

2020-2021 GRADUATE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Special Education & Reading Specialist K-12 Program

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE



WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

New Wilmington, Pennsylvania

2020-2021 Special Education/Reading Specialist Program Handbook

The Graduate School
Thompson-Clark Hall, Second Floor
724-946-7353

Volume 106

August 2020

Westminster College does not discriminate, and will not tolerate discrimination, on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or handicap or disability as those terms are defined under applicable law, in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to admissions and employment. In its employment practices, the College may consider the individual's support of the philosophy and purposes of Westminster as stated in the *Graduate Catalog*. Otherwise, Westminster does not discriminate, and will not tolerate discrimination, on the basis of religion or creed. Inquiries may be directed to the equal opportunity officer, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA 16172-0001, 724-946-7247.

This *Graduate Catalog* is for information only and cannot be considered binding on the College. Westminster College reserves the right and authority to change any and all requirements, regulations, policies, and academic curricula, and it is the student's responsibility to remain informed about these and any changes made thereto. Questions should be directed to the program coordinator or the director of the Graduate School. Changes in state requirements for certification take precedence over information in this catalog.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL



Dear Titans,

Welcome to the Graduate School at Westminster College! You have begun walking in the steps of a proud tradition that includes many distinguished alumni.

We are one of the earliest coeducational institutions of higher learning in the country. Westminster is also the home of the area's oldest graduate school, founded in 1944.

Honesty and personal integrity are cornerstones of our programs. Our culture is framed by a strong sense of service to others, a positive spirit, an emphasis on ethics, a commitment and respect for truth and knowledge, and engagement in civil discourse.

High standards are woven through the content of our courses. Each program is designed to balance theory and research with relevant professional and educational practices.

Our instructors demonstrate leadership in their respective fields and provide engaging, practical learning experiences for our students. They are committed to providing one-on-one student support throughout your time here. Our student-centered approach is geared to the working professional — respectful of your unique needs.

I encourage you to fully engage in all we have to offer. Your energy, time, and hard work help to make Westminster a special place to be. We are committed to producing resourceful and informed graduates that become the future change-makers in their organizations.

Thank you for choosing to be a part of something real!

Alison L. DuBois, Ph.D.

Director, The Graduate School

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WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

GENERAL INFORMATION

HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE

Westminster College was founded in 1852 by two presbyteries of the Associate Presbyterian Church. The first catalog stated that “no person will be refused admission on account of color, caste, or sex.” By admitting women and granting them degrees on the same basis as men, Westminster became one of the earliest coeducational colleges in the United States. The College has maintained a Presbyterian affiliation through two denominational mergers and is now related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through the Synod of the Trinity. Westminster is governed by a board of trustees.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSES

The mission of Westminster College is to help students develop competencies, commitments, and characteristics which have distinguished human beings at their best. The liberal arts tradition is the foundation of the curriculum continually designed to serve this mission in a rapidly changing world. The College sees the well-educated person as one whose skills are complemented by ever-developing values and ideals identified in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Westminster’s quest for excellence is a recognition that stewardship of life mandates the maximum possible development of each person’s capabilities.

The College thus realizes its mission in enabling students to:

- Develop intellectual curiosity and the competencies to reason logically, evaluate critically, communicate effectively, imagine creatively, and appreciate aesthetic and creative expressions of humanity;
- Acquire a knowledge and appreciation of self, society, human cultures, the natural world, and human relationships to God;
- Develop and demonstrate moral and ethical commitments to neighbor, society, and the natural world consistent with an understanding of self;
- Commit themselves to lifelong learning and the acquisition of skills for careers and responsible service as world citizens.

The curriculum is designed as a means by which the College endeavors to fulfill its mission.

ACCREDITATION

The College is accredited by Middle States Commission on Higher Education and is a charter member of the Association. Its education certification programs have the approval of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and are designed to meet the standards of the Ohio Department of Education. Additionally, the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is designed to meet/exceed curricular and practical requirements for license eligibility in Pennsylvania. The College is a member of the American Council on Education, the Association of American Colleges and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104
Telephone: 267-284-5000

Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126
Telephone: 717-783-6788

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Westminster College is to help men and women develop competencies, commitments and characteristics which have distinguished human beings at their best. The liberal arts tradition is the foundation of the curriculum and is designed to serve this mission in a rapidly changing world.

The College sees the well-educated person as one whose skills are complemented by ever-developing values and ideals identified in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Westminster's quest for excellence is recognition that stewardship of life mandates the maximum possible development of each person's capabilities.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE OUTCOMES

1. to reason logically and evaluate critically
2. to communicate effectively
3. to think creatively, and appreciate aesthetic expressions
4. to demonstrate intellectual curiosity
5. to acquire knowledge of self, society, human cultures, the natural world, and human relationships to God
6. to apply our knowledge to contemporary issues
7. to demonstrate moral and ethical commitments to neighbor, society, and the natural world
8. to demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and the acquisition of skills for careers and responsible service as world citizens.

HISTORY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School was established at Westminster College in 1944. The first classes were offered during the summer of 1945, and the first degree was awarded in 1946. The program was instituted as a service to public school teachers within convenient driving distance of the College. At that time, no educational institution between Pittsburgh and Cleveland offered graduate work. There proved to be a demand, and by 1950 more than 100 graduate students were enrolled in a well-organized program approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction. Courses leading to the certification of guidance counselors were later approved. In 1959, the State Council of Education approved extending the Graduate School to include courses leading to provisional elementary and secondary principal certificates. Subsequent approval was granted to prepare superintendents.

Westminster provides the opportunity for a number of selected students to do advanced study and research leading to the degree of master of education, during both the regular academic year and the summer session. Programs are offered for the preparation of principals, superintendents, guidance counselors, and reading specialists K-12 combined with special education specialist PreK-8. A master's degree in education is offered for elementary and secondary teachers.

OUTCOMES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

1. Cultivate effective communications skills
2. Develop analytical and critical thinking skills regarding contemporary issues in Education, Counseling, and Business
3. Nurture moral development and intellectual curiosity that has practical implications for Education, Counseling, and Business

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Westminster offers curricula leading to the master of education degree and certification of an elementary-secondary counselor, principal, reading specialist, superintendent, special education, and special education with reading. A general education master's degree is also available. Additionally, a master of arts in clinical mental health counseling is offered that includes three distinct areas of focus: youth, school, and adult counseling. Additionally, a master of business administration is offered with four programs tracks: general management, business analytics, health care management, and environmental/business sustainability.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDY

Applicants must possess academic, personal, and professional qualities deemed acceptable by the Graduate Committee.

All applicants admitted to graduate study must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and a preferred undergraduate grade point average of 3.0. Students with an undergraduate GPA of less than 3.0 may be considered by the director. Requirements for admission include submitting a completed application for graduate study, professional references and a writing sample. An advanced graduate degree supersedes the undergraduate 3.0 GPA requirement.

An applicant who has a master's degree or doctorate in education or in a teaching related field from an accredited college or university will be admitted on the basis of the advanced degree by filing the application for graduate study, and copies of all previous college or university transcripts.

The applicant is responsible for filing official undergraduate/graduate transcripts from all colleges/universities attended and an application for admission along with all other required documentation with The Graduate School, Westminster College, Thompson-Clark Hall, Room 208, 319 S. Market St., New Wilmington, PA 16172, no later than two weeks before registration.

CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTED STUDENT

From time to time, students are accepted to the program conditionally. Generally, this occurs when awaiting official transcripts, letters of reference or other documentation required to complete the application process and gain full acceptance to the Graduate School. Students accepted conditionally must meet all requirements for full admission to continue coursework.

PROVISIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT

Provisional graduate students are those who desire to become degree candidates, but do not have the minimum grade point average of 3.0. These students' progress will be reviewed after the completion of two Westminster graduate courses. This review may result in a change of enrollment status to regular graduate student if the student earns a grade of "B" or higher in both graduate courses.

CONTINUING EDUCATION STUDENT

Continuing education students are students who disclaim any intention of becoming degree or certification candidates. An applicant for this type of admission must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education. Unsuccessful applicants for admission as regular graduate students cannot be considered.

