Overview

Foundations of Education is a key component of WGU’s Professional Core and is a required course for all Master of Arts in Teaching candidates. This course introduces candidates to foundational knowledge about the teaching profession in the current educational context and the historical and cultural influences on P-12 education in the United States. This course addresses important topics that affect educators today including state standards-based curriculum, legal and ethical requirements, and professionalism. This course will culminate in evidence-based, practical application of current strategies, theories, or philosophical perspectives related to becoming an effective educator within the current school context. Candidates will engage in five hours of preclinical experiences, which include virtual observations of learning environments in multiple school settings, and an interview with an educator to gain insight on how these topics affect and inform teaching practice. Cross-cutting themes of technology and diversity are introduced for further development throughout the candidate’s programs.

Competencies

- **Readiness**
  This competency exists to assess the readiness of students.

- **Historical, Cultural, and Legal Influences on Education**
  The graduate analyzes the role of historical and cultural influences, including issues of federal and state governance, in determining standard educational practices and ensuring equal access to educational opportunities.

- **Standards-Based Curriculum**
  The graduate examines the impact of standards-based curriculum on students and teachers to determine how it supports a school's goals.

- **Educational Best Practices in Diverse P–12 Classroom Settings**
  The graduate evaluates the application of educational best practices in diverse learning settings to inform teaching practice.

- **Professional Development**
  The graduate explores pathways and opportunities for professional development to grow as an educator.

- **Historical, Cultural, and Legal Influences on Specific Situations**
  The graduate explains the historical, cultural or legal influences on specific situations within the current school context.

Learning
Welcome to Foundations of Education! This course explores what it means to be a teacher by analyzing how historical, cultural and legal influences have shaped education in the United States and examining best practices that can be used to inform teaching practice and growth. This course includes carefully selected readings, videos, and interactive formative assessment activities that highlight the evolution of the classroom, the impact of standards-based curriculum, the importance of high-leverage teaching practices, the personal attributes necessary to become an effective educator, and resources that promote ongoing professional development. Competency will be demonstrated by completing a performance assessment consisting of three tasks that challenge you to apply what you have learned and reflect on connections to your future practice.