

STUDENT HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page</u>
General Information	3
Mission Statement	3
First Year Seminar	4
TRACS Advising	4
WHEE Teach LLC / WHEE Teach	4
First Course in Teacher Education	5
Teacher Education Program Admission Requirements	5-6
Praxis I - Pre-Professional Skills Test	6
TaskStream / Portfolios	

First Year Seminar

The First Year Seminar allows you to become a member of your new community in a dynamic environment and to experience intellectual life at the university level. Taught by professors with a passion for the subject and a passion for teaching, these courses are designed to encourage exploration of new ideas, examine a range of academic topics, challenge you to set high goals for your academic career, and promote a lifelong love of learning. First Year Seminars count as a core Liberal Studies requirement for all degree programs.

TRACS Advising (Teacher Recruitment, Advising, and Career Support)

The goal of TRACS Advising is to provide you with a central location for all of your advising needs. TRACS Advisors believe that students who follow their curriculum checklist, meet regularly with advisors and foster relationships with mentors are most successful in their academic and career endeavors.

WHEE Teach LLC and WHEE Teach

WHEE Teach LLC

First Course in Teacher Education

Once enrolled in EDCI 201: Teacher Leadership in a Diverse Society, you will be made aware of requirements for admission to teacher education. This is the only course in the Professional Education Sequence that can be taken without being admitted to teacher education. The course is usually taken in the sophomore year and includes placement for a specified number of hours in a K-12 school. Placement requires a background check through our online provider and subscription to TaskStream. Check current fees through the Office of Field Experiences. Admission to teacher education requires an application that should be completed after you receive your final grade in EDCI 201.

Transfer students who have been given credit for an equivalent course taken at another college/university (as determined by the student's program and the Registrar's Office) should follow the Admission to Teacher Education Program instructions. Questions can be directed to the CEAP Licensure Specialist.

Teacher Education Program Admission Requirements:

1. Complete at least 30 hours which can include transfer hours
2. Earn a C (2.0) or higher grade in EDCI 201 and ENGL 101. Note that earning a C (2.0) or higher grade in ENGL 202 will be required before beginning Internship I.
3. Earn (and then maintain) a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75
4. Achieve the minimum required scores on the SAT, ACT, or *Pre-Professional Skills Test PPST Praxis I (Reading, Writing, Mathematics)*
5. Subscribe to *TaskStream*
6. Complete the *Personality Survey and Diversity Inventory* via TaskStream
7. Complete the *Professional Dispositions Contract*

8. Complete and submit the application for Admission to Teacher Education with related documentation to the CEAP Dean's Office, Suite 204 Killian or fax to 828.227.7388. You will be notified at your Catamount email address regarding your admission status.

Your fitness for teaching in the chosen area is determined on the basis of demonstrated academic ability and personal dispositions important for effective teaching. You may be considered suitable in one area and unsuitable in another.

Praxis I -Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST)

PPST stands for Pre-Professional Skills Tests and is also referred to as Praxis I. Praxis I measures basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and includes multiple-choice questions and an essay question on the Writing test. The tests are designed to evaluate the academic skills needed to prepare for a career in education. Teacher candidates are required to take the Praxis I tests to demonstrate their qualifications. The State Board of Education sets minimum scores that students must meet for admission to teacher education. Some exemptions do apply. THERE IS A FEE.

TaskStream/Portfolios

As a teacher education candidate, beginning with EDCI 201 you are required to subscribe to and maintain a TaskStream account throughout your professional education course sequence. TaskStream is a Web-based electronic portfolio application that allows you to upload and share selected work via the World Wide Web. TaskStream also has tools which will allow you to create standards-based lesson plans, evaluation rubrics, and entire

instructional units. Applications for all field experiences are submitted through TaskStream. THERE IS A FEE.

After you subscribe to TaskStream you should see two portfolios – Professional Education Sequence Portfolio and Initial Licensure Portfolio.

Professional Education Sequence Portfolio

In this portfolio, you will submit:

- Common Assignments (assignments that all students take each semester) in EDCI 201, SPED 339, and PSY 323
- Early Field Experience Applications
- Early Field Experience Evaluations
- The M5-120 Personality Survey and Diversity Inventory (requirement for admission to Teacher Education)

Initial Licensure Portfolio

In this portfolio, you will submit:

- Application for Internship/Student Teaching
- EE2 - Content Knowledge (you will submit this in a class)
- Individual Growth Plan
- Diversity Scale
- EE3 - Teacher Work Sample Planning
- EE5 - Teacher Work Sample Implementation and Evaluation
- EE6 - Leadership Essay
- EE4 - Certification of Teaching Capacity (CTC)

Diversity Experience Requirement

As an undergraduate degree-seeking candidate in the Teacher Education Program you are required to complete one field experience (designated by the Office of Field Experiences) in a culturally diverse setting. This means you must complete at least one field experience in a culturally diverse setting in EDCI 201, PSY 323, SPED 339, "Block," Internship, or Student Teaching. In some cases, working with a mission group, camp, tutoring program, or Service Learning project may also fulfill this requirement. For these alternatives, contact the Director of Field Experiences for approval and documentation requirements. The spirit of the diversity requirement is that students engage in meaningful teaching and learning activities with children of different racial, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds than their own.