Continuing education students may earn such graduate credit as their qualifications and performance warrant. A continuing education student not maintaining good academic standing automatically forfeits rights to take any additional graduate courses.

Continuing education students may take no more than four courses, and credit earned as a continuing education student cannot be applied toward a degree or certification either at the time the work is taken or at a later date. Continuing education student status will be noted on the official transcript.

ADMISSION OF UNDERGRADUATES TO GRADUATE COURSES

For Current Westminster Undergraduate Students: Any Westminster undergraduate who, at the beginning of the final semester of undergraduate study, needs 12 or fewer semester hours to fulfill the requirements for the bachelor's degree may, with the permission of the adviser and the director of the Graduate Program, take graduate courses. To take this option, students must apply for admission to graduate study through the Office of Graduate School. Courses completed at the graduate level may be credited toward a graduate degree and toward post-graduate teacher certification requirements, but no course may be counted for credit toward more than one degree. Applications are available from and should be submitted to the director of Graduate School.

MAINTAINING DEGREE CANDIDACY

To maintain degree candidacy in Westminster's Graduate School, students must earn grades of "B" or higher in all graduate courses. The student also must have removed any entrance deficiencies.

To change a program of a study, the student should contact the director of the Graduate School to develop a new plan of completion/program.

The director of the Graduate School will review the student's academic record, instructor evaluations, entrance assessments, and other relevant materials. The review also will be utilized in the advising process to enhance the student's knowledge and skills.

ACADEMIC STATUS

For the Master of Education, Master of Arts, and MBA degrees, in addition to submitting a Practitioner Research Report at the end of all coursework, the M Ed students must complete at least 10 courses on the graduate level and the MA students must complete at least 20 courses on the graduate level with an average of “B” (3.0) or better, including no more than two courses with a grade of “C” or less.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Students are required to complete a culminating assignment prior to graduation. There are two options: a Comprehensive Examination or a Data-driven Research project. The Comprehensive Examination is an opportunity for the student to communicate to the faculty that he/she possesses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for being successful in his/her respective field of study. Students will answer carefully selected questions related to their field in a formal written narrative that will be submitted to a panel of faculty experts for a pass or fail grade. Students who are completing Internships may prefer to complete the Data driven-Research project. This practitioner-based option allows the student to create an action research project, conduct the research at a field site, analyze the data, and report on the study’s results. Either option occurs at the end of each program track.

GRADING SYSTEM

A Excellent.	C+
A-	C Credit. Not more than two courses with a grade of “C” or under can be counted.
B+	
B Good.	C-
B-	F Failure.

I – Incomplete this may be given in lieu of the letter grades. It is a temporary grade given when a student is unavoidably delayed in completing an academic course. Such academic work must be completed by the end of the next semester if the student remains in college. Students who are temporarily separated from the College must remove the incomplete within one year after the close of the semester in which the grade was given unless special permission is granted by the dean of the College. All incomplete grades not properly removed are changed to “F.”

W – Withdrawn. This grade may be recorded for withdrawal from a course by deadlines established by the Registrar, or later if the course record to date is passing and if withdrawal is necessitated by illness or other legitimate reasons. Granting of the “W” grade requires approval by the instructor, the adviser, the director of the Graduate School, and dean of the College.

M – Students who take a leave of absence for military related reasons will be readmitted with the same academic status as he or she had when last attending. The grade transcript will show an “M” or Military to indicate that the military member or his/her spouse was unable to complete the course(s) because of military service. A grade of “M” is not counted in a student’s GPA.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the College. Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of this code of behavior. Outlined below are examples of and specific consequences for academic dishonesty at Westminster. The list of examples is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to provide an overview of the community’s common concerns. Students who are unsure as to whether specific behavior not listed here will constitute academic dishonesty should consult with their individual course instructors.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Westminster College Academic Integrity Policy (AIP) include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cheating

1. Copying answers from another student’s paper during a quiz, test, or examination
2. Divulging answers or information to another student during a quiz, test, or examination, or accepting such aid
3. Using unauthorized aids (e.g., notes or books) during a quiz, test, or examination
4. Collaborating improperly with another student on an open-book or take-home quiz, test, or examination

5. Exceeding the time limit, when one exists, on an open-book or take-home quiz, test, or examination
6. Aiding another student improperly on in- or out-of-class assignments
7. Leaving a testing area to obtain answers or aid
8. Handing in another's work or ideas as one's own
9. Taking a quiz, test, or examination with prior knowledge of its contents, when that knowledge has not been authorized or consented to by the instructor
10. Engaging in any activity which may give an unfair academic advantage to oneself or another.

Misconduct

1. Engaging, during a class or testing session, in conduct that is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the instructor or fellow students
2. Submitting the same work, including oral presentations, for different courses without the explicit consent of the instructors
3. Stealing or intentionally damaging or destroying notes, research data, laboratory projects, library materials, computer software (including the intentional passing of a computer virus), or any other work of another member of the Westminster community
4. Acting as or using a substitute in any academic evaluation procedures
5. Depriving others of necessary academic resources
6. Sabotaging the work of another member of the Westminster community
7. Unethically obtaining answers or other information about a quiz, test, or examination before it is administered, even if not a member of the class in which the quiz, test, or examination is given
8. Violating copyright restrictions, i.e., stealing the intellectual property of another.

Plagiarism

"Derived from the Latin word for kidnapping, plagiarism is the theft of someone else's 'brainchild' —that person's language, ideas, or research—and the origin of the word conveys the seriousness of such offenses in the view of college teachers and administrators. The reason is that words, ideas, and research are the main forms of currency in academic life." – Keith Hjortshoj, *The Transition to College Writing* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 172.

1. Quoting or paraphrasing, without proper citation and acknowledgment, the published words, ideas, or work of another (including anonymous publications and online publications)
2. Submitting, as one's own work, a paper, an oral presentation, or a visual presentation authored wholly or partially by someone else (including commercial services)
3. Borrowing and appropriating, without proper citation and acknowledgement, facts that are not matters of general knowledge, including all statistics, and translations, and/or the general idea or logic of another's argument.

Providing False Information

1. Furnishing false information to the college for the purpose of obtaining special consideration or privilege (e.g., postponement of an examination or a deadline)
2. Misrepresenting source material or information or participating in the falsification or misrepresentation of citations
3. Falsifying laboratory data, notes, or results, or research data of any type, and presenting it as one's work.

Process and Consequences

If a course instructor suspects that a student has violated this policy, the instructor will speak with the student, review appropriate materials, and reach a conclusion. If the instructor determines that a violation has occurred, the following process will apply:

1. The instructor will inform the student that he or she has violated the AIP and that the director of the Graduate School (DGS) and the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) will be notified.
2. The instructor will impose an academic penalty at his or her discretion (e.g., 0 for the assignment without possibility of revisions, failing grade for the course, or other appropriate academic sanctions).
3. The instructor will send the DGS a concise written explanation of the violation and the penalty.
4. After reviewing the instructor's explanation of the violation and penalty, as well as the student's record of previous offenses, the DGS and/or VPAA will take the following additional action:

- a. for a first offense, the DGS and/or VPAA may supplement the instructor's penalty with further action, up to and including suspension and permanent dismissal, after consultation with the instructor and the Academic Standards Committee. The DGS and/or VPAA may also meet with the student.
 - b. for a second offense, the DGS and/or VPAA will impose a one-semester suspension. The DGS and/or VPAA may take further action, up to and including permanent dismissal, after consultation with the instructor and the Academic Standards Committee.
 - c. for a third offense, the DGS and/or VPAA will impose a penalty of permanent dismissal from the College.
5. The DGS and/or VPAA will send the student official notification of the penalty for the violation (even if the penalty is solely that imposed by the instructor). The VPAA will send copies of this notification to the instructor and the student's academic adviser.
 6. A copy of the DGS and/or VPAA's official notification to the student will be kept in the student's academic file. If there is no second offense, this letter will be removed upon the student's graduation. If there is a second offense, the letter will become part of the student's permanent academic record.
 7. Within 15 calendar days of the DGS and/or VPAA's sending official notification of the penalty for the violation, the student may decide to appeal either the finding of a violation or the penalty for the violation.

