

# Early Childhood Education (P-5) (BSECE)

## About the Program

The Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (BSECE) is designed to provide individuals who are working in instructional roles in schools (e.g., paraprofessionals, instructional support personnel, or classroom teachers) a pathway to earn a baccalaureate degree and an initial, clear renewable certificate in Early Childhood Education (P-5) from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC), valid for five years. The program received approval from the GaPSC in December 2004.

The GaPSC requires all students in a Teacher Education Program to pass the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators™ (GACE™) Basic Skills Tests for entry into the Teacher Education Program (TEP) of Covenant College. Prior to exiting the TEP, students are required to sit for the GACE Content Assessments. Passage of these assessments is required for certification with the GaPSC.

See [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com) for information about the GaPSC and [www.gace.nesinc.com](http://www.gace.nesinc.com) for information about GACE.

The BSECE program was also approved by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) in March 2007. Upon completion of this program, graduates are eligible to receive a renewable ACSI certificate at the elementary (K-8) level, valid for five years. (See [www.acsi.com](http://www.acsi.com))

## Structure of the Program

Completing the BSECE program takes approximately 23 months with classes distributed over four semesters. Field experience is a vital part of the program linking college class discussions to classroom practice in the schools. Course field work occurs throughout the program in the classroom where the student is employed **and** in other classrooms in order to meet Georgia standards of experience in diverse settings and at differing grade levels. The professional teaching practicum in the final semester consists of two placements. The eight-week placement is in a grade chosen from one of the following grade level groupings: K, 1-3, 4-5. The four-week placement is in a grade from an alternate grade level grouping, choosing from: PreK-K, 1-3, 4-5.

The student teacher has the full teaching load for a minimum of three weeks of the eight-week placement and for two weeks of the four-week placement.

The eight-week placement may be in the classroom of employment, providing the student is employed in a self-contained K-5 classroom with a certified teacher. If a student's classroom of employment is a state-approved PK program with a certified teacher, that student may complete the shorter four-week practicum in their classroom of employment and the longer eight-week placement elsewhere. If a student's classroom of employment is a PK program that is not state-approved or does not have a certified teacher, that student will need to leave his/her classroom of employment for the entire 12 weeks.

## Teacher Education Program Conceptual Framework

### Purpose Statement:

The purpose of the Teacher Education Program at Covenant College is to prepare competent and compassionate teachers who practice their profession according to biblical guidelines in diverse educational settings. Candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become teachers who model life-long learning and faithful service to God as change-agents in society.

### Teacher Standards:

#### Domain A: Knowledge

1. **Framework.** Apply a biblical worldview to the nature and needs of learners, the role of schools in society, content and professional knowledge, and instruction.
2. **Student Development.** Use knowledge of human learning and development to provide learning opportunities that support students' physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth.
3. **Content.** Demonstrate understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline taught and create learning experiences that make these aspects of the subject matter meaningful for students.

#### Domain B: Planning

4. **Planning.** Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, curriculum goals and standards, student differences, and the social and cultural characteristics of the community.
5. **Diversity.** Create instructional opportunities adapted to the needs of diverse learners, including differences related to culture, ethnicity, race, language, gender, social class, learning styles, and exceptionalty.

#### Domain C: Instruction

6. **Instructional Strategies.** Use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

7. **Technology.** Use technology in teaching and learning.

**Domain D: Assessment**

8. **Assessment.** Understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure students’ continuous intellectual, emotional, and social development.

**Domain E: Classroom Environment**

9. **Management.** Create and maintain a learning environment that encourages responsible care for others, collaborative inquiry, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

10. **Communication.** Use effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

**Domain F: Professional Growth**

11. **Professional Growth.** Evaluate effects of choices and actions on others and actively pursue individual and collaborative opportunities to grow professionally as an active, reflective practitioner.

12. **Community.** Foster relationships with colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support student learning and well being.

in grades P-5.

- Have at least one year’s previous experience working in an instructional role in a school setting.
- Submit passing scores on the GACE Basic Skills Assessment, or acceptable SAT or ACT scores. Acceptable SAT scores: 1000 composite of Critical Reading and Math scores; acceptable ACT scores: 43 composite of English plus Math scores.

- Have completed a minimum of 58 semester hours of undergraduate college credit with a minimum GPA of 2.5. No credit will be awarded for courses with grades below “C-”, for duplicate or remedial courses. The 58 semester hours should include the following courses for at least the amount of credit specified.

