Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (P-5)
Teacher Education Program

The purpose of the Teacher Education Program is to prepare competent teachers who practice their craft according to biblical precepts in any and every educational setting. To do this, students examine carefully, in the light of God’s Word, various principles and practices proposed by both secular and Christian educators. Students then apply their convictions. Candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become teachers who model life-long learning and faithful service to God as change-agents in society.

Teacher Standards:

Shared Vision

13. Framework. Apply a biblical worldview to the nature and needs of learners, content and professional knowledge, and instructional competence.

14. Professional Growth. Be an ethical, reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others and who actively pursues opportunities to grow professionally.

15. Community. Foster relationships with colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support student learning and well being.

Nature and Needs of Learners

16. Student Development. Utilize knowledge of human learning and development to provide learning opportunities that support students’ physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual growth.

17. Diversity. Create instructional opportunities that are adapted to the needs of diverse learners, including learning differences related to culture, language, gender and ability.

Content and Professional Knowledge

18. Content. Demonstrate understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he/she teaches and create learning experiences that make these aspects of the subject matter meaningful for students.

19. Technology. Use appropriate technology in the teaching and learning process.

Instructional Competence

20. Planning. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, curriculum goals and standards, student differences, and the social and cultural characteristics of the community.


22. Instructional Strategies. Use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

23. Assessment. Understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, emotional, and social development of the student.

24. Communication. Use effective communication to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

History of the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (P-5)

In January 2004, the Education Department began offering a new program leading to a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. This program is designed to give paraprofessionals a structured way to earn a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education. The purpose of the program is for graduates, who pass the relative GACE exam, to receive a Georgia teaching certificate. The program was reviewed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission in April 2004. Official approval by the Professional Standards Commission was granted in December 2004.
Structure of the Program

The Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education degree completion program consists of 68 semester hours of course work. Classes are distributed over four semesters. The program takes approximately 23 months to complete. A vital part of the program is field experience which links college class discussion to classroom practice in the schools. Course field work occurs throughout the program in the classroom where the student is employed and in other classrooms in order to meet Georgia standards of experience in diverse settings and at differing grade levels. The professional teaching practicum is divided into three segments and provides full-time teaching experience in three grade levels (PreK-K, 1-3, and 4-5) and in diverse settings. The first section (I) is eight weeks long and is usually completed in the candidate’s school of employment. Sections II and III are each two weeks long and at least one of these must be completed in a different school than the one in which the candidate is employed.

Schedule for Completion of BSECE Program

Please note: As of fall 2006, The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) is instituting the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators™ (GACE™), a new program to assess the knowledge and skills of individuals seeking certification as Georgia public school educators. These new GACE tests replace the Praxis I and II tests formerly required.

Gate 1 : Admission Requirements

☐ Be at least 23 years of age.
☐ Be currently employed as a paraprofessional (or have a similar job with a different title) in grades P-5.
☐ Have at least one year’s previous experience as a paraprofessional.
☐ Pass the GACE Basic Skills Assessment Test, or be exempt with an acceptable score on the SAT or the ACT. An SAT exemption requires a minimum composite score (Verbal plus Math scores) of 1000; an ACT exemption requires a minimum composite score (English plus Math scores) of 43. If students choose to retake the SAT or the ACT, scores from different administrations may be combined.
☐ Have completed a minimum of 58 semester hours of undergraduate college credit with a minimum GPA of 2.5. No credit will be awarded for courses with grades below “C-“, for duplicate or remedial courses. The 58 semester hours should include the following courses for at least the amount of credit specified.
  - English Composition .................................................... 3
  - Mathematics ................................................................ 3
  - Social/Behavioral Science ........................................... 9
  - Developmental Psychology ......................................... 3
  - Humanities (3 semester hours must be in art, music or literature) .................................................... 6
  - Total Credits................................................................. 24
  - Plus additional elective credits .......................... 34
  - Total credits required to enter program ........ 58

☐ Submit an application form with accompanying $25 fee.
☐ Submit official transcripts from each college or university attended.
☐ Submit two recommendation forms (one is to be completed by a current administrator, the other by any former employer or colleague).
☐ Submit the Verification of Experience and Employment form.
☐ Submit the essay requested in the application materials, according to the instructions given.