Appeals Process

1. The student will send the DGS and/or VPAA written notification that he or she intends to appeal either the finding of a violation or the penalty for the violation.
2. The VPAA will ask the chair of the Academic Standards Committee to convene an Academic Integrity Review Board (AIRB), made up of the following:
 - a. two members of the Academic Standards Committee, chosen by the committee
 - b. the chair of the department or program in which the violation took place
 - c. one other faculty member nominated by the student
 - d. the VPAA, in cases in which his or her decision is not being appealed.
3. One of the two participating members of the Academic Standards Committee will chair the AIRB.
4. When appearing before the AIRB, the student may bring an adviser who is a member of the campus community but who is not a member of the student's family. The adviser may consult with the student during questioning by the AIRB, but the adviser may not participate in that questioning herself or himself.
5. The AIRB's decision will be reached by majority (3/4 or 3/5) vote, using the standard of "more likely than not."
6. Within 48 hours of the student's appearance before the AIRB, the chair will send the student and the instructor official notification of the board's decision.
7. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the AIRB, he or she must do so within seven calendar days of the AIRB's sending official notification of its decision. This appeal must be made in writing to the president of the College, whose decision will be final.

Additional Stipulations

A student may not withdraw from a class in which he or she has been charged with violating the College's Academic Integrity Policy, unless he or she successfully appeals the finding that a violation has occurred. Charges of violating this policy may be brought by an instructor against a student who is not enrolled in the class affected by the violation.

Any member of the Westminster community, including students, staff members, faculty members, and administrators, may bring a charge for a violation of the College's Academic Integrity Policy. If someone other than a course instructor wishes to bring a charge, he or she can initiate the process by contacting the course instructor, a department chair, or the VPAA.

Copies of all materials pertaining to violations, penalties, and appeals will be kept in the Office of Academic Affairs. The VPAA will send to the Academic Standards Committee a monthly report on the number and nature of violations of the policy.

TIME LIMITATIONS

All work for the master's degree, including credits accepted by transfer, must be completed within a period of seven calendar years unless a student takes a leave of absence. Written appeals for extension of the time limit will be considered by the Director of the Graduate School.

WITHDRAWAL, TRANSFER, OR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student wishing to withdraw or transfer from the Graduate School should start the process by contacting the Graduate School.

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR WITHDRAWAL (VOLUNTARY OR INVOLUNTARY)

When illness, injury, or a psychiatric disability occurs, a student or guardian may request, or the College may require, a medical withdrawal or medical leave of absence (MLOA) from the College. All medical withdrawals or leaves must be approved by the vice president for student affairs. Specific conditions to receive an MLOA or Medical Withdrawal, including the conditions for future readmittance, are stipulated at the time of the withdrawal or granting of a leave of absence. These conditions may specify what professional medical documentation is required for the withdrawal to be granted, and/or a period of time for a leave. Before the student will be permitted to return to campus, the College may require a professional evaluation or assessment (at the student's expense) stating the professional expert's opinion that the student is now capable of meeting the academic and the social standards of the College (which are stated in the Westminster Student Code of Conduct). Students who are granted an MLOA or Medical Withdrawal will be given a "W" (withdrawal) for all courses in which the student was enrolled at the time of the MLOA or Medical Withdrawal.

Grievance Procedures for Involuntary Withdrawal

Refer to the information on "Involuntary Administrative Withdrawal" in the Undergraduate Student Handbook for additional information and grievance procedures related to a withdrawal that is not voluntarily initiated or accepted by the student.

RETURN TO CAMPUS PROCEDURES FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR WITHDRAWAL

Students wishing to return after a Leave of Absence should contact the Graduate School.

READMISSION FOR US ARMED FORCES MEMBERS

Students who take a leave of absence for service-related reasons will be readmitted with the same academic status as he or she had when last attending or being admitted to Westminster College.

State law requires college or university to grant a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard or other reserve component of the armed forces or the member's spouse a military leave of absence from their education if he or she is called to active duty (other than active duty for training). The grade transcript for all classes shall show an "M" or "Military" to indicate that the military member or his/her spouse was unable to complete courses because of military service. A grade of "M" is not counted in a student's GPA.

TRANSFER OF CREDITS FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE/CERTIFICATION

Graduate credit earned at other approved institutions may be accepted for transfer to Westminster College provided the credit has been completed within the six-year period established for the completion of all degree requirements. Acceptance of transfer credit either before or subsequent to admission to Westminster must have written approval by the director of the Graduate School. There must be prior approval to take transfer work while enrolled at Westminster. Work with a grade lower than a "B" will not be accepted. While transfer credits are accepted, more than half of coursework must be taken at Westminster.

Since each institution determines the conditions under which credits may be accepted, graduate students desiring to transfer Westminster credits to another institution should make previous arrangements with the institution concerned. Westminster cannot guarantee that its courses will be accepted for credit toward the master's degree by any other college or university.

ADVISING

The director of the Graduate School and the program coordinator for each curriculum will function as advisers and will assist in the planning of a program of studies. **Each student is responsible for planning a program in keeping with all requirements for graduation and certification. It is the student's responsibility to contact and confer with the adviser concerning questions regarding the program. Regular advising emails and notices are distributed.**

Students matriculated in the program as listed in previous catalogs will follow, as far as possible, the new program as described herein. However, in individual cases where it would present a hardship, students may be permitted to continue under their former program. It should be noted that changes in state certification requirements take precedence over information in this catalog.

MAXIMUM COURSE LOAD

A graduate student who carries three or more courses per semester is considered a full-time student. Four courses are the maximum load which any graduate student will be permitted to carry. The normal load for a graduate student working full time is one or two courses. Students should allow ample time for library research, project work, and cooperative assignments when planning their schedules.

AUDITING

A limited number of auditors may be permitted in certain courses. Before auditing is permitted, approval of the director of the Graduate Program and the instructor of the course must be obtained.

Individuals holding a baccalaureate degree who wish to audit graduate courses but who have not previously taken work at Westminster College must make application for such auditing through the Office of Graduate School and Adult Studies. No credit or grades will be given to a student auditing a course. The fee for auditing is \$415 per course.

REGISTRATION

Late registration for a course must be completed before the class meets for a second time.

A graduate student who temporarily discontinues study must notify the director of the Graduate Program prior to registration in order to resume study. Graduate students will self-register for courses each term. Directions will be sent via email to students each term.

WITHDRAWALS

Withdrawing from a course, or from the program entirely, may have financial implications. The official withdrawal date is the key to determining the status of a withdrawal, and the impact on charges and financial aid. The official withdrawal date is determined and approved by the Graduate School Office. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Graduate School Office of any intention to withdraw.

WITHDRAWING FROM CLASS

If a student withdraws from a class, but is still enrolled for the semester, the following chart indicates the financial implications. The student is responsible for notifying the Graduate Program Office in writing of their intention to continue.

100% On-Line Course or Blended Course That is Primarily Online

Action:	Timing:	Financial Impact:
Add/Drop	Prior to the completion of the fifth calendar day after the official start date of the course as determined by the College's academic calendar and/or schedule of classes.	No fee
Withdraw	After the completion of the fifth calendar day after the official start date of the course as determined by the College's academic calendar and/or schedule of classes.	100% course charges

If a student does not log in to an online class at all, or does not participate academically in the course (see below), the course would be considered dropped within the add/drop period, and there would be no fee for the course. Conversely, if it is demonstrated that the student academically participated in the course after the add/drop period, they would be responsible for the full course charges.

Rules for documenting academic participation are consistent with those prescribed under federal regulations for determining withdrawal from a course for federal financial aid purposes. Examples of academic participation are: submission of an assignment, submission of an exam, posting to an online study group or discussion forum, or contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject of the course.

