



# Undergraduate Teacher Licensure Program Prospective Student Guide

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION** ▪ UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER  
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University of Colorado  
Boulder

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## Overview

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In Colorado, it is not possible to major in education at the undergraduate level. Undergraduate students that aspire to become public school teachers may complete the teacher licensure program in conjunction with their bachelor's degree. Students may pursue licensure in one (1) of the following subject areas:

- **Elementary (K-6):** an interdisciplinary license for teaching grades K-6.
- **Secondary (7-12):** candidates in the secondary program must select a specific content area of specialization. The School of Education offers the following areas of emphasis: *English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies*, or a World Language: *French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, or Spanish*.
- **Music (K-12)**

Depending upon your major, it is possible to complete the requirements for both the teaching license and the bachelor's degree in four academic years. Below are major recommendations, by licensure area, that allow students to complete the requirements for both programs in four years.

### Major Recommendations

Elementary		English	Music	Social Studies
Anthropology	Humanities	Communications	Music Education	Anthropology
Astronomy	Linguistics	English		Economics
Communications	Mathematics	Linguistics	<b>Science</b>	Geography
EBIO	Political Science	Humanities	Astronomy	History
Economics	Physics		Chemistry	International Affairs
English	Psychology	<b>Mathematics</b>	EBIO	
Geography	Spanish	Mathematics	Physics	<b>World Languages</b>
History		Applied Mathematics	Geology	French      Latin
			MCDB	German     Russian
			IPHY	Japanese    Spanish

If your major does not appear on the list under your licensure area on the previous page, you should contact the Office of Student Services in the School of Education to learn about your options for pursuing teacher licensure. It is still possible to enroll in the teacher education program but it may take longer than four academic years to complete the requirements for licensure. Also, there may be stipulations to your admission.



## Education is *not* an undergraduate major at CU-Boulder.

Undergraduate students that want to become teachers may pursue the teacher licensure program in conjunction with a bachelor's degree in the liberal arts.

### Why a Degree + Licensure Structure?

In 1982, CU-Boulder was the first institution in Colorado to eliminate its bachelor's degree in education. Future teachers must be proficient in the content knowledge that they will be presenting in public school classrooms. Earning a bachelor's degree in the liberal arts provides students with a foundation in the curriculum that they will be teaching. The teacher education coursework complements this core knowledge by exposing students to the theories and methodologies that underlie effective classroom instruction. Depending upon the licensure program, students will complete 36-42 semester hours of education coursework *in addition to* their major requirements.

### I want to be licensed in a subject that is not offered at CU-Boulder

There are many ways that you could proceed to reach your goal. An obvious solution is to consider attending an institution that has programs for your teaching interests. Alternatively, you could complete your bachelor's degree at CU-Boulder and then become licensed through another institution's Post-Baccalaureate program. Another option may be to earn your initial teaching license at CU-Boulder, then [adding an endorsement](#) in the other field after graduation. The last option may require additional coursework depending upon your major, please contact the Office of Student Services.

## Program Goals

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The School of Education is committed to teacher preparation for a diverse society and the education of all children. Our program focuses on educating teachers to be knowledgeable, reflective professionals who recognize their responsibilities to children and their profession, and who attend to the diverse cultural background of public school students.

The undergraduate program combines academic expertise with hands-on experience to prepare candidates for the demands of public school education. Candidates will have a strong foundation in the research that informs instruction and will have many opportunities to translate theory into practice within ethnically diverse elementary, middle level, and high school classrooms.

### Our goals for candidates in the teacher education program include:

- Gaining comfort in using multiple teaching/learning strategies in classrooms with diverse student learners.
- Understanding experience active learning – learning by doing.
- Becoming familiar with and able to utilize performance assessments.
- Understanding social and community contexts and their crucial role in schooling.
- Learning to be reflective practitioners.
- Creating standards-based teaching lessons.
- Developing collaborative skills.

