



BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What programs are offered?

Northwest Florida State College offers three baccalaureate programs in teacher education.

- **The Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education** prepares students for teaching positions in grades kindergarten through six and includes both the reading and ESOL endorsements.
- **The Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Mathematics** prepares students for teaching positions in grades five through nine.
- **The Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades General Science** prepares students for teaching positions in grades five through nine.

Who may enroll in the programs?

Students who meet Northwest Florida State College admission requirements and the program admission requirements may enroll in an NWFSC teacher education program. (See page 2 for program admission requirements.)

When can I start the program?

New students are admitted in fall and spring semesters. Students needing to complete lower division prerequisites before admission to the baccalaureate program may do so during any semester.

Are the programs accredited?

The Florida State Board of Education approved the college's proposal to offer teacher education baccalaureate programs in February of 2007. The Florida Department of Education fully approved all three programs; graduates are eligible for professional teaching certificates.

In addition, Northwest Florida State College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelor and associate degrees, certificates and diplomas. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools may be contacted at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, or (404) 679-4501 for questions about the accreditation of Northwest Florida State College. The website address is www.sacscoc.org.

What are the costs?

NWFSC tuition and fees are among the lowest in Florida of any college or university. For current NWFSC fees, see the college catalog, schedule of classes or the college website. Tuition for upper division courses is approximately 65% of tuition for upper division courses in the university system. Additional costs include textbooks and related instructional supplies. Students will pay a one-time software fee of

approximately \$68 to open an electronic portfolio, which will be available to them throughout the program and at least one year after program completion. Some courses may carry a lab fee.

Is financial aid available?

The usual forms of state and federal financial aid are available to qualifying students admitted to the program, including Military Tuition Assistance, Pell grants, Stafford Loans, Veteran's Assistance, and the Florida Student Assistance Grants. Selected other financial support resources, such as Troops to Teachers and veterans' benefits, may also be available. Students seeking state or federal aid should complete the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)." Students should submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after receiving their most recent W-2 tax notice. Information on the FAFSA, as well as an outline submission option, is available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

Scholarship opportunities specific to the baccalaureate programs are available to qualifying students through the NWFSC Foundation. Interested students should complete the NWFSC Scholarship Application, available through the [Office of Financial Assistance](#) or the Student Services Office at any NWFSC location.

What are the admission requirements?

To be admitted to the NWFSC teacher education degree programs, students must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Completion of an Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree from a regionally accredited college or university or at least 60 semester hours of postsecondary education from a regionally accredited college or university.
2. Completion of all General Education Requirements and lower-division state-mandated common prerequisites, including the three Common Education prerequisites: EDF 1005, EDF 2085 and EME 2040.

Middle Grades General Science and Middle Grades Mathematics programs have specific prerequisite requirements which are subject to change by legislative mandate. Please contact an advisor for current requirements.

A minimum grade of "C" is required in each of these prerequisite courses.

3. A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the general education component of undergraduate studies or completion of the requirements for a baccalaureate degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale from any college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association or otherwise approved pursuant to State Board of Education rule.
4. Passing scores on the General Knowledge Test of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE). ***Students are not admitted to the Teacher Education program until this requirement is met.***
5. Completion of the standard Florida foreign language upper division admission requirement. (If, at the time of admission, the student has not completed two years of the same foreign language in high school or eight credits in college, the student will need to complete eight credits of foreign language before completing the program.)
6. Agreement to submit to fingerprinting and background checks by both the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Note: The outcome of the background check may impact the student's eligibility to meet selected program requirements, including completion of the teaching internship and various field experiences.

Do I need any prerequisite courses?

Yes. Students must complete all General Education requirements and lower-division state-mandated common prerequisites, including the three Common Education prerequisites: EDF 1005, EDF 2085 and EME 2040.

Middle Grades General Science and Middle Grades Mathematics programs have specific prerequisite requirements which are subject to change by legislative mandate. Please contact an advisor for current requirements.

A minimum grade of "C" is required in each of these prerequisite courses.

When can I apply for admission to the teacher education programs?

