will be evaluated against Bluefield College's state approved undergraduate program. Deficiencies in content requirements must be satisfied through additional course work at the graduate or undergraduate level.

Program Description

Following the national accreditation of the program through the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) in 2009, the goal to provide a graduate degree in teaching excellence began to take shape to serve not only our graduates but teachers around the region and beyond. As stated previously, the overall aim of the Teacher Education Program at Bluefield College at the undergraduate level is to prepare *competent, caring, and qualified* teachers who are reflective practitioners with goals of **Reflective Practice, Subject Matter Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, Caring Teaching Skills, Diversity, Technology, and Licensure**. Those aims would continue for the Bluefield College Master of Arts in Education. Students, who already hold a teaching license or credentials for teaching specifically to their career, would replace the licensure goal with **Leadership** and **Research**. At the graduate level, analyzing research studies and conducting original research would form the basis for a deeper experienced-based understanding and application of the goals as they apply to excellence in teaching and learning.

Admission Requirements for the MAEd Program without teacher licensure.

Admission to the MAEd program is limited to candidates capable of performing at the graduate level. Applicants must have the following:

- A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
- **A cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or higher on conferred degree.**
 - Official undergraduate transcript showing degree conferred and major completed must be provided.

- Official transcripts showing any completed graduate coursework must also be provided.
- A valid professional teaching license.
 - A copy of the professional license must be provided.
 - Prospective students with a valid professional teaching license from the state of Virginia may choose to have their license verified via the Virginia Department of Education website instead of submitting a copy to Bluefield College.
 - Prospective students who do not have a valid teaching license, but who have the credentials for teaching in their chosen career, may be considered if the graduate coursework is mutually determined to be beneficial to their performance in that career.
 - Prospective students who wish to take courses in the program to renew their teaching license should provide a copy of their expired license.
- Two positive responses from either the Bluefield College web-based reference forms or two letters of recommendation, both from individuals who have observed the applicant in a classroom or professional setting or have knowledge of their work ethic, academic abilities, and teaching proficiency.
- Pre-Self-Assessment of Professional Temperament and Performance completed.
- A completed Master of Arts in Education Application for Admission.

Admission Requirements for the MAEd Program with teacher licensure.

Admission to the MAEd program is limited to candidates capable of performing at the graduate level. Applicants must have the following:

- A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a major in, or strongly related to, the following endorsement areas:
 - Career & Technology Education: Business & Information Technology
 - History & Social Sciences
 - Music Education-Instrumental PreK-12
 - Music Education-Vocal/Choral Prek-12
 - Science-Biology
 - Theatre Arts PreK-12
 - Visual Arts PreK-12
- **A cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher on conferred degree.**
 - Official undergraduate transcript showing degree conferred and major completed must be provided.
 - Official transcripts showing any completed graduate coursework must also be provided.
- Two positive responses from either the Bluefield College web-based reference forms or two letters of recommendation, both from individuals who have observed the applicant in a classroom or professional setting or have knowledge of their work ethic, academic abilities, and teaching proficiency.
- Pre-Self-Assessment of Professional Temperament and Performance completed.
- A completed Master of Arts in Education Application for Admission.

Background Check Requirements

Most school divisions require background checks be completed before fulfilling field observation hours or student teaching placements. Candidates enrolled in the MAEd program must contact the school division where they wish to complete hours associated with course work and student teaching to determine what requirements are needed before beginning the field hours. If a negative result is revealed, then the teacher licensure candidate will be counseled about future career decisions.

Required Assessments

- Students must complete the following before enrolling in EDU 5553 Field Experience.
 - Passing test results on the PRAXIS Core Academic Skills for Educators Test: Mathematics (5732) OR the PRAXIS I Mathematics assessment (if taken before January 1, 2014).
 - Passing test results on the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)—Reading Subtest (091) and Writing Subtest (092)
- Students must complete the following before enrolling in EDU 5556 Student Teaching Internship.
 - Students must meet the minimum required score on the Praxis II Content Assessment required for Virginia licensure before being placed for student teaching.

Assessment Availability

Praxis Core Mathematics (5732):

The computerized test is given year-round, by appointment, at testing centers throughout the state and in other states. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities.

Required Scores

Core Academic Skills for Educators: Mathematics:5732 (On-screen four-function calculator provided.)
Required Score: 150

Information about registration, test dates, and testing locations for the Praxis Core Mathematics Assessment can be found on the ETS home page (<https://www.ets.org/praxis/va/requirements>).

Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (091 & 092):

The computerized test is given year-round, by appointment, at available at Pearson VUE test centers nationwide. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities.

Required Scores

Writing Sub-Test (092)	235
Reading Sub-Test (091)	235
Composite Score*	470*

Information about registration, test dates, and testing locations for the VCLA can be found on the VCLA home page (www.va.nesinc.com).