Important Note Regarding Potential Impact on Financial Aid:

There may be financial aid implications when dropping or withdrawing from a course if you are no longer enrolled half time. Please contact the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM

The following is Westminster College's policy regarding withdrawal from the program:

Tuition and Mandatory Fees:

College fees are usually not returnable to students unless they withdraw from the College because of illness or reasons beyond their control. The date that the withdrawal is approved by the applicable College administrative office is considered the official date of withdrawal. Refunds, when allowed, will be calculated as follows:

Session Classes (Including Summer and Online):

A student taking a session course is considered to be withdrawn from the College under the following circumstances:

- 1 Withdrawal from a first session course occurs after the drop/add date, and the student does not provide written confirmation that he/she will attend the second session course in the same semester.
- 2 Withdrawal occurs after the drop/add date of the second session course.

In the first instance, tuition and mandatory fees will be prorated based on the number of calendar days prior to the official withdrawal date related to the first session course, divided by the total number of calendar days for the first session course.

In the second instance, tuition and mandatory fees will be prorated based on the number of calendar days prior to the official withdrawal date divided by the total number of calendar days for the semester. No refunds will be given once the semester is 60% completed.

Students who withdraw from the first session course after the drop/add period, and provide written confirmation that they will attend the second session course, are considered to still be enrolled at the College. In this case, the student will be charged full tuition and mandatory fees for the first session course and no proration will be performed on Federal Title IV Financial Aid.

Other College fees, generally, are not prorated. An administrative fee of 5% of actual charges (up to \$100) will be assessed against the student's account. Generally, no refund will be made where the withdrawal is required because of misconduct.

Federal Title IV Financial Aid:

If the withdrawing student has Federal Title IV Financial Aid, the Financial Aid Office is required by federal statute to recalculate eligibility for this aid.

If a student withdraws from a first session course after the drop/add date, and the student does not provide written confirmation that he/she will attend the second session course in the same semester, earned Federal Title IV Financial Aid will be calculated as follows: The number of calendar days prior to the official withdrawal date related to the first session course, divided by the total number of calendar days for the first session course.

If withdrawal occurs after the drop/add date of the second session course, earned Federal Title IV Financial Aid will be calculated as follows: The number of calendar days prior to the official withdrawal date related to both courses in the semester, divided by the total number of calendar days for both courses in the semester. If the withdrawal occurs after the semester is 60% completed, the student is deemed to have earned 100% of the Title IV Aid.

Students who withdraw from the first session course after the drop/add period, and provide written confirmation that they will attend the second session course, are considered to still be enrolled at the College. In this case, the student will be charged full tuition and mandatory fees for the first session course and no proration will be performed on Federal Title IV Financial Aid.

The percentage of unearned aid (100% - the percentage of earned aid determined in the applicable formula above) is applied to the total amount of the Title IV aid that could have been disbursed for the semester to determine that amount of aid that must be returned to the federal financial aid programs.

From time to time, the full amount of Title IV aid for which the student is eligible has not been fully disbursed when the withdrawal calculation is being performed. In such a case, if the student earned less than the amount of Title IV aid that was disbursed, both the institution and the student would be required to return a portion of the funds. If the student earned more than the amount of Title IV aid that was disbursed, the institution would owe the student a post-withdrawal disbursement of aid within 120 days of the student's withdrawal.

Unearned aid is allocated to the appropriate federal aid program in the following order and must be returned by the institution within 30 days after the determination of the date of the student's withdrawal:

- Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
- Subsidized Stafford Loans

Federal Perkins Loans
Federal Parent Plus Loans
Federal Pell Grants
Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grants

Westminster College and Other Financial Aid:

The formula that is used to calculate tuition will also be applied to Westminster College and other financial aid unless the source of the financial aid indicates another method of calculation is required.

ADD/DROP POLICY

Add/drop deadlines are published each semester by the registrar's office and are enforced. Students are urged to keep these important dates in mind.

TUITION AND FEES (2020-2021) – M.ED. & CERTIFICATION STUDENTS

Degree seeking and certification only students are charged \$1,665 per course.

Auditing fees are \$415 per course.

Late Fees of \$100 per occurrence will be assessed on any account with an outstanding balance on the following dates:

SEMESTER	LATE FEE DATE
Summer	June 15
Fall	September 15
Spring	February 1

A carrying charge for late payment may be assessed.

TERMS OF PAYMENT

Statements and Payment Due Dates:

Monthly statements will only be made available to students online through CASHNet. Students are able to provide online access to student account information for parents and others through this service. CASHNet may also be used to make payments on a student account as described below. Information about CASHNet can be obtained from the Business Office.

Payment due dates on student account billings are as follows:

Fall Semester Bill: July 20, or if registered late, Friday before the first day of class

Spring Semester Bill: January 10

Summer Semester Bill: June 14

Late Fees/Interest:

The College permits some additional time for loan proceeds, scholarships and payments to be posted before assessing late fees on student accounts. The application of the \$100 late fee is assessed based on the following criteria:

Balance > \$0 as of September 15 for fall

Balance > \$0 as of February 1 for spring

Balance > \$0 as of June 15 for summer

A late fee will not be assessed when there are scheduled travel course payments due after the "as of" date that determines assessment of late fees. However, a \$100 late fee will be assessed if the payments are not made according to the payment schedule for the trip.

Interest at a rate of 12% per annum (1% per month) will be assessed on account balances outstanding at the end of the finals period, or upon the student's separation from the College (graduation, withdrawal, leave of absence, suspension, expulsion, etc.), whichever is applicable. A courtesy letter will be sent approximately one week after the Business Office receiving notification of the separating event. Interest will then be assessed on the outstanding balance in the next billing period, approximately one month after the courtesy notification.

Payment Methods:

The Business Office accepts payments via cash, check, money order, and bank check at the window. All checks or money orders should be made payable to Westminster College. Credit card and ACH payments are accepted through CASHNet only. A teleprocessing fee will be charged on all credit card payments based on the amount charged. Wire transfer payments will be accepted on a limited basis on student accounts as approved by the Director of Student Financial Services.

For those who wish to pay their accounts in installments, arrangements are available through CASHNet only.

The Business Office reserves the right to require payment on certain student accounts via cash, bank check or money order only.

Pre-Registration/Registration:

Student account balances that are not paid in full by the late fee date, or throughout the semester as additional charges are incurred, will be placed on financial hold. While on hold, the student will not be permitted to register.

The Business Office will notify those students whose balance is greater than zero of the consequences with respect to pre-registration. This notification will be sent via U.S. mail, e-mail and/or another method deemed appropriate.

Check payments >\$1,000 that are presented within two weeks prior to a pre-registration or registration period may be subject to verification with the bank for sufficiency of funds. Payments on accounts where there have been previous returned items will be verified for sufficiency of funds. Holds will not be released on the latter accounts until such verification takes place.

The Business Office will make every effort to release students from financial hold in a timely manner once payment in full is received on an account and verified when applicable. The student, once released from hold, would be able to register at times determined by the Registrar's Office.

Registered Students Attending Summer Classes:

A student who was permitted to register for the fall semester may choose to attend summer classes at Westminster. The due date to pay summer charges is June 14. If the summer charges (along with any other charges related to previous semester(s) are not paid in full by June 30, the fall registration will be canceled and the student will be unable to return to the College until the account balance is paid in full.

The Business Office will notify those students whose balance is greater than zero of the consequences of non-payment for the summer (and/or previous) term. This notification will be sent via U.S. mail, e-mail and/or another method deemed appropriate.

Transcript and Diploma Hold:

If a student account has a balance greater than zero on the late fee date, or throughout the semester as additional charges are incurred, a financial hold will be placed on the account which prevents the student from receiving their transcripts and if graduating, their diploma. These holds will remain on the student account until the balance is paid in full.

Notification of the student account balance and the consequences with respect to transcripts and diploma will be sent to those students whose balance is greater than zero. This notification will be sent via U.S. mail, e-mail and/or another method deemed appropriate.

Check payments that are presented to release a transcript hold may be subject to verification with the bank for sufficiency of funds. Payments on accounts where there have been previous returned items will be verified for sufficiency of funds. Holds will not be released on the accounts until such verification takes place, and in the case of a transcript hold, the check clears the bank.

