



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The department prepares teachers for all educational environments from prekindergarten to grade 12, as well as teacher educators and researchers for higher education institutions; faculty and students conduct research on a wide range of issues related to teaching, learning and teacher education.

3 undergraduate degrees, 12 graduate degrees

20 faculty, 7 staff

390 undergraduate students

240 graduate students

Undergraduate Degrees

(B.S.Ed.)

Early Childhood Education

Middle School Education

Social Science Education

Graduate Degrees

Early Childhood Education

(M.Ed., Ed.S., Ph.D.)

Elementary Education

(Ph.D.)

Middle School Education

(M.Ed., Ed.S., Ph.D.)

Social Science Education

(M.A., M.Ed., Ed.S., Ed.D., Ph.D.)

With graduate programs in elementary and secondary education perennially ranked among the top 5 in the country, the **Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education** is known for its innovative preparation of educators who have a strong theoretical and practical understanding of teaching, learning and educational environments.

Nationally Recognized Researchers

Department faculty are nationally recognized in their areas of expertise. Their research includes teaching and learning in all subject areas of the school curriculum, childcare policy, comparative education, culture and pedagogy, early educational intervention, education for democracy, the history of education, the professional development of teachers and teacher educators, reflective practice, the roles of families and communities in schooling, school reform and policy, schooling and social justice, the social construction of motivation, and teacher-student relationships.

Innovative Initial Preparation

The department offers innovative programs that focus on professional educator preparation and certification from prekindergarten through 12th grade. Students may achieve initial certification in early childhood education, middle school education or social science education at both the bachelor's and master's levels.

There are three options available for students seeking initial certification from the state of Georgia to teach children from pre-K to grade 5: the undergraduate partnership program, the undergraduate pre-K to grade 2 emphasis, and the master's-level Early Childhood Certification Option (ECCO). The P-2 emphasis is administered in collaboration with the child and family development department in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and with faculty in special education in the College of Education. All three early childhood education initial preparation programs empha-

size the importance of diversity and provide preservice teachers with a strong foundation for meeting the needs of all children.

Georgia middle school (grades 4–8) initial certification may be obtained through the undergraduate middle school education program and through an M.Ed. plus certification option. Preservice teachers specialize in two subject areas from among language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and develop an understanding of the unique cognitive, social, and emotional needs of young adolescents.

The social studies program offers both bachelor's- and master's-level options that lead to initial certification in social science education for teaching in grades 7–12. Preservice teachers develop the dispositions, knowledge and skills needed to encourage adolescents and young adults to engage in public affairs and learn the content and methods of inquiry that will enable them to be more effective in the social, political and economic life of their communities, state and nation.

Exemplary Advanced Programs

Students may enhance their preparation as teachers or develop expertise as teacher educators in master's, specialist, and doctoral programs offered by the department.

The master's-level advanced preparation programs are intended to extend and blend the theoretical and practical understanding of students who already hold initial certification. Students are provided opportunities to develop their skills as action researchers. The research theme in master's

programs becomes an emphasis in specialist programs. In both the master's and the specialist programs, students have opportunities to include courses for teaching endorsements – such as ESOL, gifted, and reading endorsements – into their programs of study.

Students typically choose either a specialist or a doctoral program for their terminal degree work, though students with a specialist degree sometimes go on to complete a doctorate. Specialist programs are most often selected by individuals who focus their careers primarily on teaching and curriculum leadership at the pre-collegiate level and doctoral programs by those who aspire to teach and conduct research at the college or university level.

In the doctoral programs, students are expected to develop research and teaching skills, engage in intensive study of educational issues, and conduct and disseminate original educational research. In addition to becoming college or university faculty, graduates of these programs sometimes take leadership positions in school districts, government agencies or other educational organizations. Unlike master's or specialist programs, which can typically be completed in a year of full-time or two years of part-time study, doctoral programs typically require at least three years of intensive study and research.

Study Abroad Opportunities

The department supports two study abroad experiences for its students, one in Mexico and the other in Italy.

Xalapa, Mexico

The summer Xalapa experience is part of a cultural and educational exchange between the University of Georgia and the University of Veracruz in Xalapa, Mexico. It is designed to prepare preservice and experienced teachers, as well as other educators, to work with families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Participants spend three weeks in Xalapa and surrounding areas studying Spanish and learning about Mexican culture and

schooling. Experienced teachers, taking the course for professional development, create workshops to share what they have learned with their colleagues.

A typical day in the Xalapa experience includes morning observations in schools and community agencies. Afternoons are spent speaking conversational Spanish and learning about Mexican culture and history in classes at the School for Foreign Students at the University of Veracruz.

Participants are matched with a “professional partner,” a Mexican educator whose school will be visited by participants. Students also take part in seminars on educational issues related to culture and language and have the opportunity to explore the rich culture of Xalapa with host families, as well as to visit ancient archeological sites in the northern part of Veracruz state.

Carpi, Italy

The Italy study abroad experience is centered in Carpi, a city about the size of Athens, Ga., located between Milan and Bologna in northern Italy. Undergraduates, most from the early childhood program, spend the Maymester working five mornings a week with a teacher and students in an Italian preschool or elementary school and live with Italian host families. Participants help Italian children learn English (which is taught in Italian schools beginning in the second grade), teach them American songs and games, and help them complete mathematics homework.

While in Italy, participants engage in several seminars, visit sites of educational interest (such as a Montessori School and the world-renowned preschool program in Reggio Emilia), and visit sites of historical and cultural significance including cathedrals and museums in Carpi and nearby cities such as Florence, Venice, Verona, Bologna and Sienna.

The League of Professional Schools

The League of Professional Schools comprises nearly two dozen public schools throughout Georgia whose teachers and



administrators have committed to becoming more knowledgeable, thoughtful, and purposeful about planning, implementing, and studying changes. Each League school forges a covenant focused on teaching and learning that will prepare students for a democratic society. Needed school improvements are democratically determined, and the consequences of changes are studied using action research.

Standing for Children and Teachers

The central mission of all programs in the Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education is to make better the lives of children and teachers in all educational settings. The department is committed to the belief that education from prekindergarten through the university should focus on the development of thoughtful and engaged members of a democratic society and to the goal of bringing democratic principles to life in its work.

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