



OVERALL REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER LICENSURE through POST-BACCALAUREATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

based on State of TN Guidelines

Department of Education

Master of Arts in Teaching Program

Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Education Program (Licensure-Only)

In the State of Tennessee, post-baccalaureate teacher education programs are defined as initial teaching licensure options or tracks where all who apply to such programs have already earned a bachelor's degree. These programs are often contrasted with traditional undergraduate teacher education programs. In Tennessee, fulfilling a post-baccalaureate teacher licensure program involves the following eight basic requirements:

1. **General Education.** There should be evidence of a strong undergraduate general education in the liberal arts and sciences. Typically, these are the courses taken during the freshman and sophomore years of college, aimed at broad education and experience in all academic areas: the arts and humanities, language and literature, mathematics and science, and social sciences. Assessment of basic competencies, such as communication skills, may be required.
2. **Major Supporting the License/Endorsement Areas Sought.** There must be a major or the equivalent of a major (i.e., coursework that adds up to equal a major, even if it spans two institutions) in a licensure area that the college or university offers. The major may be one that the student completed when earning the bachelor's degree. Now he or she wants to teach in the major area at the secondary level. For example, the student completed a B.A. in English and now wants to become licensed to teach English in high school. That student's major will typically be enough to support the license sought. But what about an individual who finished a history minor but now wants to become licensed to teach history in high school? It is unlikely that this licensure candidate will have additional history courses to complete, usually at the upper-division (300-400) level, in order to round out a full history major. It is even more the case that the individuals who majored in business topics will have to take additional coursework in order to complete the equivalent of a major in any licensure area sought. All coursework to compose the equivalent of a major in support of a particular license must be planned with an education advisor who knows the particular license requirements and the coursework that will suffice.
3. **Professional Education Courses.** Professional education courses focus on areas of teacher knowledge about instruction, curriculum, learning, students, classrooms, schools, technology, and the profession as a whole, as well as the many complex skills and abilities demanded of teachers. Many licensure programs are also focused on values, attitudes, and dispositions desirable in those who choose this profession. The number and type of courses differ for the elementary and secondary programs.
4. **Admission to a Teacher Education Program.** It is essential that each person who seeks a license is admitted to a teacher education program in order to be properly advised about the pattern of coursework. While some programs allow students to take a course or two while this process of getting admitted is in motion, it is

important to understand that taking courses does not guarantee admission to a teacher education program. It is not enough to simply get admitted to any college or university; it is essential to become fully admitted to the teacher education program. Any individual who takes education courses without being admitted to a teacher education program does so at his/her risk. Taking courses does not guarantee that an individual will be admitted to a program or recommended for teacher licensure. Admission requires a 2.5 g.p.a. in both general education and the major, as well as cumulatively, passing scores on the PPST (or on other approved admissions tests), recommendations, essays, and a successful interview with faculty and practicing professionals. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that he or she seeks and gains admission to a teacher education program.

5. **Field Experiences and Student/Practice/Intern Teaching.** The State of Tennessee expects each licensure candidate to have a variety of field experiences and practica accomplished in association with professional education coursework. Toward the culmination of the licensure process, each licensure candidate also must have a significant experience (meaning at least one semester long) of classroom responsibility while being guided, supported, mentored, and supervised. Most programs in Tennessee offer traditional "student teaching" experiences but will sometimes also work "on the job" with qualified individuals who are already teaching.
6. **Assessment of Competencies.** Criterion-referenced measures, such as portfolios or other performances in addition to student teaching, may be used to assess students. Some of this is done to help students identify areas of weakness prior to completing the program. All of it is intended to help licensure candidates meet professional standards for the State of Tennessee and other standards proposed for the teaching profession, as well as the particular concerns of individual programs. Each program chooses a conceptual model that may become a focus of attention in assessing candidate development.
7. **Licensure Examinations.** A sequence of Praxis II tests, which used to be called the NTE (National Teachers Examination), is required for every license sought. The former Core Battery (General Knowledge, Professional Knowledge, and communication Skills) has been eliminated by the State of Tennessee and replaced by a test called the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT). In order to be sure that you do not take the wrong tests, get advised on the right tests to take for your license. In some cases, student will have as many as four or five tests to take. It can prove to be a significant hurdle. Due to a new teacher education "report card" on Praxis II test success rates at the various colleges and universities, many post-baccalaureate teacher licensure programs in Tennessee are requiring admitted students to take content knowledge tests early. We advise beginning early in any licensure program and getting acquainted with the testing requirements for that license, so that (a) the reality of testing is faced and (b) adequate preparation for the test is developed.
8. **Recommendation for Licensure.** When the entire program of study is completed, along with the required assessments, including the Praxis II tests, then the institution at which the candidate is enrolled, admitted, and matriculated for purposes of initial teaching licensure may recommend the candidate to the State of Tennessee for the Apprentice license. This recommendation occurs when all requirements of the State of Tennessee and the particular institution have been completed and reviewed.