Developmental Psychology .....	3
English Composition .....	3
Fine Arts Distribution Requirement ** .....	3
Mathematics Core Requirement .....	3
Natural Science Distribution Requirement ** .....	3
Social Science Distribution Requirement ** .....	6
United States History .....	3
<b>Total Designated Credits .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Plus additional elective credits .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Total credits required to enter program .....</b>	<b>58</b>

- Submit an application form with accompanying \$25 fee.
- Submit official transcripts from each college or university attended.
- Submit a statement of faith.
- Have a personal interview with a faculty member of the Education Department and achieve at least the required minimum score (70%) on the Faculty Recommendation Form.
- Submit two recommendation forms (one completed by a current administrator, the other by any former employer or colleague).
- Submit the Verification of Experience and Employment form.
- Submit a Letter of Cooperation signed by yourself, by your principal (or director) and by your school district superintendent, if the school falls under the jurisdiction of a public school district.
- Submit the essay requested in the application materials, according to the instructions given.

**PROVISIONAL ADMISSION:** If all entrance requirements are not met, a candidate *may be provisionally* approved to the BSECE Teacher Education Program under these stipulations:

1. An applicant who has not taken the GACE Basic Skills test, but has met all other admission requirements, may be considered for provisional TEP admission. Prior to admission, the applicant must show proof of registration for the next available GACE test.
2. An applicant who has taken the GACE Basic Skills test but has not passed all sections, while meeting all other admission requirements, may be considered for provisional TEP admission. If admitted provisionally,

## Schedule for Completion of BSECE Program

Note: The Teacher Education Program at Covenant College is governed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Students participating in the Teacher Education Program at Covenant College must submit passing scores on the GACE Basic Skills Tests for entry into the program. Upon exiting from the program, students must submit scores for the GACE Content Assessment in their particular field of study. Passing scores on both GACE Basic Skills Tests and Content Assessments are required for recommendation for certification for the GaPSC. These required assessments are incorporated into the Gates below.

### Gate 1 : BSECE Requirements for Admission to Covenant College and the Teacher Education Program (TEP)

- Be at least 23 years of age.
- Be currently employed full-time in an instructional role

the applicant will work with the Director of the BSECE to develop an Individual Plan for Success (IPS). The IPS may include work in the Writing Center (at the student's expense), and/or other appropriate steps. Dates for retaking the GACE will be specified in the IPS. The student will meet regularly with the Director to review and refine the IPS.

3. An applicant who does not meet the 2.5 GPA requirement, but has met all other requirements, may be considered for provisional admission.
4. An applicant who is lacking up to six credit hours of the required transfer credits, but who has met all other admission requirements, may be considered for provisional admission.
5. Passing scores on all sections of the GACE Basic Skills test, completion of all required transfer credits, and a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher must be achieved before beginning the third semester of coursework.
6. The subcommittee of the Teacher Application Committee (TAC) will make decisions regarding any exceptions to these stipulations.

## **BSECE TRANSFER OF CREDIT**

### **General Guidelines:**

Acceptable credits for transfer include the following:

- Coursework from regionally accredited colleges
- CLEP credit (See page 17 in this catalog for information on credit that Covenant College awards based on CLEP tests.)
- American Association of Bible Colleges credit
- Advanced Placement credit

### **Specific Guidelines about transferring in Teaching Field or Professional Education courses:**

- The following courses may *not* be transferred, due to their perspectival nature:  
EDU 120. Foundations of Education  
EDU 222. Educational Psychology  
EDU 370. History and Philosophy of American Education
- Up to six other credits may be transferred providing they are 300 or 400 level courses from a four year college taken within the last five years.

### **Please note:**

- A student must always check with the BSECE Director before registering for any course that he/she intends to transfer to Covenant College.
- If a student's credit hours drop below 12 for any given semester, that student will not be eligible for financial aid.

## **Gate 2: Initial Approval for Student Teaching**

Persons desiring to student teach must formally apply and be approved by the Teacher Application Committee prior to enrolling in EDU 492. Teaching Practicum Elementary Grades.

- Submit a completed Student Teaching Application. Applications will be distributed at the mid-point of the second semester of the program. Complete and submit to the Administrative Assistant of Education Department at that time.
- Ask a full-time Covenant College faculty member who has taught one of your BSECE courses to complete and submit the Professor Evaluation of Student Teacher Candidate form on your behalf.
- Ask a teacher or principal who supervises your work in your school to complete and submit the Teacher/Principal Evaluation of Student Teacher Candidate form on your behalf.
- Maintain a minimum total institutional GPA of 2.50. (Note: This GPA must be maintained throughout the program.)
- Have full TEP approval. (No student who has provisional approval to the TEP will be permitted to begin student teaching.)
- Receive official notice of *initial* approval to student teach from the Teacher Application Committee.