The Business Office will make every effort to release students from financial hold in a timely manner once payment in full is received on an account and verified or cleared, whichever is appropriate.

Additional Consequences of Outstanding Prior Semester Balances:

In addition to the above, students who are not registered and have unpaid prior balances will be unable to return to the dorms, participate in College activities, nor attend classes until the account balance is paid in full and the student is registered for classes. Please note that future financial aid cannot be used to cover balances from the previous semesters.

Payments returned by Bank:

Payments of any type (check, ACH, credit card, wire) that are returned by the bank for any reason will be subject to a \$15 fee. The

fee will be applied to the student account, when possible, upon notification by the bank (on-line or otherwise) of the returned item. The Business Office will attempt to make contact with the issuer of the check to resolve the returned item.

If the returned item permitted the release of a hold on a student account, the hold will be reinstated and additional holds may be added as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. If a payment permitted the student to pre-register, the student will be notified of the returned payment and given 7 days to resolve the unpaid item. If there is no resolution, the registration will be canceled.

If the payment permitted registration for the semester currently underway, the student will be notified of the returned payment as soon as practicable and will no longer be permitted to attend class, nor participate in College related activities. A maximum of 7 days will be given to resolve the returned payment during the regular academic year, and a maximum of 3 days during the summer semester. The student will also be notified by the appropriate College offices of their status and next steps in accordance with procedures specified in the Handbook for Students, College catalogue and other institutional policies.

Pre-Payment Hold:

A prepayment hold requires that arrangements for full payment for a semester be in place prior to registration for that same semester. The following accounts will qualify for prepayment holds:

1. Account previously sent to a collection agency.
2. Accounts previously in the College's internal collections process.
3. Accounts currently classified as delinquent that are in internal collections.
4. Accounts with habitual returned payments (3 or more).
5. Accounts for students whose registration was canceled in any semester for financial reasons.
6. Foreign student accounts.

Internal and External Collections:

Outstanding balances remaining on a student account as of the last day of the finals period and/or upon separation from the College are subject to the following collection procedures:

Internal Collections:

1. A courtesy letter will be sent approximately one week after the last day of finals or approximately one week after the Business Office receives notification of separation from the College. The delinquency date will correspond to the last day of finals in the case of students expected to return, and to the separation date for students not returning. Charges that occur after the delinquency date for the period of attendance (printing, student affairs fines, etc.) will have the same delinquency date as other charges for that period.
2. Interest will be assessed on the outstanding balance as described above, approximately one month after the courtesy notification is sent to the student.
3. Three monthly statements will be sent to the address on file, along with a letter.
4. If there is no response from sending the statements, up to three additional monthly letters will be sent to the address on file in an effort to collect the outstanding balance and/or to make payment arrangements with the debtor prior to sending the account to an external collections agency. The third letter will contain a deadline for response to avoid the account going to a collections agency.
5. If the College is successful in obtaining a response from the debtor, payment arrangements may be discussed for the account. All agreements on payment arrangements will be documented on a promissory note which is signed by the debtor.
6. If a payment arrangement is not followed as agreed, the pre-collections process will be reactivated at the point it left off prior to the arrangement being made. If the account reached the point of being sent to external collections prior to the arrangement, the College will make one last effort to contact the debtor prior to sending the account to external collections.
7. Students who wish to return will not be permitted to move into the dorms, participate in College activities, nor attend classes until the account balance is paid in full. If the previous balance is paid by the Friday before classes resume for the new semester, the account will be taken out of internal collections and the student will be permitted to register (assuming that there are no additional holds). Payments received within ten days of the start of the new semester must be made via certified check, money order or via CASHNet (credit card and ACH).

External Collections:

If the internal collections process is unsuccessful, external collections agencies will be utilized to assist in collecting the outstanding balance. All collections fees will be added to the outstanding balance on the student account and will be the responsibility of the debtor. Generally, the account will be placed in first collections for approximately one year. If the effort is unsuccessful, the account will be returned to the College. The Business Office will make one attempt to reach the debtor prior to the account being entered into second collections. If that effort is unsuccessful, the account will be turned over to second and then to third collections for approximately one year each. The College reserves the right to continue collections efforts beyond third collections.

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There are several sources of financial aid available to graduate students in the M. Ed. program.

Joseph R. Henderson Scholarship

The Joseph R. Henderson Scholarship, sponsored by Phi Delta Kappa, is available to a first-year graduate student. The scholarship, which is non-renewable, is \$500 and is applicable to tuition only. Application forms and further information are available from the Office of Adult and Graduate Studies.

M. Elaine Willson Memorial Scholarship Fund

The M. Elaine Willson Memorial Scholarship (\$1500) is available to a graduate student who has earned at least 15 credits toward a graduate degree and maintained a GPA of 3.5 in graduate study. Preference is given to graduate students with nursing backgrounds who have an interest in teaching, counseling or education related fields and have demonstrated financial need. Application forms and further information are available from the Graduate School office.

LOAN PROGRAMS

A number of educational loan programs are available to assist students in meeting their costs of attendance. A Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and a Westminster College Application for Financial Aid must be on file before a student will be certified for a student loan. Only those students enrolled at least a half-time basis in a degree-granting program are eligible for educational student loans. "Provisional" or "Conditional" graduate students are not eligible for the Federal Direct Stafford Loan. Half-time enrollment is generally defined as taking a minimum of two graduate courses per semester. Contact the Office of Financial Aid for more complete details of minimum enrollment criteria for loan recipients for summer session. Students who already earned a master's degree and are enrolled in courses for guidance counselor, principal or superintendent certification are not eligible for Federal Direct Stafford loans.

Federal Direct Stafford Loan

The Federal Direct Stafford Loan provides the potential for graduate students to borrow up to \$20,500 in unsubsidized Stafford loans per academic year.

Private, Nonprofit Loans

There are a number of privately funded loan programs that provide funds to credit worthy students. Although the interest rates and terms are not as generous as the Federal Direct Stafford Loan, some students may be interested in this type of borrowing opportunity.

For more information contact:

Financial Aid Office
Westminster College
319 S. Market St.
New Wilmington, PA 16172
(724) 946-7102

VETERANS EDUCATION BENEFITS

For the Master of Education (M Ed.), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Arts (MA) degrees, in addition to submitting a Practitioner Research Report or Comprehensive Exam (M Ed; MA) at the end of all coursework, the M Ed and MBA students must complete at least 10 courses on the graduate level and the MA students must complete at least 20 courses on the graduate level with an average of "B" (3.0) or better, including no more than two courses with a grade of "C" or less. At any time these standards are not maintained, the student will be placed on probationary status. A probationary student is required to pass an examination before permission to register for additional courses is granted. Failure to pass the examination results in suspension. A suspended student may petition the Graduate Committee for re-admission. Dismissal may occur after the petition is considered.

Students who receive Veterans Education Benefits and who earn below these grade point average thresholds for any semester will be placed on Academic Probation and will be subject to Academic Suspension at the discretion of the Director of the Graduate School. These students will be notified that they are required to meet with the director in order to return to the College. Students who do not follow through with this meeting will be dropped from their next semester's classes. Students who have not yet registered will have a registration hold which will prevent them from registering until the director indicates such a meeting has taken place and the student is allowed to register.

The law requires that educational assistance benefits to Veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when those students do not make satisfactory progress toward completion of their educational training objective. Based upon this requirement, any students using Veterans Education Benefits will be suspended from Westminster College when they have two consecutive semesters below the minimum required GPA (as defined above). All such decisions will be made by the Director of the Graduate School in consultation with the graduate faculty. Students receiving Veterans Education Benefits and who have been placed on academic suspension shall remain separated from the College for a minimum of one academic semester.

Veteran Education Benefits can be resumed if the student reenrolls in the same educational institution and in the same program. When a student has failed to maintain prescribed standards of progress, VA will be informed promptly so that benefit payments can be discontinued in accordance with the law. The termination date assigned by Westminster College will be the last day of the term or other evaluation period in which the student's progress became unsatisfactory. Upon recertification to VA, Westminster's certifying official should maintain in the student's file a statement that describes the conditions for the student's continued certification to VA. These conditions will prescribe the minimum performance standards to be achieved by the student during the next enrollment/evaluation period.