# Coursework Requirements

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Requirements for each licensure area are outlined on the *Requirement Checklists*. Click one of the links below to be directed to the checklist for that content area:

[Elementary \(K-6\)](#)

Secondary (7-12)

[Music \(K-12\)](#)
[English](#)
[French](#)
[Mathematics](#)
[German](#)
[Science](#)
[Japanese](#)
[Social Studies](#)
[Latin](#)
[Russian](#)
[Spanish](#)

Each checklist is unique but all of them follow a similar format. Students must satisfy the *Content Requirements* for their licensure area as well as the *Education Requirements*.

## Content Requirements

Content requirements may be fulfilled with coursework that you are completing towards your major and the Arts & Sciences Core. However, it is possible that your major requirements will not satisfy all of the content requirements for the teaching license. If a requirement on the checklist is not included in your major, you should plan to take this course(s) as elective credit. For students that plan their schedules carefully, the content requirements should not require you to take additional coursework.

Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and transfer credits may be applied towards the content requirements. This is dependent upon how the university accepts these credits. It is not required that the content requirements be complete before applying to the teacher education program. However, all requirements must be completed *prior* to the student teaching semester.



## Class Size

The School of Education is a smaller community on the CU-Boulder campus allowing students to work directly with faculty. A typical education class size is 25-30 students.

## Education Requirements

Education (EDUC) requirements represent the core of the teacher education program. Depending upon the licensure program, students will complete 36-42 semester hours of education coursework *in addition* to their major requirements. This means that education students will have a heavier courseload than a typical undergraduate student. If your goal is to graduate in four years, you may need to take up to 18 semester hours during some terms. Some education students choose to complete major requirements during the Summer to reduce the courses they will need to take during the Fall and Spring semesters.

The final semester of the program is a full-time student teaching placement. To be eligible for student teaching, students must have completed all major requirements, completed all education requirements, and passed a state approved licensure exam. If you plan to student teach in your final semester of senior year, you must complete all of the coursework requirements for your major and the education program in three and one-half years.

## Taking Courses Prior to Admission

Some education (EDUC) courses may be taken prior to admission, such as the EDUC 3013 *School & Society* requirement. Students that are interested in “sampling” an education course are encouraged to take EDUC 3013 prior to application. Additional courses are eligible to be completed prior to admission and will be outlined at the beginning of Section 2 on the *Requirement Checklists*. Because these eligible courses will vary by content area, students should decide on the licensure area they want to pursue before enrolling in these classes (e.g. Elementary vs. Secondary English).

## Degree Audit

Degree audits are now available for all of the licensure programs. You may access the degree audit tool by logging into your [MyCUInfo](#) account (check the “What if” option then make the appropriate selections for your licensure field). Although you can easily fill out the checklist by comparing your transcript to the requirements, the degree audit can also assist you with this. The audit will also calculate your content area GPA if you are considering one of the secondary (7-12) fields. **Degree audits should only be used as a guide and are not a substitute for meeting with an advisor.**

The School of Education evaluates each applicant’s transcript(s) after the application deadline. Upon admission to the teacher education program you will receive a copy of your checklist that will show the requirements that you have already satisfied, and those you must complete prior to student teaching. **The *Requirement Checklists* published on our website reflect current program requirements but are subject to change at any time.** Students are held to the requirements in place at the time of admission for the duration of their program.

## School Placements

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In addition to attending classes on the CU-Boulder campus candidates will participate in a minimum of 800 field experience hours over the course of the program at public schools throughout the Denver/Boulder metropolitan area. Practica placements are arranged by the Director of Field Experiences and students are required to travel to their assigned school site. Your school site will rotate each semester to expose you to different classroom environments and student demographics. Transportation to practicum is the student’s responsibility. Bus transportation is accessible for free with your [CU Student ID](#). There are also several [eGo CarShare](#) locations on the CU-Boulder campus.