## **Gate 3: Final Approval for Student Teaching**

- Complete all education courses in the first three semesters with a grade of C- or better by noon, one week prior to student teaching.
- Maintain a minimum total institutional GPA of 2.50.
- Receive official notice of *final* approval to student teach.

## **Gate 4: Student Teaching and Exit from Program**

- Take the GACE Early Childhood Education tests at the beginning of the fourth and final semester.
- Submit a completed Georgia Certification Application to the Administrative Assistant of the Education Office.
- Submit a complete ACSI certification application if ACSI certification is also desired.
- Submit a self-evaluation of each of your student teaching practicums.
- Confirm that all Placement File materials have been submitted to the Education Office.
- One month prior to the end of the fourth and final semester, submit your completed Developmental

Portfolio to the College Supervisor of your second student teaching practicum.

- ❑ Complete a Survey of Graduating Seniors during the final class of EDU 489. Student Teaching Seminar.
- ❑ Complete the 62 credits for BSECE courses with a grade of at least “C-” in each.
- ❑ Have an additional 64 credits AND meet core requirements, one of which is 6 credits of Bible.

## The Developmental Portfolio

The Developmental Portfolio is a collection of evidence that provides a record of the candidate’s progress towards meeting the Education Department’s teacher standards. This compilation of material synthesizes the candidate’s coursework and fieldwork experiences and provides a summary of development from the candidate’s perspective. It serves to encourage the candidate to be actively involved in monitoring and reflecting on his/her development as a teacher and provides assessment data for candidate and program improvement.

The completion of the Developmental Portfolio is a requirement for the successful completion of the Covenant College Teacher Education Program and is completed through LiveText.

## LiveText

College LiveText edu solutions™ is a suite of web-based tools. Education students use LiveText to submit course assignments online for review/assessment as well as to develop electronic portfolios.

(See [www.college.livetext.com](http://www.college.livetext.com).)

## Teacher Placement Service

A variety of services are offered to TEP students by the Teacher Placement Service. Services include assisting students in assembling a permanent credentials file, providing an annual teacher recruitment event, maintaining an electronic listing of teacher vacancies, and posting an electronic Directory of Teacher Education Graduates. Graduates receive a lifetime membership to this service.

# Course Requirements for a BS Degree in Early Childhood Education

## General Education (Core) Requirements

BIB 251. Biblical Literature for Educators.....	3
BIB 252. Christian Doctrine for Educators .....	3
Developmental Psychology .....	3
English Composition .....	3
Fine Arts Distribution Requirement ** .....	3
Mathematics Core Requirement .....	3
Natural Science Distribution Requirement ** .....	3
Social Science Distribution Requirement ** .....	6
United States History.....	3
<b>General Education (Core) subtotal * .....</b>	<b>30</b>

\* Note: Both Bible courses are taught with the BSECE program. Biblical Literature may be satisfied by transfer.

\*\* See Core and Distribution Requirements on page 24. The Natural Science course is not required to have a laboratory component, but is preferred.

## General Electives

Transfer or other Covenant elective courses.

<b>General Electives .....</b>	<b>34</b>
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## Teaching Field

EDU 313. Language Arts Content and Skills in the Early Grades.....	2
EDU 315. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 317. Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties... ..	2
EDU 324. Science Content and Skills in the Early Grades ..	3
EDU 326. Math Content and Skills in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 328. Social Studies Content and Skills in the Early Grades.....	3
EDU 337. Teaching Art/Music/PE in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 342. Essentials of Instruction in the Early Grades.....	3
EDU 366. Literature for Children in the Early Grades.....	3
EDU 454. Organization and Management of the Early Grade Classroom .....	2
EDU 480. Senior Integration Paper .....	2
<b>Teaching Field subtotal .....</b>	<b>29</b>

## Professional Education

EDU 120. Foundations of Education.....	4
EDU 215. Technology for Educators .....	3
EDU 222. Educational Psychology .....	3
EDU 234. Teaching in a Pluralistic Society .....	3
EDU 310. Professional Development Experience I.....	0

EDU 311. Professional Development Experience II.....	0
EDU 312. Professional Development Experience III.....	0
EDU 361. Education of Exceptional Children .....	3
EDU 370. History and Philosophy of American Education..	3
EDU 410. Educational Assessment.....	1
EDU 489. Student Teaching Seminar .....	1
EDU 492. Teaching Practicum: Elementary Grades .....	12
<b>Professional Education subtotal.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Degree total .....</b>	<b>126</b>

## Education Courses

### 120. Foundations of Education

A study of various foundational principles that inform an understanding of the role of the teacher, the nature of the student, the law and education, and the mission of the school. Students evaluate these principles from a Christian perspective and apply the principles in school settings. Four hours.