SUMMER SESSION

Westminster's Graduate School offers two Summer Sessions which generally run from mid May to mid-August.

LIBRARY

A wide range of information resources and technologies are offered through Library and Information Services. RALPH MCGILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY provides access to online and traditional print academic resources that are carefully selected based on Westminster's unique curriculum. All of the library's online resources are available from off-campus locations with a valid Westminster username and password. If you need print resources and/or DVDs from the library's collection, email mcgill@westminster.edu with the full citation information and/or links to the WISE page. The Library is also home of the LIS HELP DESK, which provides both library and technology support to the campus. If you need assistance with your Westminster account or any other technological issues, email us at lishelp@westminster.edu.

TRANSCRIPTS OF CREDITS

Students desiring transcripts of credits for courses completed at Westminster College may write to the Registrar, Westminster College, 319 S. Market St., New Wilmington, PA 16172-0001, (and include the following) or make such a request online.

1. Full name (including maiden name)
2. Address
3. Dates of attendance (inclusive)
4. Date of graduation/program completion
5. Name and address to whom transcript should be mailed
6. Signature

Requests may be made online at www.westminster.edu. Click on the Academics tab, then Registrar and click on Requesting Transcript.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR M. ED. STUDENTS

Westminster College Graduate School is standards-based. A student must demonstrate the competencies developed by the program area to be recommended for certification. The practicum and internship courses provide the student with opportunities to demonstrate these competencies. A grade of less than a "B" in a practicum course indicates the student has not demonstrated the program competencies at a level necessary to be recommended for certification. When recommendation for certification is denied, appeals should be directed to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Denial on the basis of a letter grade is not subject to appeal.

It is the student's responsibility to make application for certification. Applications for certification in Pennsylvania must be made using the PA Department of Education Teacher Information Management System (TIMS). Information can be found at the PDE website under Teachers and Teacher Certifications. Applications for certification in Ohio may be obtained by calling (614) 466-3593 or inquiring through the Ohio Department of Education website.

CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PENNSYLVANIA

Instructional I

The Instructional I Certificate is valid for a period of six years of teaching in Pennsylvania and is not renewable. College credit acceptable for conversion to the Instructional II Certificate must be earned at an approved degree-granting institution. All credits must be earned subsequent to the conferring of the bachelor's degree. Students will be required to pay an application fee. The application for conversion must be processed by the appropriate school district.

Instructional II

The Instructional II Certificate is a certificate issued to an applicant who shall have completed three years of satisfactory teaching on an Instructional I Certificate attested to by the superintendent of the school district in which his or her most recent service was performed; or in the case of an intermediate unit, the executive director; or in the case of an approved non-public school, the chief school administrator. In addition, the applicant shall have completed 24 credit hours of advanced study.

Professional Development

In order to maintain the validity of a certificate, practicing educators must engage in continuing professional development. The Commonwealth requires 180 hours every five years to meet the requirements of Act 48. Two graduate courses constitute 180 hours toward Act 48 credit.

STATE Examination for Certification/Licensure

In addition to meeting the College's program requirements, candidates for certification must pass the appropriate sections of the STATE Series Examinations as dictated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the Ohio Department of Education.

To obtain the latest testing requirements and scores needed for certification, please check the Praxis website for the current Pennsylvania or Ohio requirements at <http://www.ets.org/praxis>

Important PRAXIS Information for Graduate Students

All candidates must report scores to:

- 1) Westminster College (R2975) **AND**
- 2) Pennsylvania Department of Education (R8033)

OHIO

Graduate courses at Westminster College may be used for professional and licensure purposes in the state of Ohio. Students should consult with the school district personnel office or the Ohio Department of Education. All certification/licensure decisions for Ohio are made by the ODE.

CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE

The College establishes requirements for the master's degree but the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of Ohio establish requirements for certification. Therefore, in matters of certification, commonwealth or state analysis, decisions, or changes take precedence over the information in this catalog.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The purpose of the Professional Development Center is to provide resources and counsel to assist Westminster students and alumni in making career choices and employment searches. The PDC is located on the second floor of McKelvey Campus Center. For more information, visit <http://www.westminster.edu/campus/services/professional-development-center>.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Westminster College Alumni Association was chartered and registered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in October 1931. The object of the association, as stated in the charter, is threefold: to establish relations between Westminster and her alumni, former students and other friends; to promote systematic giving for College purposes by members of the association; and to advance the interests of the College in whatever ways possible. The Alumni Association offices are located in the Wiley Alumni House. For more information, visit www.westminster.edu/alumni.

ONLINE COURSES

Westminster College has been approved by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) to offer distance education programs to students residing outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This includes current Westminster College students taking a Westminster online course, undergraduate or graduate, while located in a state other than Pennsylvania.

The Westminster College Graduate School offers degree programs and online course instruction that leads to and meets requirements for certification and/or licensure programs in Pennsylvania. Further, these degree programs are designed but not certified to meet requirements outlined by licensure and certification entities in states other than Pennsylvania. The decision to certify and/or license a Westminster graduate ultimately resides with the licensing and/or certifying agency. It is recommended students contact the appropriate agency, board, organization, or specific entity to ensure the correct academic requirements will be met through Westminster College graduate degree programs.

Students participating in internships, practicums, or field experiences outside of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should seek prior approval from their department chair. This applies to both online and in-person educational opportunities outside of Pennsylvania.

NC-SARA Membership includes institutions representing 49 states. California is not a member of NC-SARA. As a result, Westminster College is currently unable to enroll students in online courses if they reside in the state of California.

As per NC-SARA, student complaints about an experience in a Westminster online course may be directed to the following: <https://nc-sara.org/student-complaints-process>

HELPFUL LINKS

Information on NC-SARA and Institutional Approval: <https://nc-sara.org/>

Information pertaining to Westminster College and its approvals through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: <https://www.education.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

For further information regarding the Westminster College Graduate School online course offerings, degree programs, and certification programs: <https://www.westminster.edu/academics/graduate/index.cfm>

Westminster College is regionally accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education: 3624 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104 267.284.5000

MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE SPECIAL EDUCATION AND READING SPECIALIST PROGRAM

The mission of the Special Education and Reading Specialist Program is to prepare effective educators who develop an in-depth understanding of special education and literacy in order to be able to:

(Special Education focus)

- A. Provide instruction for K-8 students with disabilities
- B. Be knowledgeable about special education law
- C. Maintain a commitment to making informed theoretical and practical decisions related to special education

(Reading Specialist focus)

- D. Enhance literacy learning in the classroom
- E. Be a literacy leader among their peers and
- F. Maintain a commitment to making informed theoretical and practical literacy decisions in their work with students, teachers, administrators, families and the community.

ABOUT THE SPECIAL EDUCATION & READING SPECIALIST PROGRAM

The Special Education & Reading Specialist Program is designed to develop the requisite knowledge and appropriate skills to work with students with disabilities in K-8.

The program is particularly designed for those who seek to hold the master's degree, reading specialist certificate and/or the special education certificate. The reading specialist may: 1) work directly or indirectly with students in elementary through developmental reading at the college level who have not thrived with general classroom instruction and/or, 2) work in the capacity of resource teacher and curriculum adviser and/or, 3) work with teachers, administrators, and other professionals as a literacy coach, supervisor, or professional developer to enhance and coordinate the total reading program in a school or district.

Reading courses examine the current reading research and psycholinguistic contributions to literacy and mediate these new directions in the light of the practical and proven. The program reflects the recommendations of the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and is approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Pennsylvania requires PRAXIS Examinations for certification.

Those seeking certification in Special Education will be certified in PreK-8 and have the capability of working with individuals who have a documented disability in the following areas:

- Learning Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Communication Disorders
- Emotional and Behavioral Disorders
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Multiple Disabilities
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Physical Disabilities and Other Health Impairments
- Hearing Loss
- Visual Impairment

COURSES OF INSTRUCTION IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

All courses are three semester hours.

