

TEACHER LICENSURE NOTES FOR ADVISORS

General Information

These notes should assist first and second year advisors in planning schedules with those students seeking teacher licensure through Sweet Briar's Education Department. Please take a few minutes to review these notes before you advise.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, there are no "education majors." Every student seeking a teaching license must complete a liberal arts major while fulfilling requirements for licensure approved by the Virginia Department of Education. Sweet Briar College offers a five-year MAT program, which allows the completion of teacher licensure requirements (valid in 48 states including Virginia) and student teaching while simultaneously earning a master's degree. The fifth year of this program is co-educational and limited housing opportunities are available. Information on the MAT program, including course descriptions, can be found at <http://www.sbc.edu/education/overview>.

At Sweet Briar, students complete some professional studies courses during their first four years and the rest during their fifth year, completing their student teaching in the spring of the fifth year. Students participate in graduation during their senior year and earn their Master of Arts in Teaching at the end of their fifth year. The Education Department's professional course sequence consists of 18 semester hours of coursework plus field experiences. The attached suggested sequence is meant to help advisers suggest choices for their advisees interested in pursuing teaching licensure. Due to scheduling conflicts, students may elect to take courses out of sequence. However, students should observe the suggested sequence as closely as possible. Please encourage your advisees to contact a member of the Education Department to arrange an appointment during their first year so that we may identify and assist those students who are interested in completing the MAT.

The Education Department offers three options for students seeking licensure through the MAT program: Elementary Education, (PreK-6), Secondary Education (6-12), and PreK-12 licensure in studio art, dance, music (vocal-choral), as well as the languages of Spanish, French, German, and Latin.

Prospective elementary teachers must major in Liberal Studies and complete the required professional studies listed for PreK-6 licensure. Elementary licensure candidates receive their bachelor's and master's degrees at the end of their fifth year. Prospective secondary teachers must major in one of the following academic disciplines and complete the required professional studies listed below for secondary licensure: biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, English, theatre arts, or history and social studies. Candidates for PreK-12 licensure should consult with the Chair of the Education Department to obtain licensure requirements for their academic major. The college catalog also has a full listing of requirements for professional studies under Education. Requirements for the Liberal Studies major may also be found in the catalog for advisor or student reference.

Travel Abroad

If your advisees are planning a semester or a year abroad, it is imperative that they begin their licensure coursework during their first year. Students may elect to take some of the requirements in summer school or take coursework out of sequence. The five-year MAT allows for flexibility in planning for valuable study abroad experiences, but the Education Department cautions prospective teachers to plan carefully to ensure completion of their professional studies requirements. The Education Department also works with International Studies to arrange summer teaching internships abroad. Students accepted into the Education program who are interested are encouraged to meet with the Chair of the Education Department as soon as they know they want to travel abroad so a plan can be made.

Standardized Testing

In compliance with Virginia licensure requirements, prospective teachers must submit passing Praxis I scores or equivalent test scores no later than January 25 of the sophomore year for admission to the Teacher Education Program, and Praxis II scores during the fall of senior year for admission to the MAT program. In addition, students must have passing VCLA scores and elementary licensure candidates must have passing RVE test scores prior to applying to the MAT. Test information is available on the education website.

Conclusion

The Education Department will be glad to assist you and your advisees in understanding the licensure requirements. The Department is committed to the development of prospective teachers with strong liberal arts preparation, recognizing that subject area knowledge is crucial to teaching excellence.