### 215. Technology for Educators

This course prepares students to integrate technologies in teaching, learning, assessment and the school curriculum. Students develop competence in planning and designing learning environments and experiences that use technologies. The course addresses social, ethical, legal and human issues, and assists students in developing a Christian perspective on the use of technology. Three hours.

### 222. Educational Psychology

The central concern of this course is the question, “How do people learn?” To answer that question, a biblical view of human beings, their behavior, and their relationship to learning is the starting point. Through this biblical framework, the major families of learning theory (behaviorism and cognitive-field psychology) are then examined to determine what things are acceptable and helpful to the Christian teacher. The last part of the course emphasizes the measurement and evaluation of learning. Three hours.

### 234. Teaching in a Pluralistic Society

A course providing students with information about categories of student diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, home language and learning style. Contemporary research and practice related to these areas, drawn from the disciplines of education, history, anthropology and sociology are surveyed and evaluated. A variety of teaching strategies and resources are developed which embody a biblically informed understanding of the teaching-learning process, and which enable students to become effective teachers in heterogeneous classrooms. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### 310. Professional Development Experience I

### 311. Professional Development Experience II

### 312. Professional Development Experience III

BSECE courses require fewer hours of seat time than traditional undergraduate college courses require due to the assumption that the student's daily work in an instructional setting within a school makes a significant contribution to the education of the student. These courses are designed to provide focused fieldwork related to each BSECE course in order to extend and integrate in-class instruction with field experiences. Focused field experiences will provide BSECE students the opportunity to learn what it means to apply their faith to various classroom situations. The fieldwork assignments will be in grades PK-K, 1-3, and 4-5 in diverse school/student settings. EDU 310 is taken during the first semester of BSECE, EDU 311 during the second semester, and EDU 312 during the third semester. Each course is zero-credit and taken as pass/fail. A passing grade in each course is required for completion of the BSECE program.

### 313. Language Arts Content and Skills in the Early Grades

An overview of the purpose and use of language from a Christian perspective forms the framework for this course. The student examines the goals, methods, materials and evaluation in teaching, listening, speaking, handwriting, spelling and writing. Directed field-based experience is required. Two hours.

### 315. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades

This course is designed to provide a foundation in the teaching of reading. It includes a general survey of approaches to reading instruction along with a critical analysis of those approaches. The content focuses upon those competencies which may be considered essential regardless of the grade level taught. Direct application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes will focus on the tasks confronting the reading teacher. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### 317. Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties

This course is designed to prepare classroom teachers to assess reading performance, identify reading difficulties, design instruction to remediate weaknesses, and promote increased reading achievement. Candidates will use informal and formal assessment tools to evaluate students in classrooms. Two hours.

### 324. Science Content and Skills in the Early Grades

The learner studies instructional procedures, materials, and evaluation in teaching biological and physical sciences in the elementary school. Three hours.

### 326. Mathematics Content and Skills in the Early Grades

This course focuses on the goals, methods, materials, and assessment procedures of mathematics instruction in the early grades. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### **328. Social Studies Content and Skills in the Early Grades**

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of teaching social studies in the early grades. Topics include educational research and practice related to social studies instruction in the early grades; theories about the nature of the learner, the teacher, and the classroom environment as they relate to the teaching of social studies; curriculum content (including Georgia history); planning and implementation of instruction; selection and use of instructional materials; and assessment. Social studies introduces students to the nations and people of the world, the cultures that they have constructed through the ages, and the many ways in which people interact with each other and with their environment. This course, therefore, will give students the opportunity to rigorously consider the implications of a biblical worldview for their own understanding of the world and its people and to consider its influence in shaping their teaching. Three hours.

### **337. Teaching Art, Music and Physical Education in the Early Grades**

A course designed to teach the rudiments of educational theory and practice in the fields of art, music and physical education. Students will focus on the following topics: 1) Art: essential techniques, methods and materials in classroom organization and the operational phases of an art program; 2) Music: instructional methodologies such as Orff, Kodaly and Discipline-based Music Instruction; 3) Physical Education: basic motor learning through sequential movement education principles. Three hours.