Traditionally this is completed during EDCI 201 or as early into the Teacher Education Program as possible. While many students have difficult schedules making it hard to travel to a school on the list, this is important in t

sponsor a campus garden, special events like Days of Service and Alternative Break trips, and service-based scholarships and employment opportunities.

Internships

A full-year internship is required for all undergraduate elementary and middle grades majors. During the first semester (Internship I) you will spend the equivalent of at least two school days (15 hours) per week in the school for three credit hours. Internship I begins the week WCU classes begin unless you are able to begin the day teachers start the semester. If completing Internship I in the fall semester, you are expected to spend at least three days with your Cooperating Teacher before public school students start the

will teach, as well as general and subject-specific teaching skills and knowledge. You should register for and complete Praxis II tests in the last semester or the semester before the last semester of your program. THERE IS A FEE. (This testing requirement will change effective July 2014.)

Applying for your NC Teaching License

Hooray!! You've finished your program and are anxious to teach.

Early Field Experience FAQ

1. How do I apply?

All Early Field Experience Applications are submitted via TaskStream. Undergraduate ELEM/MG "Block" Practicum applications are submitted the preceding semester after registration. All other Early Field Experiences Applications are open the first day of class.

2. How do I receive my placement information?

You will receive your placement information via your Catamount e-mail account. You are responsible for checking this account on a regular basis per university policy. Placement information and additional important information will be sent to this account throughout the semester. Early Field Experience information is sent out beginning the eleventh day of the semester and continuing as placements are approved by the schools. Late applications and unusual placements may take longer.

3. How do I contact my host teacher?

Contact your host teacher as soon as possible, but within one week of receiving your placement to confirm schedule.

Cell Phones: Use of cell phones is forbidden in the school. ABSOLUTELY NO TEXTING during classroom visits.

Social Media: You are not permitted to "friend" students or staff or discuss the observation experience via any social networking system.

6. What am I expected to do for my field experience?

Your course instructor makes assignments to be completed in the field placement.

7. How will teachers evaluate me?

8. How can I be successful in my placement?

Show respect for the teacher and all school personnel as described in #5 above. Complete assignments as directed by your course instructor. Submit timesheet by due date if applicable to the course. Late timesheets are not permitted and may result in course failure.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What courses should I take?

You can find all of the degree requirements for your program through the online catalog and the degree audit/evaluation. You should use the degree audit in My Cat to prepare for your advising appointment. You can run a degree audit/evaluation for your current major using the instructions below.

2. How do I run a degree audit/evaluation?

Log into My Cat (<http://mycat.wcu.edu/>)

1. Click on the "Personal Services" tab
2. Click on the "Student" tab
3. Click on "Student Records"
4. Click on "Degree Audit/Evaluation"
5. Choose the appropriate term (if this is an option) and click submit
6. You will see your current curriculum information including your major.
To run a degree audit/evaluation, click on "Generate New Evaluation" in the middle of the page at the bottom.
7. Select the button next to the major you wish to run an audit for and click the Generate Request button.
8. Wait patiently for the audit to generate.
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3. How do I know how I am doing in a course?

You should read your course syllabus carefully to make sure you understand your professor's grading policies. If you have questions about how your professor calculates your grades, visit with him or her during office hours. In addition, you should check your progress grades during the fifth week of classes.

4. How do I find my fifth week grades?

1. Log in to My Cat
2. Click on the "Personal Services" tab
3. Click on the "Student" tab
4. Click on "Academic Progress"
5. Select the term and click Submit
6. Scroll down to find your Week 5 grades and attendance (if posted)

5. How do I find my final grades?

1. Log in to My Cat
2. Click on the Personal Services tab
3. Click on Student Records
4. Click on the Grades
5. Select the current academic term

6. What can I do to improve my grade in a course?

1. Go to class every day
2. Use a day planner
3. Study 3 hours each day
4. Meet with your instructor during office hours
5. Spend time in the Writing and Learning Commons and Mathematics Tutoring Center.