Students may apply for admission to the teacher education programs at any time; introductory courses are offered in the Fall and Spring semesters. Students not already admitted to or attending NWFSC may apply for admission to the college at any time.

How long will it take me to complete the program?

Students attending full-time, including summers, may complete the program in two years (five semesters). However, the teaching internship requirement can be completed only in the fall or spring terms, which may affect the student's completion date.

All NWFSC teacher education programs are 120 credits; 60 credits are earned at the lower division and 60 credits are earned at the upper division.

If I have already taken courses at another institution, can they be applied to this degree program?

Possibly. Complete your admission requirements and have your official transcripts sent to NWFSC for evaluation and review. All applicants who are accepted for admission to the program will be contacted prior to the start of the program by a Teacher Education program advisor to write an official program of study and plan a course sequence for you to follow to ensure you meet all the requirements.

Where are most of the classes held?

Most classes will be held on the NWFSC campus in Niceville. Classes may also be offered at other NWFSC campuses on a limited basis. Some instructional activities, as well as the majority of field experiences, will occur on site in various elementary and middle schools within Okaloosa and Walton counties.

Are both day and evening classes available?

Classes are available days and evenings. To accommodate required field observations and other practical experiences that take place in the K-8 setting, students will need to commit some daytime hours to the program, regardless of what times their actual classes are held. During internship (the last semester), students will need to be in the K-8 school setting for the entire school day.

Can I take online courses?

Most courses will be offered in the traditional format, although some courses will be offered in blended/hybrid format, with about half the number of meetings in a traditional class and the remaining instruction completed independently online or through other independent learning formats. Other selected subject area classes may be available online.

Do I have to attend full time? Can I attend part-time?

Students may attend full or part-time; however, not all classes may be available in all terms. The teaching internship, for example, is available only in the fall and spring terms. Field experience assignments can be completed only in the daytime, primarily between 7:00 am and 2:00 pm.

Is practical teaching experience part of the program?

Yes. School-based "field experiences" are infused throughout the NWFSC Teacher Education programs. Students will complete a 450 hour teaching internship or student teaching assignment as the culminating experience in the program. Elementary education students, who will earn the reading

endorsement, will complete an additional 60 hour reading practicum. These teaching components are designed to ensure adequate application and practice of teaching skills learned in the classroom setting.

In addition, many classes have an additional “field experience” component where the student will observe in the classroom, attend school staff meetings, present a lesson in the school setting, or complete other school-based activities.

Will I have to be fingerprinted or go through a background check?

Yes. Florida law requires that students and employees who have direct contact with children in the public school setting undergo a background check, which is conducted through a fingerprinting process administered by a vendor. A background check is also a part of the Florida Teacher Certification process. Students will be required to complete this background check process prior to any practicum or on-site field experiences. College staff will provide extensive information and guidance about the process; however, the student is responsible for meeting all fingerprinting/background check procedures required by the school district. Students MUST bring evidence of fingerprint clearance to the NWFSC Teacher Education Department.

Will I be a certified teacher when I have completed the BS degree?

The bachelor’s degree is a crucial element in obtaining Florida teacher certification. Actual certification is determined by the Florida Department of Education, and there are additional steps associated with the process. NWFSC’s teacher education program is designed to cover the content and competencies required by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) in preparation for certification in the following areas: Elementary Education, Middle Grades Mathematics, or Middle Grades General Science. The Elementary Education program includes the reading and ESOL endorsements. The FLDOE web site (www.fldoe.org) provides current information regarding certification requirements.

I have an AA degree. How many credits can be applied to the BS degree?

An AA degree earned in Florida can be transferred to this degree program, and all 60 credits will count toward your baccalaureate degree. Additional prerequisite coursework may be required. Once you have completed the admission criteria and had your transcripts evaluated, talk with a NWFSC academic advisor to see which courses from an out-of-state degree can be applied towards lower level credits. Upper division transfers will have to be handled on an individual basis through the Office of Teacher Education.

How can I get more information about the program?

Consult the NWFSC website at <http://www.nwfsc.edu/BSEducation/>, or call the NWFSC Teacher Education Department at 729-6440.