All students complete one semester of student teaching in their final semester of the program. With some limitations, you will have the option to request specific schools for your student teaching placement. The School of Education will coordinate this process and will attempt to place all students into one of their top three school choices. Student teaching requires a full time commitment and students will be assessed tuition for this semester.

### Which districts do we partner with?

The School of Education partners with *many* districts throughout the Denver/Boulder metro area. The list below reflects districts that have hosted our candidates for field experiences most recently.

- Adams County School District 50
- Adams 12 School District
- Aurora Public Schools
- Boulder Valley School District
- Cherry Creek School District
- Douglas County Public Schools
- Denver Public Schools
- JEFFCO Public Schools
- Littleton 6 Public Schools
- Mapleton School District
- School District 27J
- St. Vrain Valley School District
- Thompson R-2J School District
- Weld County RE-8 School District

# Program Length

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## Elementary (K-6)

The elementary teacher licensure program is structured around a cohort system and requires four semesters to complete. The first three semesters consist of the education (EDUC) courses and field experiences. All students complete a full-time student teaching placement in the fourth semester. The cohort structure of the elementary program requires that students complete the EDUC courses in the order prescribed on the *Requirement Checklists*. It is not possible to take the EDUC courses out of sequence or in an expedited manner. If you satisfy all of the education requirements prior to the completion of your major, you must delay student teaching until you have completed all of your major requirements.

## Secondary (7-12) & Music (K-12)

At the minimum, requirements for the secondary and music licensure tracks may be completed in three semesters. The first two semesters consist of education (EDUC) courses and field experiences. The final semester will require a full-time student teaching commitment. Although students may develop their own plan for completing the education requirements, some EDUC courses must be taken concurrently and may only be offered in a specific semester (Spring/Fall). For this reason, the School of Education will provide students with strong recommendations for completing licensure requirements upon admission. We assume that all students plan to complete the program as quickly as possible.

## Study Abroad

Students often inquire about the feasibility of pursuing study abroad and the teacher licensure program. The School of Education encourages students to pursue these experiences and will work with students that go abroad during the course of the teacher licensure program. However, we encourage you to consider the following when contemplating this decision:

- Education (EDUC) courses are designed to satisfy state mandated requirements for Colorado teachers and **it is not possible to complete any EDUC requirements abroad.**
- It is possible that coursework completed abroad may satisfy the *Content Requirements*. However, this is dependent upon how these credits are accepted by the degree granting college. (e.g. *if you receive credit for HIST 1020 for a course completed abroad the School of Education can apply this towards your content requirements, if appropriate*).
- If your goal is graduate with your degree and the teaching license in four academic years – in order to stay on track – 100% of the coursework you complete abroad should transfer towards your major or your college's core requirements. For assistance in selecting appropriate courses, please see your major advisor.
- Students that go abroad after enrolling in the teacher education program are essentially taking time off from the program. This may extend your program beyond four academic years depending upon: when you begin the teacher licensure program, the length of time you go abroad, and how well courses completed abroad transfer back to CU-Boulder.

The School of Education has its own policies, standards, and expectations for students that plan to become teachers. Accordingly, we also have our own application process. All students must meet the admission criteria, apply, and be admitted in order to enroll in a teacher licensure program. Applications are only considered at the specified deadlines; we do not offer “rolling” admission. All applicants are *strongly* advised to read the [Application Instructions](#) before beginning the application. To be eligible to apply, you must meet the following criteria:

- 1 Twenty-six (26) semester hours of college coursework completed, *or in progress*. Transfer students must complete one (1) semester at CU-Boulder before applying.
- 2 Minimum 2.75 GPA cumulatively among all institutions attended (on 4.0 scale).
  - *Secondary (7-12)* applicants must also have a 2.75 GPA or higher in all content coursework.
  - *Music (K-12)* applicants must also have a 3.00 GPA or higher in all content coursework.
- 3 Completed a minimum of 25 clock hours of age-appropriate youth interaction. Refer to the *Application Instructions* for more information.
- 4 Demonstrate proficiency in the Math and Verbal Basic Skills requirements. To do so, applicants must complete college-level math and composition course with a grade of “B-” or higher on a 4.0 scale. Acceptable scores on the ACT, SAT, or GRE exams may also fulfill this requirement. ACT: 20 or higher; SAT: 500 or higher; GRE: 500 or higher. (Based on the respective content section of the exam – math or verbal – it is *not* based on your composite score).

