

[\(/teacher-certification\)](#)

USAO offers 12 programs in teacher certification, including art, physical education (PHED), language arts, math, music (vocal and/or instrumental), science, social studies, elementary, early childhood, and deaf education. Major requirements for a teaching certificate in these areas can be found on the respective program's checklist and in the *Teacher Education Handbook*.

Students enrolling in PK-12 and for secondary education certification should understand that these are only certification programs, not degree programs. PK-12 (art, music, deaf education and physical education) and secondary education (language arts, math, science, and social studies) students must also satisfy the requirements for their degree areas. Students should consult the area advisor for the degree and certification checklists.

All USAO teacher certification programs are accredited by both the Oklahoma Commission on Teacher Preparation and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. However, the requirements for a teaching certificate are subject to change by the various state agencies. Therefore, those seeking certification should consult the Director of Teacher Education or area advisor before developing a degree plan.

- The *Teacher Education Handbook*, available from the USAO Bookstore, provides further information concerning the program and its requirements.
- Information about the required tests and scores can be obtained from the Teacher Education Office or a teacher education faculty member.

All certification programs include a foreign language competency requirement and preparation of a professional portfolio.

All requirements for teacher certification programs are subject to change if new requirements are established by the Oklahoma State Board of Education, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, or the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

Teacher Certification in K-12 and Secondary Education

USAO does not offer degrees in K-12 or Secondary Education. However, students may obtain teaching certificates in the academic areas of: arts; health, physical education and recreation (HPER); language arts; math; music (vocal and/or instrumental); science; and social studies. Major requirements for a teaching certificate in these areas can be found on the respective program check sheet and in the *Teacher Education Handbook*. See your advisor for a program check sheet and the specific requirements for the certification program in these areas.

Teaching Certificate Programs

USAO has approved programs for teaching certificates in the following areas:

- PK-3 Certificate Early Childhood Education
- 1-8 Certificate Elementary Education
- Elementary-Secondary Certificate (Grades PK-12) Art, Physical Education, Music
- Secondary Certificate (Grades 5-12) Mathematics
- Secondary Certificate (Grades 6-12) English, Science, Social Studies
- Special Education Certificates (Grades PK-12) Education of the Deaf

Admission to Teacher Education

Students declaring an interest in teacher education should enroll in "Orientation to Teaching," a course designed to acquaint them with the many facets of teaching as a profession. Upon completion of the minimum requirements, the student makes formal application to enter the Teacher Education Program. Applications are available in the Teacher Education Office.

Minimum requirements for admission to Teacher Education are:

1. completion of 30 semester hours;
2. an overall grade-point average of 2.5 for the last 24 semester hours;
3. successful completion of the following courses with a grade of "C" or better:
 - IDS 1013, Rhetoric and Public Speaking
 - IDS 1113, Writing I
 - IDS 1213, Writing II
 - IDS 1223, Mathematics in the Modern World
 or their equivalents;
4. completion of the Oral English and Speech Screening;
5. recommendations by three faculty members and one public school teacher or administrator;
6. satisfaction of the Admission Test requirement; and
7. satisfaction of the English Proficiency requirement.

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Requirements for the Professional Trimester (Student Teaching)

For student-teaching approval, an overall average of 2.50 on coursework is required, with an average of 2.75 in the major area. Other requirements are listed in the *Teacher Education Handbook*.

Certification Requirements

Students may qualify for an initial Oklahoma teaching certificate if they:

1. complete a teacher certification program,
2. pass the Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET), the Oklahoma Subject Area Test(s) (OSAT), *and* the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Exam (OPTE),
3. satisfy the requirement for foreign language competency,
1. submit an acceptable professional portfolio to the Director of Teacher Education, *and*
2. submit fingerprints for a background check to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

A minor in education is available for a student pursuing a major in Art, Physical Education, (English) Language Arts, Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Studies or Music. A student must be successfully admitted to the Teacher Education Program to be able to enroll in any 3000 or 4000 level Professional Education course.

