

# **Graduate Handbook**



## **Bluefield College School of Education**

**SEPTEMBER 2016**

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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. Accreditation was granted by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) for a period of seven years, from December 11, 2009 to December 11, 2016. This accreditation certifies that the forenamed professional education program has provided evidence that the 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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## INTRODUCTION and PHILOSOPHY

The Teacher Education Program has a long history at Bluefield College graduating highly qualified teachers since 1979. 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 life-long 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, 2016 from [www.bluefield.edu](http://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 and diversity permeate the core areas, and all aspects of the program culminate in meeting licensure requirements. Students in the Teacher Education Program major in a 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 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 through 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 are able to 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 in order 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 through the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation). 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 and on the Bluefield College website. **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 framework is supported by three knowledge bases:

- ❖ Subject Matter Knowledge (Undergraduate)
- ❖ Pedagogical Knowledge
- ❖ Caring Teaching Skills

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

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



## 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 more than 30 year history of successful program graduates, the MAED degree program offers a program which emphasizes research that enhances teaching/learning. Licensed teachers or qualified individuals with teaching positions in other careers who desire a master's degree to advance professional goals, and senior level undergraduate students who meet the required 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 specific 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.

As stated above, the overall aim of the School of Education is to prepare competent, caring, and qualified teachers who are reflective practitioners; that aim links to the goals of the Teacher Education Program.

### **Admission Requirements for the MAEd Program without teacher licensure.**

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

- A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
- A grade point average of 2.75 or higher in all college work.
  - Official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate courses (except for those taken at Bluefield College) must be provided.
- A valid professional teaching license.
  - A copy of the professional license must be provided.
  - 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.
  - Test results from either the Praxis II Content Assessment, the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general test or the Miller Analogies. A copy of the scores must be provided.
- 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, including essay questions.

\*Individuals who have completed a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education are exempt from taking/submitting GRE/MAT scores.

### **Admission Requirements for the MAEd Program with teacher licensure.**

Admission to the MAEd program is limited to candidates capable of performing on 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 grade point average of 3.00 or higher in all college work.
  - Official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate courses (except for those taken at Bluefield College) must be provided.
- Assessment Requirements. A copy of all test results must be provided.
  - **For admission to the MAED program**
    - Praxis II Content Assessment test results in the teaching endorsement area sought. Praxis II must be taken prior to admission. Students must meet the minimum required score on the Praxis II Content Assessment required for Virginia licensure prior to being placed for student teaching.
  - **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 prior to January 1, 2014).
- Passing test results on the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)—Reading Subtest (091) and Writing Subtest (092)
- 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, including essay questions.

### **Probationary Acceptance to the Graduate Program**

For consideration of probationary acceptance, an individual may apply to the graduate program and take six (6) credit-hours of courses before all requirements are met. However, application and fee, transcripts, minimum required GPA, and letters of reference are necessary for probationary acceptance. Failure to complete all admission requirements after six (6) hours of coursework will result in administrative withdrawal from additional courses or credit may not be applied toward graduation in the degree program. Once all admission requirements are met, the student will receive a letter of unconditional acceptance to the Master of Arts in Education program and can then continue coursework.

### **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. In order to continue in the program, students must petition the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who will convene an ad-hock 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 from a regionally accredited institution may be counted as credit toward the Master of Arts in Education. In order to receive transfer credit, the student must submit an official transcript, and if requested, a course syllabus and/or 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 in terms of 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 successfully complete 6 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; 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 SH**

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**

EDU 5323(Fall) 3 SH

EDU 5213 (Fall) 3 SH

EDU 5143 3 SH

(Spring) 3 SH

EDU 5243 3 SH

(Spring) 3 SH

EDU 5113 18

(Summer) SH

EDU 5123

(Summer)

Total

#### **Second Year**

EDU 5333 (Fall) 3 SH

EDU 5233 (Fall) 3 SH

EDU 5343 (Spring) 3 SH

EDU 5133 (Spring) 3 SH

12

SH

### **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 successfully complete a minimum of 6 credit hours for three terms and 9 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. In addition, they will submit a professional portfolio based on InTASC standards and TEAC principles, 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 SH**

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**

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

**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 retained 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 retained 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 in**

**order 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.**

### **Assessment Information**

Assessments for the MAED program will follow the competencies of pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skills, diversity, reflective thinking, technology, research and leadership. Formative and summative assessments will be given in each course, and final assessments will be given to complete the masters' program. Several of these will be used for data collection including the following:

Entry Level:

GRE or MAT Scores/Praxis II Scores

*Self-Assessment of Professional Temperament and Performance* (Pre-program)

Within Courses:

- Students are required to record themselves teaching a lesson during the semester. The student, as well as the instructor, will view the video and assess it for pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skills, diversity, reflective thinking, and technology. Copies of lesson evaluations in this class may be retained by the Teacher Education Program. These ratings may be analyzed to ascertain program effectiveness in each category.
- Students are required to obtain two or more lesson evaluations from administrators or colleagues at the school level. Those lessons will be assessed for pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skills, diversity, reflective thinking, and technology. Copies of lesson evaluations in this class may be retained by the Teacher Education Program. These ratings may be analyzed to ascertain program effectiveness in each category. In addition, students may be required to video record themselves during the semester.
- Students are required to develop and implement a research project to impact student learning. They will present the project and their results for a panel of evaluators who will assess the research process, as well as content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skills, diversity, reflective thinking, and technology. Copies of research evaluations in this class will be retained by the Teacher Education Program. These ratings will be analyzed to ascertain program effectiveness in each category.
- Written Examination will consist of 3-5 essay questions that students will be required to answer in a proctored setting with computer word processing. The answers will be assessed by at least two graders using a common rubric. The questions will address and provide data for pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skills, diversity, reflective thinking, technology, leadership, and research. A sample question and rubric can be found in the Graduate Handbook. These rankings will be collected for each category to ascertain program effectiveness.

### **Evaluation of the Teacher Education Program**

Evaluation of the Teacher Education Program is a continuous effort and includes all aspects of the program. Each semester teacher licensure candidates are asked to evaluate each course taken in the professional education program including the field placements.

In an effort to continue to improve, the Teacher Education Program at Bluefield College conducts follow-up studies of its program completers each spring. Evaluations are completed by program completers after one year and again after three years. Survey forms are also sent to principals of schools where graduates are employed. The results of these surveys are used in the planning process of the Teacher Education Program as well as provides data for national accreditation and state program approval. In addition, the School of Education submits Institutional Effectiveness Annual Reports which supports continuous improvement.

### **Alumni Success**

Bluefield College School of Education graduates currently hold positions as teachers, building administrators, and central office personnel throughout Virginia, the surrounding states and as far away as China. Bluefield College teacher education graduates have been recognized as outstanding educators and have received various awards including Teacher of the Year Awards, Ashland Oil Teaching Awards, Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics, and Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Grant Awards. Bluefield College graduates have served in leadership positions including Executive Secretary of the National Education Association, member of the Virginia State Board of Education, and as superintendents of school districts. Bluefield College School of Education graduates also serve on the College's Board of Trustees.

### **References**

Ball, D., & Cohen, D. (1999). Developing practice, developing practitioners: Toward a practice-based theory of professional education. In L. Darling-Hammond and G. Sykes (eds.), *Teaching as the Learning Profession: A Handbook of Policy and Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.