

BA in Elementary Education



The Elementary Education BA program is designed for students who wish to obtain a Type 03 certificate to teach in K-8 classrooms in the state of Illinois. Elementary education program faculty believe that education is a civil and social right. We view teaching as an intellectual and ethical enterprise geared toward enlightenment and human liberation. We focus on educating teachers who are thoughtful and competent, compassionate and courageous, culturally aware, grounded in community, and armed with the necessary commitments, skills, and critical dispositions of mind that will allow them to successfully negotiate the challenges and the opportunities that characterize urban public schools. Our goal is to develop teachers who are willing to deeply reflect on their own lives as they work toward changing society and making a powerful positive difference in the lives of children.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Program faculty are among the world’s leading researchers in the areas of curriculum studies; math, science, literacy, and bilingual education; and the foundations of education. We deeply value community-derived knowledge about the best ways to prepare teachers to teach in urban schools. Our research and teaching focuses on issues of equity, access, and social justice and calls for a critical interrogation of knowledge as a deeply political construct that can both empower and disempower the students we teach. We want teachers to use knowledge to empower themselves and their students to advance the cause of social justice. These values are reflected in our teaching, research, and activism in the community.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible for admission into the undergraduate elementary education program, students must have successfully completed the general education course requirements, including an area of concentration and introductory courses in literacy and child development. The program also requires that students have completed 50 service-learning hours in urban educational settings.

In order to successfully complete the program, students are required to complete at least 60 hours of foundations and professional studies course work with an average grade of B or higher. Students must also successfully complete required fieldwork and student teaching—based entirely in the Chicago Public Schools. In addition, students must complete the following in order to be certified to teach in the state of Illinois:

- The Illinois Basic Skills Test
- The Elementary Education Subject Matter Test
- The Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT) Test
- The Council on Teacher Education Unit Assessment Plan

FIELDWORK AND STUDENT TEACHING

Students complete 240 hours of fieldwork in their junior year and another 120 hours in their senior year beyond student teaching. All fieldwork and student teaching is completed in one of the program’s partner schools, which are located in predominately African American and/or Latino communities in the Chicago metropolitan area. Many of these schools have been historically underserved but possess strong leadership and a cadre of caring, competent, and dedicated teachers who are willing to mentor novice teachers. All fieldwork and student teaching is supervised by master urban researcher-practitioners who help students develop the conceptual, procedural, and pedagogical knowledge necessary for successfully teaching in diverse urban classrooms.

CONTACT INFO

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The Instructional Leadership MEd program in elementary education is designed for students who have already earned a BA and want to become certified to teach in K-8 classrooms in the state of Illinois. Elementary education program faculty believe that education is a civil and social right. We view teaching as an intellectual and ethical enterprise geared toward enlightenment and human liberation. We focus on educating teachers who are thoughtful and competent, compassionate and courageous, culturally aware, grounded in community, and armed with the necessary commitments, skills, and critical dispositions of mind that will allow them to successfully negotiate the challenges and the opportunities that characterize urban public schools. Our goal is to develop teachers who are willing to deeply reflect on their own lives as they work toward changing society and making a powerful positive difference in the lives of children.

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PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Instructional Leadership MEd program in elementary education requires 35 hours of course work from three areas—core curriculum, area of concentration, and student teaching. Students must demonstrate content knowledge by passing the following tests administered by the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS):

- Illinois Basic Skills Test (taken prior to program admission)
- Content Test in Elementary Education (taken prior to applying for student teaching)
- Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT) Test (taken prior to certification)

Students must show evidence of having completed at least one course in each of the six core curricular areas of the Illinois Content Area Standards for Elementary Education—English language arts, mathematics, science, social science (to include at least one course in either American history or American government), physical development and health, and fine arts.

CERTIFICATIONS

The Elementary Education Type 03 Certificate provides Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) certification for teachers seeking to instruct in K–8th grade classrooms. Middle School Endorsements and Bilingual/English as a Second Language (ESL) Approvals can be added to this certificate. Additional courses are required.

SPECIAL PROGRAM FEATURES

While typically a two-year program, the required courses and student teaching can be completed in as little as 15 months through flexible scheduling options. A student may choose to take up to four courses each semester. All classes meet in the evenings from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. (fall/spring) and from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. (summer). There are 135 pre-student teaching field experience hours required for the program. Students must make time to do this work in schools, but often find this part of the program the most rewarding.

Options exist for individuals who may already have an Illinois Type 09 Secondary or a Type 04 Early Childhood Certificate or an elementary certificate from another state based on a review of courses.

We specialize in serving the needs of Type 29 provisionally certified bilingual teachers or others employed, but not fully certified, as teachers. Under specific conditions, a teacher can “student teach” in her own classroom.

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