EDUCATION

ED 940 Research. Current research and trends in education. The course is designed to involve the student, through independent research and seminar-type discussion, in an analysis of significant contemporary issues in education.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EP 740 Human Development. A course in advanced educational psychology designed to develop deeper understanding of human development and learning. The course examines the contributions of major developmental theorists. A life course perspective is employed.

EP 820 Special Education for School Leaders. The psychological implications for teaching gifted and/or cognitively and disabled children. Problems of the blind, the deaf, those defective in speech, and those with behavior problems are considered.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER

ELL 710 English Language Learners. This course teaches competencies related to the instructional needs of students for whom English is not their first language. It will explore the language, culture, standards-based instruction, assessment, and professionalism needed to understand and teach linguistically diverse learners.

READING

REA 810 Language and Literacy in the Preschool and the Elementary School. This course examines the problems, issues and theories in teaching emergent through transitional readers from a socio-psycholinguist perspective. It includes studying the role of both the home and school in literacy development, examining factors that influence reading comprehension, exploring informal and formal assessment tools, and selecting strategies to foster young children's continued growth in reading and writing. Special emphasis is placed on investigating the three language cueing systems. A 10-hour tutoring experience is required.

REA 820 Language and Literacy in the Middle/Secondary and Beyond. This course focuses on the psycholinguistic development of an independent reader. Issues that students encounter on a literacy continuum from middle school, through high school and into adulthood are examined. Strategies for improving reading and writing, fostering interpretive, critical, and creative readers and promoting interest in reading are considered. Particular attention is given to the reading problems and skills needed when using informational texts in the content areas. A 10-hour tutoring experience is required.

REA 830 Advanced Children's and Young Adult Literature. This course is an in-depth study of the genres of literature for children and young adult literature. Discussion concerning the importance of fiction and non-fiction works in the elementary through high school classroom and the roles they play in student learning are pursued. Special attention is given to the examination of books that are reviewed in the literature and found especially noteworthy. The usefulness of literacy grants to support literacy learning is explored as well.

REA 850 Linking Assessment and Instruction. Instruction in the use of formal and informal methods of literacy assessment for emergent through independent readers with emphasis on readers with special needs as well as gifted readers.

REA 860 Leadership in the School Literacy Program. This course enables literacy specialists and administrators to collaboratively investigate various methods for organizing and evaluating reading programs. Assessing literacy materials, programs, and state and national standards for the elementary and secondary classroom is a central focus. Working with struggling readers enables graduate students to explore comprehension as a meaning-making process and study ways to increase parental involvement. A 10-hour tutoring or supervising experience with teachers, parents, and administrators is required. *Prerequisite:* Minimum of one other reading specialist course.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

SED 702 Behavior Management/ABA Applied Behavior Analysis. This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of the characteristics of students with learning and behavior problems with respect to factors that influence the instructional environment while providing classroom management theory and practical applications for students who have special needs. Applied Behavior Analysis methods will be analyzed and programs for implementation examined.

SED 704 Seminar in Reading Strategies for Special Education. This course is designed to provide specific instructional reading techniques and strategies to assist the learner who has been identified as being at-risk for failure due to poor reading skills or as having special needs. Students will examine literature and programs related to reading and the student with special needs.

SED 711 Legal Issues in Special Education. The focus of the course is on the analysis of legislation, litigation, and administrative rulings related to special education. The course will emphasize the development of legally sound policies and procedures to ensure an appropriate education for students with disabilities.

SED 712 Seminar in Assessment Methods in Special Education. The course will emphasize the development and implementation of assessment procedures for students who have disabilities. Graduate students will become familiar with a variety of assessment instruments and techniques to administer to effectively evaluate children who have disabilities in PreK-8 settings.

SED 714 High Incidence Instructional Strategies/Low Incidence Strategies in Special Education. This course is designed to provide practical application of knowledge about learners who have high incidence disabilities and learners who have low incidence disabilities. Theory, best practices, regulations, and research as related to a practicum component in PreK-8 schools working with students who have special needs in a classroom setting will be examined. The goal of the course is to assist future special educators to prepare for the unique role of a teacher in a field that is rapidly changing as a result of shifts in public school policies, school reform, questions of efficacy, limitations of resources, teacher roles and expectations, and advocacy.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

M.ED. AND CERTIFICATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PREK-8 & READING SPECIALIST K-12

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

Requirements for Master of Education in Special Education & Reading Specialist 36 Semester Hours

Course #	Course Title	Planned	Completed
ED 940	Research		
ELL 710	English Language Learners		
EP 740	Human Development		
EP 820	Special Education for School Leaders		
REA 810	Language and Literacy in the Preschool and the Elementary		
REA 820	Language and Literacy in the Middle/Secondary and Beyond		
REA 830	Advanced Children's and Young Adult Literature		
REA 850 or SED 712	Linking Assessment and Instruction or Seminar in Assessment Methods in Special Education		
REA 860	Leadership in the School Literacy Program		
SED 702	Behavior Management/(ABA) Applied Behavior Analysis		
SED 711	Legal Issues in Special Education		
SED 714	High Incidence Instructional Strategies/Low Incidence Strategies in Special Education (30 Hr. Practicum)		

Practitioner Research Report — Successful completion of Practitioner Research Report		
PECT Exam — Pass both modules of PreK - 8 and Special Education		
PRAXIS Test — Pass one module Reading Specialist		
PDE Application — Submission of PDE Certification Application on PDE TIMS		
QPA for program 3.0 or higher for admission and completion		

*For the most current information on PA or OH state test requirements, PA students go to <http://www.ets.org/praxis/pa/requirements> and Ohio students go to Ohio Assessment for Educators at <http://www.oh.nesinc.com>.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

CERTIFICATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PREK-8 & READING SPECIALIST K-12

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

Requirements for Certification in Special Education & Reading Specialist 36 Semester Hours

Course #	Course Title	Planned	Completed
ED 940	Research		
ELL 710	English Language Learners		
EP 740	Human Development		
EP 820	Special Education for School Leaders		
REA 810	Language and Literacy in the Preschool and the Elementary		
REA 820	Language and Literacy in the Middle/Secondary and Beyond		
REA 830	Advanced Children's and Young Adult Literature		
REA 850 or SED 712	Linking Assessment and Instruction or Seminar in Assessment Methods in Special Education		
REA 860	Leadership in the School Literacy Program		
SED 702	Behavior Management/(ABA) Applied Behavior Analysis		
SED 711	Legal Issues in Special Education		
SED 714	High Incidence Instructional Strategies/Low Incidence Strategies in Special Education (30 Hr. Practicum)		

PECT Exam — Pass both modules of PreK - 8 and Special Education		
PRAXIS Test — Pass one module Reading Specialist		
PDE Application — Submission of PDE Certification Application on PDE TIMS		
QPA for program 3.0 or higher for admission and completion		

*For the most current information on PA or OH state test requirements, PA students go to <http://www.ets.org/praxis/pa/requirements> and Ohio students go to Ohio Assessment for Educators at <http://www.oh.nesinc.com>.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

READING SPECIALIST K-12 FOR PA/OH (*CERTIFICATION ONLY*)

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
 (Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

Requirements for Certification only as Reading Specialist K-12

For those already holding a bachelor degree in education and holding a valid OH or PA teacher's certificate/license

Course #	Course Title	Planned	Completed
REA 810* #	Language and Literacy in the Preschool and the Elementary School		
REA 820* #	Language and Literacy in the Middle/Secondary School and Beyond		
REA 830* #	Advanced Children's and Young Adult Literature		
REA 850* #	Linking Assessment and Instruction		
REA 860* #	Leadership in the School Literacy Program		
REA 980 #	Practicum in Reading		
SED 704 #	Seminar in Reading Strategies for Special Education (Practicum 30 hours)		

Note: For PA Certification, if no previous coursework in English Language Learners has been completed, Act 49 course ELL 710 is required.

The program meets certification requirements in Pennsylvania. The program is designed to meet Ohio licensure requirements, but licensure is subject to changing Ohio standards, ODE transcript analysis, and testing requirements. In some cases, additional coursework may be required to meet state standards.