Praxis II Content Area Assessments:

The computerized test given during specific testing windows throughout the year. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. (<https://www.ets.org/praxis/va/requirements>).

Praxis II Score Requirements (as of 7/26/17)

Licensure Areas Available Through MAED with Teacher Licensure Program	Specialty Area Examination	Test Code	Required Score
Visual Arts PreK-12	Art: Content Knowledge	5134 Computer	158
Biology 6-12	Biology: Content Knowledge	5235 Computer	155
Business 6-12	Business Education: Content Knowledge	5101 Computer	157
Vocal/Choral Music PreK-12, Instrumental Music Prek-12	Music: Content Knowledge (contains listening section)	5113 Computer	160
History & Social Science 6-12	Social Studies: Content Knowledge	5081 Computer	161
Theater Arts Prek-12	NO PRAXIS II TEST REQUIRED IN VA AT THIS TIME.		

Important Test Score Information

It is the student's responsibility to submit minimum test scores for all required assessments to the School of Education. Testing companies DO NOT send official score reports to the college.

Immediately upon receiving official test scores, students should save the document to their personal computer or jump drive, submit a copy of the scores to the School of Education, and make a copy for themselves. Copies of test scores are required for individual education courses and student teaching. Most school systems also require copies of test scores when submitting applications for teaching positions.

It is critical for students to keep copies of all official score reports. Students only have access to their test scores via a testing company website for a limited number of days. After the scores are removed from the website students must pay to retrieve them again. Testing companies permanently delete student scores from their archives after a set number of years, and they cannot be retrieved.

Official test scores submitted to the School of Education cannot be released to anyone other than the Virginia Department of Education when the student's application for licensure is submitted. The student must sign a release to include the Bluefield College transcript and copies of score reports with the licensure application packet.

Teacher Licensure Requirements

Teacher licensure candidates who complete the approved teacher education program, including: the *Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)*, *PRAXIS II*, *Reading for Virginia Educators Assessment (RVE)* for PreK-6 and special education licensure and other state mandated tests, as well as, certification or training in: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting for Educators, Emergency first aid, Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED), and Dyslexia Awareness Training, are eligible for a Virginia teaching license with an endorsement in a specific area of study. All programs at Bluefield College have been approved by the Virginia State Board of Education. The fee for an initial Virginia teaching license is \$50 for Virginia residents and \$75 for out-of-state residents. The School of Education works with all teacher licensure candidates completing the approved program to facilitate the process for obtaining a teaching license in Virginia. It is the teacher licensure candidate's responsibility to submit all minimum scores and certifications to the School of Education along with the licensure application and the appropriate license fee. No teacher licensure candidates will be recommended for licensure until student teaching is completed.

Opportunities to Take Graduate Courses While an Undergraduate

Undergraduate teacher licensure candidates who are seniors in the Teacher Education Program may be granted permission to take graduate classes in the Master of Arts in Education program provided there are available seats in the course and provided that they meet the following requirements:

- Senior level status in the semester before student teaching or in student teaching
- Course load of 12-15 hours in the semester
- Overall grade point average of 3.50
- Successful completion of all required teacher license assessments
- Two references from faculty on file
- Completion of the Master of Arts in Education Undergraduate Application for Admission

If there are more eligible undergraduate teacher licensure candidates for the graduate program than there are available seats, eligible teacher licensure candidates will be ranked according to GPA, completion of assessments, additional endorsements, and academic minors.

Academic Standing for the MAEd Program

In line with the academic policies of Bluefield College, satisfactory academic standing for the MAEd program will be determined by completion of three graduate semester hours per term with no grade below a C. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.75 (3.0 for teacher licensure candidates) on a 4 point scale. If a student's GPA falls below 2.75 (3.0 for teacher licensure candidates) at the end of any semester, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program. To continue in the program, students must petition the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who will convene an ad-hoc committee to decide the student's status in the program. If approved to continue in the program, the student must create a plan for completion to be approved by the Dean of the School of Education. Grading, grade appeals, and grade changes will be consistent with the institution's existing academic policies and can be found in the Bluefield College Catalog.

Transfer Credits

Up to six hours of transfer credit, taken within the past five years, from a regionally accredited institution may be counted as credit toward the Master of Arts in Education. To receive transfer credit, the student must submit an official transcript, and if requested, a course syllabus and course description. All transfer credit is subject to approval by the Dean of the School of Education. The School of Education and Bluefield College reserve the right to evaluate all transfer credit regarding its institutional standards. A minimum of a B (3.00) is required for all transfer work. For teacher licensure: teacher licensure candidates **MUST** take EDU 5556 Student Teaching Internship at Bluefield College.

Graduation Requirements for the MAEd Program without teacher licensure.

