

VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

D. HENRY WATTS SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Fully accredited by the Virginia Board of Education, the Teacher Education Program at Virginia Wesleyan University is known for preparing enthusiastic, well-trained, and highly effective classroom teachers who consistently strive to meet the diverse and ever-changing learning needs of all students. Through data-informed reflection and response, education faculty advocate a perspective that values continuous improvement and lifelong learning for all faculty, educators, and students.

THE PROGRAM

The Teacher Education Program offers three undergraduate majors leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree: Elementary Education (PreK-6), Special Education (K-12), and Education Studies (non-licensure). The Program also offers a 4+1 education master's degree for aspiring teachers hoping to teach in one of 13 different content areas and an online master's degree in teacher leadership for practicing teachers. For more information about any of these degrees, please visit the VWU Teacher Education website.

THE MAJOR

Small class sizes, a broad-based liberal arts curriculum, and close partnerships with some of the best public and private PreK-12 schools in the state, VWU offers elementary teaching candidates an incredible context to pursue a teaching career. With an on-campus PreK-12 lab school, Tidewater Collegiate Academy, VWU elementary teaching candidates will have their first teaching experience in their first year. Practical teaching experiences grow in intensity and duration throughout their academic journey culminating in an immersive senior internship. With nearly 400 hours spent in multiple, diverse teaching contexts, VWU elementary teaching candidates will graduate as some of the most experienced and well-trained new teachers in the state.

THE COURSES

Courses within the elementary education major address content related to developmental psychology, foundations of education, classroom management, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with crosscutting themes of educational technology and culturally responsive teaching. The courses provide multiple opportunities to observe/practice what is learned on and off campus within diverse educational contexts.

INTERNSHIPS/RESEARCH

Elementary Education candidates take part in multiple field experiences tied to coursework starting in their first year. Field experiences increase in intensity as candidates move through the major, providing crucial experience as preparation for formal internships in their senior year. In the fall they observe/participate in a classroom for a 50+ hour practicum experience mentored by a master teacher and a VWU professor. In the spring, the internship requires full teaching responsibility in two teaching contexts totaling 300+ hours. During this experience, candidates are required to employ and respond to action research measuring their teaching effectiveness.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

VWU boasts many close partnerships with educational organizations and school districts which offer unpaid and paid teaching opportunities on and off campus while pursuing the major. Innovative grant-funded programs and study away opportunities also provide learning experiences beyond the classroom.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Bill McConnell, Ph.D.

Director of Teacher Education

Associate Professor of Education

wmccconnell@vwu.edu