## When Should I Apply?

Students may apply once they have satisfied the admission criteria above. The first requirement, completion of 26 semester hours of college coursework, means that students will typically apply during the second semester of freshman year and begin the licensure coursework during their sophomore year. It is possible to begin the program in either the Fall or Spring semester. Refer to the *Application Instructions* for the corresponding application deadline



## What You Should Know *Before* You Apply

- **Are you ready?**

As a professional studies program, our expectations of teaching candidates are high. Students play an integral role in the relationships we maintain with schools during practica and student teaching. Future teachers should demonstrate professionalism, resourcefulness, and initiative. Can you follow directions and find answers to questions for yourself? Are you coachable and willing to learn? The licensure program is much more than just “making the grade.”

- **Know the age group and subject area you want to teach.**

This is often the most critical decision for applicants. Each licensure track at CU-Boulder is designed to prepare students for teaching a specific age group and/or subject area (e.g. Elementary K-6 or Secondary 7-12). **It is *not possible to switch to a different licensure area if your teaching interests change during the course of the program.*** Remember that 25 hours of age-appropriate youth interaction is an application requirement. If you know that you are interested in classroom teaching but are unsure about the age group or content area, you should begin acquiring the youth experience hours to assist you in making this decision.

- **Know what you are committing to.**

The teacher education program is intensive academically, as well as in terms of time commitments. Regular travel will be required throughout the Denver/Boulder metropolitan area.

- **Read the [Application Instructions](#).**

The application instructions provide the most comprehensive information about the application requirements, process, and deadlines. Refer to this document to ensure your application is complete and submitted on time.

## Application Advice from the [Admissions Coordinator](#)

Applications are considered as a whole and there is rarely a single factor that would prevent an applicant from being admitted. However, we encourage you to consider the following:

- A “strong” applicant will often exceed the minimum admission criteria. Satisfying the minimum admission requirements *does not guarantee acceptance*.
- As indicated in the [program goals](#), the School of Education is committed to promoting social justice through teacher education. Applicants with experience working with diverse or at risk youth, for example, will be viewed as better prepared to enter a teacher licensure program.
- The personal essay is a significant piece of your application. It is your opportunity to demonstrate why you would be an outstanding candidate for the teaching profession as well as what you can contribute to the School of Education community. Successful essays:
  - Avoid generalizations and clichés. Statements like “I love children” and “I want to share my knowledge with tomorrow’s leaders” lack depth. Have you adequately researched the education field to know why you want to be a teacher?
  - Demonstrate a strong call to the teaching profession and an awareness of the challenges facing education today. Why do you want to be involved?
  - Will be concise and well written. Writing about experiences that influenced your decision to become a teacher is encouraged, but remember that you have 1000 words. Condense!

## Competitiveness

Applicants often inquire as to the competitiveness of our program. As you might expect, this is influenced by a number of factors and *acceptance rates will vary widely* semester to semester. Below are averages from our most recent admission cycles, Spring 2010 – Fall 2011. All figures are approximate.

<u>Content Area</u>	<u>Applicants Admitted</u>
Elementary	87%
English	98%
Mathematics	68%
Science	93%
Social Studies	65%
World Languages	95%
<b>Total</b>	<b>87%</b>

We receive the largest number of applications for the Elementary program (accounting for approximately 51% of applications from the data set above). Admission can be more competitive for the Elementary content area as there is a limited set of spaces in the cohorts that we admit. Two cohorts are admitted for each fall semester and one cohort is admitted for each spring semester. Approximately 25-30 students are placed in one cohort.