BSECE PROVISIONAL ACCEPTANCE POLICY

The Admissions Committee may consider for provisional acceptance an applicant who has not fully met the stated admissions criteria. The status of provisional acceptance will be reviewed after 18 hours of course work; no more than 18 hours of BSECE course work may be taken on the basis of provisional acceptance. For example, an applicant who has a grade point average of less than 2.50 for previous course work, or who is not entering with 58 semester hours of previous course work, or who has not yet passed the GACE Basic Skills Assessment Test may be admitted on a provisional basis if other admissions criteria are met. However, in order to register for a second semester of study, all students must meet all stated admissions requirements so that their acceptance status can be changed to that of a regular student. So for example, a student must obtain a grade point average of at least 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale) on courses taken as a provisional student and/or must complete all required prior course work and/or must submit passing GACE Basic Skills Assessment Test scores.

BSECE TRANSFER OF CREDIT

General Guidelines:
Acceptable credits for transfer include the following:
- Coursework from regionally accredited colleges
- CLEP credit
- American Association of Bible Colleges credit
- Advanced Placement credit

Specific Guidelines about transferring in Teaching Field or Professional Education courses:
- The following courses may not be transferred, due to their perspectival nature:
EDU 220. Foundations of Education
EDU 222. Educational Psychology
EDU 370. History and Philosophy of American Education

- Up to six other credits may be transferred providing they are 300 or 400 level courses from a four year college taken within the last five years.

**Please note:**
- A student must always check with his/her academic advisor before registering for any course that he/she intends to transfer to Covenant College.
- If a student’s credit hours drop below 12 for any given semester, that student will not be eligible for financial aid.

**Gate 2: Initial Approval for Student Teaching**

Persons desiring to student teach must formally apply and be approved by the Teacher Application Committee prior to enrolling in EDU 492 **Teaching Practicum Elementary Grades**.

- Complete EDU 215 **Technology for Educators** with a grade of C- or better. During this course, you will begin your electronic Professional Portfolio in LiveText.
- Register at www.college.livetext.com. (This will happen while enrolled in EDU 215.)
- Complete EDU 222 **Educational Psychology** with a grade of C- or better.
- Student Teaching Application will be distributed at the beginning of the first course of your second semester of the program. Complete and submit to Administrative Assistant of Education Department by the end of the last course of your second semester of the program.
- Ask a full-time Covenant College faculty member who has taught one of your BSECE courses to complete and submit the Professor Evaluation of Student Teacher Candidate form on your behalf.
- Ask your Cooperating Teacher to complete and submit the Cooperating Teacher Evaluation of Student Teacher Candidate form on your behalf.
- Maintain a cumulative institutional GPA of 2.50 or better. (Note: This GPA must be maintained throughout the program.)
- Receive official notice of initial approval to student teach from the Teacher Application Committee.

**Gate 3: Final Approval for Student Teaching**

- Near the end of the third BSECE semester, register to take the GACE Early Childhood Education test at the beginning of the fourth and final BSECE semester.
- By the date of the first class of the last course of the third semester, submit your electronic Professional Portfolio for a progress check to the education professor who is assigned to be the College Supervisor of your eight-week student teaching practicum.

- Complete all education courses with a grade of C- or better.
- Maintain a cumulative institutional GPA of 2.5 or better.
- Receive official notice of final approval to student teach.

**Gate 4: Student Teaching and Exit from Program**

- Take the GACE Early Childhood Education test at the beginning of the fourth and final semester.
- Submit your GACE score to the Administrative Assistant of the Education Department.
- Submit a completed Certification Application to the Administrative Assistant of the Education Department.
- Submit a self-evaluation of each of your student teaching practicums.
- Confirm that all Placement File materials have been submitted.
- One month prior to the end of the fourth and final semester, submit your completed electronic Professional Portfolio to the College Supervisor of your eight-week student teaching practicum.
- Complete a Survey of Graduating Seniors in the final **Student Teaching Seminar**.
- Complete the 62 credits for BSECE courses with a grade of at least “C-” in each.
- Have an additional 64 credits AND meet core requirements, one of which is 6 credits of Bible.

**The Professional Portfolio**

The Professional Portfolio is a collection of evidence that provides a record of the candidate’s progress towards meeting the Education Department's teacher standards. This compilation of material synthesizes the candidate’s coursework and fieldwork experiences and provides a summary of development from the candidate’s perspective. It serves to encourage the candidate to be actively involved in monitoring and reflecting on his/her development as a teacher and provides assessment data for candidate and program improvement. The Professional Portfolio is developed and maintained electronically through LiveText and will be available to candidates throughout their program and during their initial job search upon graduation.

The completion of the Professional Portfolio is a requirement for the successful completion of the Teacher Education Program. Guidelines for portfolio development are included in the Teacher Education Program Handbook and in the Student Teaching Handbook.
LiveText

College LiveText edu solutions™ is a suite of web-based tools. Education students use LiveText to submit course assignments online for review/assessment as well as to develop personalized electronic professional portfolios. Through LiveText, students have access to unitedstreaming™ which offers 15,000 chaptered video clips, all correlated to state educational standards, that students can add as resources to LiveText lesson plans, projects, WebQuests, and portfolios.

