

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

What can I do with a major in elementary education?

Students who major in elementary education usually plan to teach elementary school after graduation. Most students are motivated by a strong desire to work with children and help them succeed academically and socially. Although permanent teaching jobs are not always easy to find, the teaching profession can offer stable employment, good health and retirement benefits, generous vacation time, and personal fulfillment. Most education majors plan to become classroom teachers, but some will go on to pursue other related careers. Examples of these careers include:

- Environmental educator
- Human resources specialist
- Fundraiser
- Non-profit program manager
- After-school or summer youth program coordinator
- Corporate trainer
- Curriculum developer

What is the academic path to become an elementary school teacher?

Public schools and some private schools in the United States require teachers to have valid teaching certificates.

Students who plan to teach elementary school have a variety of educational pathways for receiving a teaching certificate. Some universities offer elementary education as an undergraduate major; graduates of those programs can teach with a bachelor's degree. **Other universities – such as the University of Washington-Seattle and Seattle University – do not offer elementary education as an undergraduate major.** A student who wants to attend that university and become a teacher should choose a different undergraduate major and plan to do a post-baccalaureate or master's-level education program to earn their teaching certificate.

Most programs in elementary education offer a general degree that will prepare graduates to teach a wide range of subjects that elementary school teachers cover. Depending on the program, students can add a minor or endorsement from a specialized area. Endorsements to the elementary education undergraduate major may include:

- Special education
- Literacy specialist
- Science education
- Bilingual education and TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language)

Students interested in teaching music, PE, or art at the elementary school level should pursue a major in that specific field of education.

How can I prepare at Seattle Central for a major in elementary education?

Students planning to major in elementary education at a baccalaureate institution usually take courses in a broad range of academic areas, **as well as general education requirements**, to prepare to transfer. Required prerequisites vary according to the transfer university, so it is strongly recommended that students work with an advisor at Seattle Central and at their intended transfer universities to ensure they take the appropriate classes to enter the major upon transfer.

Students planning to major in education should consider earning the Associate of Arts – DTA or the Associate of Science – DTA degree to prepare to transfer. Advisors can help students look at prerequisite requirements and choose the degree that will work best for them.

Consider an emphasis to your associate degree before you transfer, such as Global Health, Global Studies, Sustainable Agriculture or Equity and Social Justice. This can enhance your resume, personal experience and be something you put into your personal statement. You may even already have completed it without knowing it! For questions on how to plan your emphasis, please contact your advisor.

Tips for Success as an Education Major

- Consider which path to earning a certificate in elementary education is right for you. Some students choose the university first and then follow the pathway that university offers. Others choose based on the length of the program and when they want or need to start teaching. Students who choose a program that offers a bachelor's in education will be able to teach directly following completion of the bachelor's degree. Students who choose the post-baccalaureate or master's path will need additional education following completion of the bachelor's degree in order to teach. This path takes one to two years longer, but the starting salary with a master's degree is often higher than with a bachelor's degree.
- Teaching elementary school requires a broad background in many academic disciplines, including math, science, social science, and English. Whether you plan to pursue a bachelor's in elementary education or a post-bac or master's program, you should contact the programs to find out what classes you should take to best prepare for your program.
- Check prerequisites, admission requirements, and GPA requirements at your intended transfer university early so you can be well-prepared to transfer.

Pathways to earning an Elementary Education Teaching Certificate:

Bachelor's degree in elementary education in the Seattle area:

City University	Elementary and Special Education
CWU-Des Moines	Early Childhood Ed./Elementary Education double major Also Elementary Education w/ Middle Level Math or TESL
Seattle Pacific University	Elementary and Special Education
WWU @ N. Seattle College	Elementary and Special Education

The main campuses of Central Washington University, Western Washington University, Washington State University, and Eastern Washington University all offer bachelor's degrees in elementary education.

Post-baccalaureate teacher certification in the Seattle area (not a master's degree):

UW-Bothell	K-8 Teacher Certification
UW-Tacoma	K-8 with English Language Learners (ELL) Certification K-8 with K-12 Special Education Certification
WWU @ N. Seattle College	Elementary Education Certificate

Master's degree in education in the Seattle area (includes teacher certification):

City University	Master in Teaching – Elementary or Special Education
Seattle University	Master in Teaching – Endorsements in Elementary (K-8), Special Education, and ELL (English Language Learners)
UW-Seattle	Master of Teaching, Elementary Master of Education, some pathways include certification

Next Steps:

- Research universities you are interested in attending and the prerequisite classes they require for your major.
- Meet with an advisor to choose a transfer degree, discuss prerequisites, and plan what classes you need to take in the next quarter or two.
- Explore professional organizations in your area of interest for more information about education and career options.