Minor in Education

16 hours including: EDUC 2002 Orientation to Teaching

EDUC 2011 Directed Field Experiences I

EDUC 2022 Education of the Exceptional Child

EDUC 2103 Human Growth and Development

EDUC 3102 Educational Psychology

EDUC 3203 School and Society

EDUC 3211 Directed Field Experiences II

EDUC 4442 Classroom Management and Evaluation Theory

Plus, the Methods Course corresponding to the appropriate major: (2 or 3 or 4 hours)

ART 3273

PHED 3104

ENGL 4763

MATH 4463

NCSI 4463

HIST 4763

MUSC 4552 or MUSC 4562 or MUSC 4572

Teacher Education Background Check Policy

Recognizing that public trust is important to the education system and that those working with children are held to a high standard of conduct as well as knowledge and skill, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma has adopted the following Background Check Policy to assure our education partners that every effort is made to protect the safety of their students.

Beginning in Fall 2008, all college students enrolled in Field Level I classes will be required to complete a criminal background check process. Each student must be cleared through his/her background check before being allowed to begin the 20-hour classroom observation experience for Direct Field I/Practicum I. Refusal to submit to a background check will result in the student's withdrawal from the course.

If the background check is not clear, that student will receive notification by letter and will be required to drop the course. He/she may not reenroll until cleared by the background check process.

It is emphasized that only the Director of Teacher Education, Coordinator of Field Based Experiences and the college student's faculty advisor will have knowledge of the results of the background check. All results will be held in strict confidence and on a "need to know" basis. A copy of the individual background check results will be provided to the individual upon written request to the Director of Teacher Education.

Candidates enrolling in Field Level II classes will be required to sign an affidavit verifying that they do not have any convictions, outstanding criminal charges or warrants of arrest pending in Oklahoma or in any other jurisdiction.

Teacher candidates applying for the professional trimester will be required to submit to a criminal background check during the application process. Results must be obtained and on file in the Teacher Education office before a candidate will be allowed to report to his/her first assignment. If the candidate's background check is not clear, the application for the Professional Trimester will be denied. Denial notification will be sent to the teacher candidate via certified letter. It should be noted that the teacher candidate will be ineligible for future professional trimester opportunities until a subsequent background check clears them.

Teacher Education Paraprofessional Option

The federal reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the "No Child Left Behind" Act, requires paraprofessionals working as teacher assistants in school districts to be highly qualified. Oklahoma's Legislature recognizes that public school paraprofessionals play an important role in education school children and in assisting teachers. An Oklahoma Title I Paraprofessional Credential is available to persons meeting the following requirements:

1. Has a high school diploma or GED diploma,
2. Has met a career development paraprofessional program approved by the State Board of Education, *and*

1. Has on file with the OSDE a current Oklahoma criminal history record from the OSBI as well as a National fingerprint-based criminal history record provided by the FBI.

The second requirement can be met by completing at least 48 hours of study at an institution of higher education. Successful completion of the following **Paraprofessional Core** of classes at USAO would prepare a candidate for employment as a paraprofessional in a school classroom or for Admission to the Teacher Education Program toward full teacher licensure:

IDS 1001 Freshman Orientation

IDS 1013 Rhetoric and Public Speaking

IDS 1113 Writing I

IDS 1213 Writing II

IDS 1133 The Individual in Contemporary Society

IDS 1223 Math in the Modern World

IDS 2003 Introduction to Computer Science

IDS 2013 Physical Science

IDS 2023 Life Science

IDS2133 American Civilization I

EDUC 2002 Orientation to Teaching

EDUC 2011 Directed Field Experience I

EDUC 2022 Education of the Exceptional Child

EDUC 2103 Human Growth and Development

12 hours of Electives, recommended to include:

IDS 2143 American Civilization II

Begin a foreign language

6 hours in one area of interest,

i.e. candidates desiring to work with children in pre-school, elementary or middle school should consider:

MATH 2113 Number Systems and Problem Solving and

EDUC 2323 Reading I

Applications for the credential are available in Gary Hall 206.

Alternative Paths To Teacher Certification

Although USAO believes that its teacher preparation programs are designed to produce effective, informed and reflective teachers, who are capable of independent practice and continued professional growth, alternative pathways to teacher certification are recognized. Currently Oklahoma's Alternative Placement Program is such a pathway.

Candidates choosing to seek certification through Oklahoma's Alternative Placement Program can complete a degree program of their choice and apply to the Oklahoma State Department of Education for the Alternative Placement Program. Once accepted

into the Alternative program, they can file with the Director of Teacher Education for permission to take professional education classes as required by the State Department of Education.