A significant consideration in our admission practices is the demand for teachers in the job market. Currently, the strongest demand for teachers is in the Mathematics and Science content areas. The weakest demand is for Social Studies teachers. Accordingly, the School of Education will accommodate more qualified applicants in the Mathematics and Science content areas. Few spaces are allocated for Social Studies applicants and only the strongest applicants will be admitted.

### Can I Reapply?

Yes. The School of Education encourages applicants that have been declined admission to reapply. We attempt to provide feedback to any applicant that has been declined admission and will list areas for improvement in your official letter. If you plan to reapply at the next deadline, please contact the Office of Student Services to determine which pieces of the application you should resubmit.



# After Graduation

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Upon successful completion of all academic requirements, passing a state-approved licensure exam, completion of one semester of student teaching, and completion of a bachelor's degree, the School of Education will recommend candidates for licensure. The School of Education does not issue the teaching license. Your teaching license will be issued by the [Colorado Department of Education \(CDE\)](#). All students will be informed of the licensure application process prior to the student teaching semester.

## Job Placement

Proactive students will begin planning their job search well in advance. The School of Education assists in this process by offering various seminars such as resume writing workshops and hosting educator panels with teachers and principals from local schools. We also partner with the [Career Services](#) department to get students in touch with job fair information and interviewing resources. Alumna of CU-Boulder will have access to Career Services resources up to one year after graduation.



## Job Demand

Between 2008 and 2018 the market for Elementary school teachers is projected to grow 16% nationally and 15% in Colorado.

The market for Secondary teachers is projected to grow 9% nationally and 7% in Colorado during the same period.

Data Source: [Career One Stop](#)

## Adding Endorsements

Students in the teacher education program may only pursue *one (1)* licensure area. However, it is possible to add additional teaching endorsements onto a license so that you may teach multiple content areas (e.g. Science and Math). Some colleges and universities offer programs for added endorsements but it is also possible to do this directly through CDE. Refer to the CDE website for [added endorsement requirements](#) and information about the application process.

## Transferring Licenses

You may transfer a Colorado State teaching license to another state. We recommend that you contact the state department of education in your intended state of residence to find out what their teaching requirements are and how the Colorado license may transfer in advance of program completion. If you will have to complete an

additional course or take a different licensure exam in order to transfer your license, then your contact will allow you to plan for that and avoid surprises. Our programs do not prepare candidates for licensure in other states, as each state has its own laws and standards regarding teacher preparation. Because we are accredited nationally by [NCATE](#), most of our program completers do not report major problems to us in transferring their license.

## Option to Continue Studies at the Master's Level

As you will see on the *Requirement Checklist*, some of the education courses are taught at the graduate (5000) level.

Candidates that complete the teacher licensure program may transfer a maximum of six (6) semester hours of coursework into the [Curriculum & Instruction master's program](#). The first years as a teacher are critical to a teacher's development and our master's program allows individuals to stay connected with the university in these formative years. The master's program provides a supportive framework allowing you to deepen and extend what was learned during initial

[U.S. News & World Report](#) has ranked our graduate programs at #43 on their list of Best Education Schools.

teacher preparation. Some master's programs allow candidates to complete requirements for an advanced teaching endorsement in either literacy or linguistically diverse education. Applicants must meet the admission criteria, apply, and be admitted in order to enroll in a master's program.

## Quality

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The School of Education is nationally accredited by [NCATE](#). All licensure programs have been reauthorized by the [Colorado Department of Education](#) and the [Colorado Department of Higher Education](#). All candidates will complete a minimum of 800 hours of youth interaction over the course of the program. Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, this makes candidates "highly qualified" to teach.

**NCATE**

The Standard of Excellence  
in Teacher Preparation

## Scholarships

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The School of Education is proud to support its licensure and graduate students with various scholarships. A list of available scholarships is published on the School of Education website early in the Spring semester along with the application form and instructions. The application deadline is typically during the month of March. Funds will be applied towards the student's fall tuition bill.