Graduation Requirements for a BS Degree in Early Childhood Education

General Education (Core) Requirements

ENG 111. English Composition............................................3
Mathematics ..........................................................................3
Social / Behavioral Science...................................................9
PSY 303. Developmental Psychology...................................3
Humanities (3 semester hours must be in art, music or literature).................................................................6
BIB 251. Biblical Literature..................................................3
BIB 252. Christian Doctrine..................................................3
General Education (Core) subtotal *...............................30

* Note: Both Bible courses are taught with the BSECE program. Biblical Literature may be satisfied by transfer.

General Electives

Transfer or other Covenant elective classes.

General Electives ..........................................................34

Teaching Field

EDU 313. Language Arts Content and Skills in the Early Grades.................................................................2
EDU 315. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades.........................3
EDU 317. Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties....2
EDU 324. Science Content and Skills in the Early Grades...3
EDU 326. Math Content and Skills in the Early Grades......3
EDU 328. Social Studies Content and Skills in the Early Grades.................................................................3
EDU 337. Teaching Art/Music/PE in the Early Grades.......3
EDU 444. Essentials of Instruction in the Early Grades ......3
EDU 454. Organization and Management of the Early Grade Classroom..........................................................2
EDU 480. Senior Integration Paper...................................... 2
Teaching Field subtotal.......................................... 29

Professional Education

EDU 215. Technology for Educators ......................... 3
EDU 220. Foundations of Education............................ 4
EDU 222. Educational Psychology.................................. 3
EDU 234. Teaching in a Pluralistic Society ................. 3
EDU 361. Education of Exceptional Children................. 3
EDU 370. History and Philosophy of American Education . 3
EDU 410. Educational Assessment................................ 1
EDU 489. Student Teaching Seminar............................ 1
EDU 492. Teaching Practicum: Elementary Grades.... 12

Professional Education subtotal................................ 33

Grand Total of Credits..................................... 126

Education Courses

215. Technology for Educators
This course prepares students to integrate technologies in teaching, learning, assessment and the school curriculum. Students develop competence in planning and designing learning environments and experiences that use technologies. The course addresses social, ethical, legal and human issues, and assists students in developing a Christian perspective on the use of technology. Students will purchase a LiveText subscription for this course and will use it to begin their electronic Professional Portfolios. Three units.

220. Foundations of Education
A study of various foundational principles that inform an understanding of the role of the teacher, the nature of the student, the law and education, and the mission of the school. Students evaluate these principles from a Christian perspective and apply the principles in school settings. Four units.

222. Educational Psychology
The central concern of this course is the question, “How do people learn?” For answering that question, a biblical view of human beings, their behavior, and their relationship to learning is the starting point. Through the biblical framework, the major families of learning theory (behaviorism and cognitive-field psychology) are then examined to determine what things are acceptable and helpful to the Christian teacher. The last part of the course emphasizes the measurement and evaluation of learning. Three units.
234. Teaching in a Pluralistic Society
A course providing students with information about categories of student diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, home language and learning style. Contemporary research and practice related to these areas, drawn from the disciplines of education, history, anthropology and sociology, are surveyed and evaluated. A variety of teaching strategies and resources are developed which embody a biblically informed understanding of the teaching-learning process, and which enable students to become effective teachers in heterogeneous classrooms. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

313. Language Arts Content and Skills in the Early Grades
An overview of the purpose and use of language from a Christian perspective forms the framework for this course. The student examines the goals, methods, materials and evaluation in teaching, listening, speaking, handwriting, spelling and writing. Directed field-based experience is required. Two units.

315. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades
This course is designed to provide a foundation in the teaching of reading. It includes a general survey of approaches to reading instruction along with a critical analysis of those approaches. The content focuses upon those competencies which may be considered essential regardless of the grade level taught. Direct application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes will focus on the tasks confronting the reading teacher. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

317. Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties
This course is designed to prepare classroom teachers to assess reading performance, identify reading difficulties, design instruction to remediate weaknesses, and promote increased reading achievement. Candidates will use informal and formal assessment tools to evaluate students in classrooms. Two units.

324. Science Content and Skills in the Early Grades
The learner studies instructional procedures, materials, and evaluation in teaching biological and physical sciences in the elementary school. Three units.

