SECONDARY TEACHING (6-12)

MINIMUM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS IN WASHINGTON

- a bachelor's degree
- one or more completed endorsement(s) in the subject area(s) you plan to teach
  (an endorsement is a notation on your certificate indicating that you have the necessary preparation to teach in your specialized subject area(s) -- e.g., English Language Arts, French, Social Studies, Biology, etc. -- which is usually completed before you enter the teacher education program, while you're still an undergraduate)
- completion of an approved teacher education program (usually at the master's degree level)

PREPARING AS AN UNDERGRADUATE

EXPLORE

Pre-register for, and attend, an information session with UW's College of Education's Teacher Education Program.

Talk with an adviser in the Humanities Academic Services Center, located in A-2-B Padelford Hall (contact has-center@uw.edu).

Become familiar with the Teacher Education Program prerequisites for UW for secondary education as well as for other approved teacher certification programs at other schools to which you plan to apply. Be sure that those schools offer certification in secondary education; some schools have an elementary education program only.

COMPLETE ALL COURSEWORK FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ENDORSEMENT

Become familiar with the English/Language Arts Endorsement requirements for secondary (6-12) teachers, and plan to complete them while you are still pursuing your BA degree. The endorsement requirements do not lead to a BA in English; however, they can be coordinated with English BA requirements. You should speak with a Humanities Academic Services adviser about planning.

GET CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Get substantive experience observing and participating in middle- or high-school school classroom. You can arrange these experiences on your own, work with the UW Pipeline Project, or become involved by participating in the Community Literacy Program, coordinated by UW English faculty. This is an eight-credit combination of linked courses consisting of an ENGL course (198 or 298 or 498) along with EDUC 401 (Practicum in Community Service) in which you'll work with school children in high-needs schools as well as engaging in academic reading, research, presentation and writing related to your work in the schools. Now in its 19th year, the Community Literacy Program is part of the "elementary education strand" for students planning to enter the Teacher Education Program in the University of Washington's College of Education. This program is available in Winter and Spring quarters.

CONSIDER OTHER ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are other ways to enrich your undergraduate education with classroom and volunteer experiences:

UW Inner Pipeline Seminars provide opportunities for tutoring and teaching
The Dream Project is a student-initiated school outreach program

Completing a minor in Education, Learning, and Society provides background in areas such as child development, schooling and society, and how environment and culture shape learning.

GET READY TO APPLY

Once you are in your final stages of completing your BA in English, satisfying the English/Language Arts Secondary Teaching Endorsement requirements, and completing all other required prerequisites for the teacher certification master's or post baccalaureate programs in which you're interested, you'll be ready to apply to a teacher education program and earn your certification for secondary education.

Most graduate programs accept applications just once per year. Be sure to check the application deadlines for each school to which you plan to apply.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE CAN I FIND SOME BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT BECOMING A TEACHER?

See our page called The Basics for more information.

Speak with a Humanities Academic Services adviser and plan to attend an information session at the UW College of Education's Teacher Education Program.

For official information about Residency Certification and Professional Certification see the website for the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

DO I HAVE TO EARN A MASTER'S DEGREE TO BE CERTIFIED AS A TEACHER?

No, you can pursue teacher certification through any OSPI-approved undergraduate, post baccalaureate, or master's program -- however, the University of Washington Seattle College of Education Teacher Education Program (TEP) offers only a master's in teaching (MIT) program for teacher certification; there are no undergraduate options. Click here for OSPI's list of other institutions in Washington that offer approved teacher certification programs.

WHAT IS A TEACHING ENDORSEMENT? (WAC 180 78A–010)

According to the Washington Administrative Code, an endorsement means “a specification placed on a certificate to indicate the subject area, grade level and/or specialization for which the individual is prepared to teach.” Teachers certified in elementary education have an elementary 'endorsement' (qualification to teach K-8 level reading, math, science, social studies, etc.), whereas teachers certified in secondary education have one or more subject-area endorsements, such as English Language Arts, Biology, History, etc. For more information about endorsements, visit UW's College of Education's Teacher Education Program site.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN ENDORSEMENT? (WAC 180–82–200)

The purpose of endorsement requirements is

1) “To align requirements for endorsements with the state's learning goals and the essential academic learning requirements;**
2) “To maintain rigorous standards for obtaining endorsements; and
3) “To provide school districts with teachers who are able to demonstrate a positive impact on student learning.”

** For information about the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs), see the Washington State Commission on Student Learning Web site: http://www.k12.wa.us

HOW DO I OBTAIN AN ENDORSEMENT? (WAC 180–82–204)

The credit you receive in your undergraduate studies is applied to the endorsement subject area/s you want to teach (pending approval when you enter a teacher education program). According to the Washington Administrative Code, “course work used to meet endorsement requirements must be completed through a regionally accredited college/university” and “only course work in which an
individual received a grade of C (2.0) or higher or a grade of pass on a pass-fail system of grading shall be counted toward the course work required for the approved endorsement program.” The teacher certification program in which you prepare for your initial teaching certificate recommends your endorsement(s) to the state. Again, endorsement course work, in general, must be completed before you enter your teacher certification program. For information on the English Language Arts teaching endorsement for the UW Seattle, click here.

**DO I NEED TO HAVE ALL MY ENDORSEMENT COURSE WORK COMPLETED BEFORE APPLYING TO THE CERTIFICATION/MASTER'S PROGRAM?**

In general, yes: the UW Seattle's Teacher Education Program is a full-time, cohort program. Consult the UW Seattle Teacher Education Program at edinfo@uw.edu for questions or for additional information.

**WHAT CLASSROOM GRADE LEVELS DO ENDORSEMENTS COVER? (WAC 180-82-201, 180-82-210)**

The Elementary education endorsement covers grade levels K-8; the Secondary Level endorsements (subject specific) cover grade levels 6–12. Those who wish to teach middle school can do so with either an elementary certificate (K-8) or a secondary certificate (6-12). Speak with staff in the UW Teacher Education Program if you are interested in middle-school teaching and are not sure which type of certificate would be best for you.