The graduation requirements for the MAEd program include the completion of 30 required graduate hours of coursework, at least 24 of which must be earned at Bluefield College. Students may transfer no more than six credit hours toward the required 30 hours for completion. Candidates for graduation will be required to have a grade point average of 2.75 or better. Students who complete six credit hours per term (fall, spring, and summer) will complete the program in two years.

In addition to the 30 hours of required coursework, students will be required to complete a Self-Assessment of Professional Temperament and Performance, just as they did at the beginning of the admission process; they will submit a written examination, and a final research project requiring an oral presentation and a scholarly paper. Scores on rubrics must be 3 or above on a 5 point scale to satisfy requirements.

Master of Arts in Education (MAED)

30 Semester Hours

EDU 5113 Advanced Educational Psychology

EDU 5123 Education and Society

EDU 5133 Foundations of Special Education

EDU 5143 Teaching Strategies for Student Learning

EDU 5213 Assessment and Evaluation for Student Growth

EDU 5233 Understanding and Implementation of Curriculum

EDU 5243 Classroom Management and Behavior in a Diverse Society

EDU 5323 Research in Education

EDU 5333 Teachers as Leaders

EDU 5343 Action Research in Education

Schedule of Program Requirements

First Year	Semester Hours		Second Year	Semester Hours
EDU 5323(Fall)	3		EDU 5333 (Fall)	3
EDU 5213 (Fall)	3		EDU 5233 (Fall)	3
EDU 5143 Spring)	3		EDU 5343 (Spring)	3
EDU 5243 Spring)	3		EDU 5133 (Spring)	<u>3</u>
EDU 5113 (Summer)	3		Total:	12
EDU 5123 (Summer)	<u>3</u>			
Total	18			

Graduation Requirements for the MAEd Program with teacher licensure.

The graduation requirements for the MAEd program include the completion of 36 required graduate hours of coursework, at least 30 of which must be earned at Bluefield College. Students may transfer no more than six credit hours toward the required 36 hours for completion. Licensure candidates for graduation will be required to have a grade point average of 3.0 or better. Students who complete a minimum of 6 credit hours for three terms and nine credit hours for two terms will have the opportunity to complete the program in two years. The last semester will include student teaching.

In addition to the 36 hours of required coursework, students will be required to complete a Self-Assessment of Professional Temperament and Performance, just as they did at the beginning of the admission process. Also, they will submit a professional portfolio based on InTASC standards, a written examination, and a final research project requiring an oral presentation and a scholarly paper. Scores on rubrics must be 3 or above on a 5 point scale to satisfy requirements.

Master of Arts in Education (MAED) with teacher licensure. 36 Semester Hours

- EDU 5113 Advanced Educational Psychology
- EDU 5123 Education and Society
- EDU 5133 Foundations of Special Education
- EDU 5213 Assessment and Evaluation for Student Growth
- EDU 5223 Content Learning Through Reading and Writing
- EDU 5233 Understanding and Implementation of Curriculum
- EDU 5243 Classroom Management and Behavior in a Diverse Society
- EDU 5323 Research in Education
- EDU 5343 Action Research in Education
- EDU 5553 Field Experience (100 hours of Field Observation)
- EDU 5556 Student Teaching Internship

Schedule of Program Requirements

First Year	Semester Hours		Second Year	Semester Hours
EDU 5323(Fall)	3		EDU 5553 (Fall)	3
EDU 5213 (Fall)	3		EDU 5233 (Fall)	3
EDU 5223 (Spring)	3		EDU 5343 (Spring)	3
EDU 5243 (Spring)	3		EDU 5556 (Spring)	<u>6</u>
EDU 5133 (Spring)	3			15
EDU 5113 (Summer)	3			
EDU 5123 (Summer)	<u>3</u>			
Total	21			

Graduate Program Records Policy

Records of students who have not completed requirements for the graduate program are retained for five years and are then destroyed. Complete records of students who have completed a Master of Arts in Education are retained for ten years and are then destroyed other than transcripts which are kept permanently in the Office of the Registrar.

Graduate Program with Teacher Licensure Records Policy

Records of teacher licensure candidates who have not completed an approved teacher education program are retained for five years and are then destroyed. Complete records of teacher licensure candidates who have completed an approved teacher education program are kept for ten years. After that time, only a copy of the application for initial licensure is retained. The application packet for initial Virginia teacher licensure is forwarded to the appropriate office of the Virginia Department of Education in Richmond. The teacher licensure candidate must sign a release to include the Bluefield College transcript and copies of the required test scores. **No other copies of the mandated test scores are released. The teacher licensure candidate is advised to make copies of these score reports to include them with applications for teaching positions. Teacher licensure candidates are also advised to keep copies of recommendation forms and other materials since these cannot be released.**