326. Mathematics Content and Skills in the Early Grades
This course focuses on the goals, methods, materials, and assessment procedures of mathematics instruction in the early grades. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

328. Social Studies Content and Skills in the Early Grades
This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of teaching social studies in the early grades. Topics include educational research and practice related to social studies instruction in the early grades; theories about the nature of the learner, the teacher, and the classroom environment as they relate to the teaching of social studies; curriculum content (including Georgia history); planning and implementation of instruction; selection and use of instructional materials; and assessment. Social studies introduces students to the nations and people of the world, the cultures that they have constructed through the ages, and the many ways in which people interact with each other and with their environment. This course, therefore, will give students the opportunity to rigorously consider the implications of a biblical worldview for their own understanding of the world and its people and to consider its influence in shaping their teaching. Three units.

337. Teaching Art, Music and Physical Education in the Early Grades
A course designed to teach the rudiments of educational theory and practice in the fields of art, music and physical education. Students will focus on the following topics: 1) Art: essential techniques, methods and materials in classroom organization and the operational phases of an art program; 2) Music: instructional methodologies such as Orff, Kodaly and Discipline-based Music Instruction; 3: Physical Education: basic motor learning through sequential movement education principles. Three units.

361. Education of Exceptional Children
A course designed to introduce legal definitions, and clinical characteristics of categories of exceptional children, with an emphasis on etiology, identification, assessment and the provision of educational services, including services mandated by federal law. Topics include mental retardation, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, emotional problems and giftedness. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

366. Literature for Children in the Early Grades
A course designed to explore the vast resources in children’s literature and to show appropriate ways of making literature a delight for young children. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

370. History and Philosophy of American Education
A course designed to provide an overview of the leading ideas and institutional developments that have shaped the
character of American education. Of particular interest are the influence of Puritanism on education, the rise of the public school movement, the legacy of John Dewey and the Progressive Movement and the Christian school movement. Students will look at educational developments within their social, intellectual and political contexts. Three units.

410. Educational Assessment
A course designed to introduce the basic theory and practice of educational assessment in the early grades. Topics will include a general perspective of assessment in schools and society; the development of traditional, performance, and product assessments; writing assessment; affective assessment; and standardized assessments. One unit.

444. Essentials of Instruction in the Early Grades
All teachers have certain beliefs, traits, behaviors and practices that can either improve or inhibit learning in the classroom. Today there exists a growing body of literature on effective teaching. This course focuses on strategies that can lead teachers to choices and actions that should enhance learning. An effort is made to connect a Christian philosophy of education with a research-based instructional skills model. This model is relevant to the early/middle grades and all subject matter. Directed field-based experience is required. Three units.

454. Organization and Management of the Early Grade Classroom
Students will examine classroom management from a Christian perspective with a special emphasis upon a biblical view of the nature of the child. Students examine eight models of discipline as well as developing their own management plan. Directed field-based experience is required. Two units.

480. Senior Integration Paper
This course includes a review of literature and the preparation of a paper that demonstrates personal and practical application of a Christian philosophy of education to the classroom processes of teaching and learning. Two units.

489. Student Teaching Seminar: Early Childhood (P-5)
This course integrates practical approaches and theory to real-life situations experienced during the student teaching experience. Content areas include school culture and classroom learning environment, classroom management, lesson design, implementation, reflection, and legal and ethical issues related to teaching. One unit.

492. Teaching Practicum: Elementary Grades
The professional teaching practicum is divided into three segments and provides full-time teaching experience in three grade levels (PreK-K, 1-3, & 4-5) and in diverse settings. The first section (I) is 8 weeks long and is usually completed in the candidate’s school of employment. Sections II and III are each two weeks long and at least one of these must be completed in a different school than the one in which the candidate is employed. Pass/fail grading only. Prerequisite: Approval to student teach given by the Teacher Application Committee. Twelve units.

Bible Courses

251. Biblical Literature for Educators
This course will survey biblical literature from the perspective of the unfolding of God’s covenants. In the Old Testament, emphasis is given to the promise made with Abraham. This promise is followed through the different periods of Old Testament history, concluding with the expectation of the prophet Malachi. The New Testament emphasizes the fulfillment found in the person of Jesus “the Christ” (Gospels.) The “good news” of Jesus is taken throughout the Roman Empire (Acts and Epistles.) The books of the Bible will be studied as they appear in this historical framework. Three units.

252. Christian Doctrine for Educators
This discussion of Christian beliefs will be centered around the following six topics: (1) the Bible, (2) the triune God, (3) sin and its effects, (4) Jesus “the Christ,” (5) the Christian church, (6) the study of the last things. The topics will be studied from a scriptural and historical point of view. The perspective will be from the Protestant viewpoint and at times, Presbyterian distinctives will be presented. Three units.

BSECE Course Schedules
The actual course schedule varies for each cohort. Students are given a course schedule a few weeks prior to enrolling in the program.