### **342. Essentials of Instruction in the Early Grades**

All teachers have certain beliefs, traits, behaviors and practices that can either improve or inhibit learning in the classroom. Today there exists a growing body of literature on effective teaching. This course focuses on strategies that can lead teachers to choices and actions that should enhance learning. An effort is made to connect a Christian philosophy of education with a research-based instructional skills model. This model is relevant to the early/middle grades and all subject matter. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### **361. Education of Exceptional Children**

A course designed to introduce legal definitions, and clinical characteristics of categories of exceptional children, with an emphasis on etiology, identification, assessment and the provision of educational services, including services mandated by federal law. Topics include mental retardation,

learning disabilities, physical disabilities, emotional problems and giftedness. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### **366. Literature for Children in the Early Grades**

A course designed to explore the vast resources in children's literature and to show appropriate ways of making literature a delight for young children. Directed field-based experience is required. Three hours.

### **370. History and Philosophy of American Education**

A course designed to provide an overview of the leading ideas and institutional developments that have shaped the character of American education. Of particular interest are the influence of Puritanism on education, the rise of the public school movement, the legacy of John Dewey and the Progressive Movement and the Christian school movement. Students will look at educational developments within their social, intellectual and political contexts. Three hours.

### **410. Educational Assessment**

A course designed to introduce the basic theory and practice of educational assessment in the early grades. Topics will include a general perspective of assessment in schools and society; the development of traditional, performance, and product assessments; writing assessment; affective assessment; and standardized assessments. One hour.

### **454. Organization and Management of the Early Grade Classroom**

Students examine classroom management from a Christian perspective with a special emphasis on a biblical view of the nature of the child. Students examine eight models of discipline as well as developing their own management plan. Directed field-based experience is required. Two hours.

### **480. Senior Integration Paper**

This course includes a review of literature and the preparation of a paper that demonstrates personal and practical application of a Christian philosophy of education to the classroom processes of teaching and learning. Two hours.

### **489. Student Teaching Seminar: Early Childhood (P-5)**

This course integrates practical approaches and theory to real-life situations experienced during the student teaching experience. Content areas include school culture and classroom learning environment, classroom management, lesson design, implementation, reflection, and legal and ethical issues related to teaching. Pass/fail grading only. One hour.

### **492. Teaching Practicum: Elementary Grades**

The professional teaching practicum in the final semester consists of two placements. The eight-week placement is in a grade chosen from one of the following grade level groupings: K, 1-3, 4-5. The four-week placement is in a grade from an alternate grade level grouping, choosing from: PreK-K, 1-3, 4-5. Pass/fail grading only. Prerequisite: Approval to student teach given by the Teacher Application Committee. Twelve hours.

## Bible Courses

### 251. Biblical Literature for Educators

This course surveys biblical literature from the perspective of the unfolding of God’s covenants. In the Old Testament, emphasis is given to the promise made with Abraham. This promise is followed through the different periods of Old Testament history, concluding with the expectation of the prophet Malachi. The New Testament emphasizes the fulfillment found in the person of Jesus (Gospels). The “good news” of Jesus is taken throughout the Roman Empire (Acts and Epistles). The books of the Bible will be studied as they appear in this historical framework. Three hours.

### 252. Christian Doctrine for Educators

This discussion of Christian beliefs is centered around the following six topics: (1) the Bible, (2) the triune God, (3) sin and its effects, (4) Jesus (5) the Christian church, (6) the study of the last things. The topics will be studied from a scriptural and historical point of view. Three hours.

## Example Two Year Program: BSECE

(builds on two years of previous college course work)

### Semester One:

EDU 120. Foundations of Education .....	4
EDU 222. Educational Psychology .....	3
EDU 234. Teaching in a Pluralistic Society .....	3
EDU 310. Professional Development Experience I .....	0
EDU 361. Education of Exceptional Children .....	3
EDU 366. Literature for Children in the Early Grades.....	3

### Semester Two:

BIB 252. Christian Doctrine for Educators .....	3
EDU 311. Professional Development Experience II.....	0
EDU 315. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades.....	3
EDU 324. Science Content and Skills in the Early Grades...	3
EDU 326. Math Content and Skills in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 342. Essentials of Instruction in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 410. Educational Assessment.....	1

### Semester Three:

BIB 251. Biblical Literature for Educators .....	3
EDU 215. Technology for Educators .....	3
EDU 312. Professional Development Experience III.....	0
EDU 313. Language Arts Content and Skills in EG .....	2

EDU 317. Assessing and Correcting Reading Difficulties...	2
EDU 328. Social Studies Content and Skills in EG .....	3
EDU 370. History and Philosophy of American Education .	3
EDU 454. Organization and Management in Early Grades..	2

### Semester Four:

EDU 337. Teaching Art/Music/PE in the Early Grades .....	3
EDU 480. Senior Integration Paper .....	2
EDU 489. Student Teaching Seminar.....	1
EDU 492. Teaching Practicum: Elementary Grades .....	12