Scholarship availability can fluctuate year to year depending on funding. A typical scholarship will range from \$500-1000, though some will have larger awards. Students are welcome to apply for as many scholarships for which they qualify. The School of Education faculty and donors will select scholarship recipients. You must be enrolled in a School of Education program in order to receive a scholarship.



# Advising

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## Prospective Students

This document and the resources it includes have been prepared so that applicants may make an informed decision about pursuing teacher licensure at CU-Boulder. However, it is natural that you may have questions that they do not address. There are a few ways to direct your questions:

- 1** For the quickest response, write to the Office of Student Services in the School of Education at [edadvise@colorado.edu](mailto:edadvise@colorado.edu) or call us at (303) 492-6555. Office hours are 8:00AM – 5:00PM Monday to Friday during the academic year, and 7:30AM – 4:30PM during the summer months.
- 2** Attend one of the Undergraduate Information Sessions that take place during the Fall and Spring semesters. The date, time, and location of these meetings are published on the [School of Education website](#).
- 3** You may schedule a 30-minute meeting with a School of Education admissions representative. Please review the advising expectations below before setting up an appointment:

### Advising Expectations:

- 1. Be prepared with *specific* questions.** Advisors do not prepare material to discuss as this is *your* opportunity to ask questions. Do your research in advance. Meeting to cover “general questions” or to get “more information” are not effective uses of advising time as this information is available in this document and on the [School of Education website](#).
- 2. Some questions will require your own research.** It is understandable to be curious about job availability and potential salaries, for example, but there is no stock answer that we can provide for these types of questions. There are many tools on the internet to help you research this information (see the [resources page](#)). Also, we cannot advise you on programs or licensure fields that we do not offer.
- 3. We can discuss options with you, but cannot make decisions for you.** Your decision to teach must be your own. If you are unsure about which licensure field to pursue, your best option is to gain experience. The [Career Services](#) office on the CU-Boulder campus can help you identify your strengths and interests. Career counselors are also available by appointment.

To schedule an appointment, please call the Office of Student Services at (303) 492-6555 during the office hours listed above. Appointment times are published each Thursday for the following week. The best time to contact us is during the summer months. We are located in the [Education building](#), room 151.

## Advising for Admitted Students

Students admitted to the teacher licensure program will meet with the education advisor each semester to ensure they are making adequate progress in preparation for student teaching. The education advisor will assist with course planning issues and navigating requirements. Additionally, all students will have a faculty advisor that specializes in their licensure area. Faculty advisors provide academic support to students and can assist with clarifying career goals.

# Resources

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## [Academic Calendar](#)

The university's official academic calendar with key dates for each term.

## [Approved Program List](#)

Are you interested in becoming licensed in a subject that is not available at CU-Boulder? The Colorado Department of Higher Education publishes a list of available licenses in Colorado and institutions that offer them.

## [Career One Stop](#)

Career One Stop is an all-in-one website for researching industries and careers to applying for jobs. Their website is sponsored by the US Government and pulls data from state and federal sources.

## [Career Services](#)

The Career Services department provides many services to undergraduate students, including: career counseling, skills and interests assessments, and job hunting resources, to name a few.

## [Colorado Department of Education \(CDE\)](#)

The CDE is the institution that will award your teaching license upon graduation. They also facilitate the process for [adding endorsements](#).

## [Colorado Department of Higher Education \(CDHE\)](#)

The CDHE publishes information about Colorado Higher Education institutions. If you are interested in teaching a subject that CU-Boulder does not offer, check out their list of [approved teacher education programs](#) to locate a licensure program in Colorado.

## [Course Catalog](#)

The course catalog contains university policies as well as course descriptions for all classes offered on the CU-Boulder campus. The catalog is only available for free electronically. A hard copy of the catalog may be purchased from the university [Book Store](#).

## [CU Teach](#)

The CU Teach program is designed specifically for students that want to pursue careers in math and science education. Check out the link to the left for more information.