*For the most current information on PA or OH state test requirements, PA students go to <http://www.ets.org/praxis/pa/requirements> and Ohio students go to Ohio Assessment for Educators at <http://www.oh.nesinc.com>.

Note:

*Ohio Students who hold a BS in Education and a valid OH teaching license who wish to add Reading Specialist Endorsement to their existing teaching license in Ohio will need to take the five courses indicated above by asterisks and pass the Ohio state reading tests, Ohio Assessments for Educators for Reading 038 and 039.

#PA Students who hold a BS in Education and a valid teaching certificate need to take the seven courses above and pass the PA Praxis Reading Test #5301 to obtain a PA Reading Specialist certificate PK-12.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has approved Westminster College for graduate M.Ed. programs in reading and special education.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

SPECIAL EDUCATION

PREK-8 CERTIFICATION ONLY FOR PA/OH

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____
 (Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

Requirements for Special Education PreK-8 Certification Only 24 Semester Hours

Course #	Course Title	Planned	Completed
ELL 710	English Language Learners		
EP 740	Human Development		
EP 820	Special Education for School Leaders		
SED 702	Behavior Management/(ABA) Applied Behavior Analysis		
SED 704	Seminar in Reading Strategies for Special Education (30 Hr. Practicum)		
SED 711	Legal Issues in Special Education		
SED 712	Seminar in Assessment Methods in Special Education (30 Hr. Practicum)		
SED 714	High Incidence Instructional Strategies/Low Incidence Strategies in Special Education (30 Hr. Practicum)		

PECT Exam — Pass both modules of PreK - 8 and Special Education		
PDE Application — Submission of PDE Certification Application on PDE TIMS		
QPA for program 3.0 or higher for admission and completion		

*For the most current information on PA PRAXIS requirements, go to <http://www.ets.org/praxis/pa/requirements>.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION **STANDARDS**

FOR THE READING SPECIALIST PROGRAM

I. Knowing the Content

The professional education program provides evidence that Reading Specialist certification candidates complete a program of studies in reading the same as the academic content area courses and required electives of a major in a bachelor's or master's degree. The program requires certification candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the fundamental concepts of reading and competence in teaching preschool through high school and adult students reading including:

I.A. - Historical perspectives, methodologies and theories of language and reading acquisition and development including:

- *literacy at all levels, preschool through adults and across all content areas,
- *emergent literacy and the experiences and environments that support it,
- *process reading and writing,
- *developmental spelling and the ability to abstract phonetic information from letter names,
- *causes and characteristics of reading and writing difficulties,
- *alignment of the various goals, standards, instruction and assessment,
- *variety of goals, standards, instruction, and assessment.

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program at Westminster College will study historical perspectives, methodologies and theories of language and reading acquisition and development in the following courses:

REA 810, REA 820, REA 850, REA 860

I.B. - Phonemic, morphemic, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic systems of language and their relation to reading and writing processes including:

- *the interrelationship of reading, writing, speaking, and listening,
- *the role of metacognition in reading, writing, speaking, listening,
- *linguistic differences and styles of language use as they relate to the sociocultural environment

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program at Westminster College will study how readers at all levels utilize the four language cueing systems to read and write through the following courses:

REA 810, REA 820

I.C. - Classic and contemporary literature, textbooks, and curriculum materials that are appropriate for various age levels and mediums

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program at Westminster College will explore children's and adolescent literature, commercial reading programs including basals, and curriculum materials in the following courses:

REA 830

II. Performances

The professional education program provides evidence of the candidates participation in sequential and developmental field experiences and student teaching, under the supervision of college personnel and cooperating teachers who are well trained, have interpersonal skills and demonstrated competence in teaching. (Candidates that possess an initial Instructional certificate shall be required to participate in an internship for a minimum of 100 hours in lieu of student teaching.) The program also provides evidence that the criteria and competencies for exit from the Reading Specialist program are assessed during the field experiences and student teaching and require the candidates to demonstrate knowledge and competence in fostering student learning through:

II.A. Managing the instructional environment including:

- *creating a literate environment that fosters interest and growth in all aspects of literacy,
- *establishing and maintaining rapport with all students,
- *communicating high learning expectations to all students,
- *establishing and maintaining fair and consistent standards of classroom behavior,
- *creating a safe physical environment that is conducive to learning

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program at Westminster College are afforded opportunities to create and manage a productive literacy environment in every required Reading Specialist course through field based experiences/practica. More in depth analysis of the teacher's dynamic role with small groups and whole class learning experiences are examined in the following courses:

REA 830, REA 860

II.B. - Planning of instruction in collaboration with other professionals at a variety of instructional levels based upon:

- *Pennsylvania Academic Standards,
- *addressing reading as the process of constructing meaning through the interaction of the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language and the context of the reading situation,
- *addressing the strengths and needs of learners at all proficiency levels in reading, writing, speaking and listening,
- *techniques, strategies for vocabulary acquisition and comprehension, including self-monitoring,
- *word identification and definition through the use of syntactic, semantic, and graphophonemic cues and context,
- *students' knowledge of letter/sound correspondence (phonics) in the construction of meaning,
- *students' refinement of their spelling knowledge through reading and writing,
- *spelling patterns in the English language, as an aid to word identification,
- *students' development of strategies for effective writing

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will hold curricular conversations with classmates and literacy professionals at their school practicum sites in order to plan curriculum experiences responsive to students' needs through the following courses:

REA 810, REA 820, REA 850, REA 860

II.C. - Selecting, implementing and adapting effective instructional strategies, curriculum resources, and technologies in collaboration with other educators to meet the needs of diverse learners including:

- *identifying a variety of genres to motivate students to appreciate reading/literature,
- *evaluating materials for literacy instruction,
- *using texts, trade books and technology to increase appreciation, motivation and growth in reading and writing,
- *providing opportunities for learners to select from a variety of written materials, to read for many purposes and to read extended texts,
- *varying reading rate according to the difficulty of the materials and purpose(s) for reading,
- *providing opportunities for creative and personal responses for literature

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will demonstrate their ability to choose, implement, and adjust curricular engagements, resources, and technologies in their work with preschool through adult literacy learners through the following courses:

REA 830, REA 860

II.D. - Selecting, developing and administering assessments that involve multiple indicators of student progress and maintain records of information including:

- *norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, formal and informal inventories, constructed response measures, portfolio-based assessments, student self-evaluations, work/performance samples, observations, anecdotal records, journals and other indicators of student progress,
- *communication with students about their strengths, areas needing improvement, and ways to achieve improvement,
- *individual educational plans (IEP) for students with severe learning problems related to literacy,
- *components and procedures adopted by the PA. System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will explore assessment and evaluation as an on-going process of gathering information in order to create a responsive literacy curriculum through the following courses:

REA 810, REA 820, REA 850

III. Professionalism

The professional education program provides evidence that Reading Specialist certification candidates demonstrate knowledge and competencies that foster professionalism in school and community settings including:

III.A. - Reading local, state, national, and international publications and belonging to professional organizations

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will become familiar with various literacy organizations and their publications through the following courses:

REA 810, REA 860

III.B. - Collaborating with other educators, allied professionals and the wider community, as well as serving as a resource to teachers, administrators, community and allied professionals

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will demonstrate their ability to collaborate with others in their school and community settings and become an effective resource through the following courses:

REA 830, REA 860

III.C. - Communicating with parents to make them effective partners in the literacy development of their children

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will become effective literacy learning partners with parents through the following courses:

REA 810, REA 820, REA 850

III.D. - Integrity & ethical behavior, professional conduct as stated in Pennsylvania's Code of Practice & Conduct for Educators, and local, state and federal laws and regulations

Candidates in the Reading Specialist Program will examine ethical practices in every course but especially in the following courses:

All REA Courses

CONTACT US TODAY!

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

319 S. Market Street
New Wilmington, PA 16172

STAY CONNECTED

CALL: 724-946-7353

VISIT: westminster.edu/graduate

EMAIL: graduatestudies@westminster.edu

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

