Shorter University School of Education

"Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway"

Program Manual

2025- 2026



SHORTER UNIVERSITY
Transforming Lives through Christ

Shorter University's Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway is a unique program leading to initial teacher certification in Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education. This innovative program, a collaboration between Shorter's School of Education and local partnership districts, allows candidates to continue serving as paraprofessionals as they complete their bachelor's degree.

Students earn foundational courses through one of Shorter's established online programs. After foundational courses are complete, students transition to professional courses taught in a variety of formats designed to meet the needs of working individuals.

Candidates must be approved by their district before enrolling in the Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway. A minimum cohort of 6 is required in education courses.

Candidate, University, and District responsibilities will be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Although a general MOU template is used for each cohort, the SOE reserves the right to work with the partnership district to formulate an agreement to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

Stakeholder General Responsibilities

Paraprofessional:

- Complete the required district application and other pre-employment documents and/or trainings in a timely manner.
- Join the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) at the Support Personnel level. Present evidence to SOE Data Manager.
- Adhere to the Georgia Educator Code of Ethics.
- Adhere to all policies and procedures of the University and the district employer.
- Attend all class sessions, including clinical practice seminar.
- Attend all SOE professional learning days, if possible.
- Attend all district meetings as required to include sessions with the school-based mentor.
- Maintain open and honest communication with all stakeholders.
- Exhibit professional dispositions.
- Complete all assignments in a timely manner.
- Pass both sections of GACE before beginning clinical practice.
- Maintain employment as a paraprofessional. Students must be serving as a paraprofessional before starting traditional courses.
- Ensure the support of the district is in place for field experience as well as clinical practice (student teaching). Some districts require students to resign from their position as paraprofessionals during student teaching.

University:

- Screen viable candidates for the program.

- Maintain clear, frequent communication with district partner.
- Ensure candidate has a current preservice certificate, PAGE Support Personnel membership, and passing GACE scores.
- Provide multi-faceted support to include an academic advisor from the School of Education, course professors, a success coach, a university supervisor for clinical practice, and a clinical practice seminar professor.
- Provide applicable professional learning opportunities.
- Provide alternative delivery models for some courses as appropriate.
- Provide training for cooperating teachers.
- Establish policy and procedures in conjunction with district partners and University administration.

District Partner:

- Maintain clear, frequent communication with University.
- Share the responsibility of supporting candidates by providing a building level mentor with at least three years of experience and acceptable evaluations.
- Ensure mentor completes all required University assessment trainings and attends Clinical Practice orientation.
- Include candidates in applicable professional learning opportunities.
- Provide specialized training as appropriate to include student restraint training if needed.
- Provide orientation to district and building level policies.
- Work with candidate, as needed, to ensure they can complete all assignments and field experiences (in applicable grade level bands) related to courses and clinical practice.
- Allow candidates to attend SOE professional learning days during clinical practice not to exceed 5 per academic year or 3 per semester, if possible.
- Accommodate candidate's obligation to attend courses clinical practice seminar weekly (after typical school hours).
- Ensure candidates are placed in settings which will allow both general education and special education experience.
- Allow Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education candidates to assume the role of the special education teacher and general education teacher during clinical practice.
- Provide access to employee benefits and TRS, per district policy.
- Grant priority interviews for open positions to candidates who are performing well.
- Allow candidates serving as paraprofessionals to assume all primary teaching duties for at least 20 days during clinical practice.
- Ensure candidates serving as paraprofessionals are placed in their content and grade level requirement for at least 50% of the academic day.
- Promote Shorter University School of Education programs such as endorsements and graduate degrees.

- Actively participate in the annual Teacher Education Advisor Council (TEAC) meetings.
- Provide physical classroom space for evening courses, if applicable.

Pathway Delivery Model Overview

Elementary & Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Candidates:

Freshmen & Sophomore Years- All online classes via Shorter's established online program.

Junior Year- Transition to traditional program (evening & online classes)

Pathway Field Experience Overview

Candidates are required to complete experiences in three grade level bands as outlined by the GaPSC Mother Rule (505-3-.01): PK-K, 1-3, 4-5. Additionally, candidates will need experience in both general and special education settings for the SpEd/EE degree.

Candidates must log 540 hours during clinical practice (a.k.a. student teaching). Candidates may complete this experience in their current setting if they can fulfill all clinical practice requirements and GaPSC mandates.

Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education candidates log approximately 340 field placement hours prior to clinical practice. Candidates may complete 75% (or 255 hours) in their current setting if all course requirements and GaPSC mandates are met. This means candidates must log 85 +/- hours in at least two other settings to meet the grade level band requirement.

Elementary Education candidates log approximately 285 field placement hours prior to clinical practice. Candidates may complete approximately 75% (or 210 hours) in their current setting if all course requirements and GaPSC mandates are met. This means candidates must log 75 +/- hours in at least two other settings to meet the grade level band requirement.

Proposed Course Sequence Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway

Associate of Science, General Studies to B.S., Special Ed. Gen. Curriculum/Elementary Ed.

*Counts as Elective Toward A.S., General Studies

F-1	S-1	Su-1
ENG1010	ENG 1020	*EDU 2110 (online)
CST1011	ENG 2110-2190	*EDU 2130 (online)
COM1010	CST 1012	
MAT #1	SCI #1	
F-2	**S-2**	**Su-2**
His/Soc Per Gr. 2	*HIS 2060	*EDU 2000 (online)
HIS 2050	*Science #2	*EDU 3100 (online)
Art. Exp.	*HIS 1020	*EDU 3000 (online)
*MAT #2	*Elective	*EDU 3755 (online)

Degree Completion= A.S., Gen. Studies

Enter B.S., Special Ed. Gen. Curriculum/Elementary Education

F-3	S-3	Su-3
HIS 3140 (M 6-9)	EDU 3820 (online 2)	EDU 2950 (July)
EDU 3300 (TR 4:00- 5:15)	EDU 3800 (online 1)	EDU 3250 (online)
EDU 3580 (MW 4:00- 5:15)	EDU 3550 (MW 4:00- 5:15)	MAT 1150 (June)
EDU 3700 (online 1)	EDU 3360 (TR 4:00- 5:15)	
F-4	**S-4**	
EDU 4010 (online 1)	Student Teaching	
EDU 4015 (TR 4:00- 5:15)		
EDU 4020 (online 2)		
EDU 4025 (MW 4:00- 5:15)		
EDU 4090 (TR 5:30- 6:45)		

(The SOE reserves the right to alter the schedule based on program/student needs.)

Sequence Sheets

Associate of Science **Online 2022-2023**

Student's Name:					ID:		Evaluation By:		
Semeste	Course Code	Course Title	Hrs	Grad	Semeste	Course Code	Course Title	Hrs	Grade
Foundation Courses			**33 hours**		**Elective Courses**			**27 hours**	
Effective Communication									
	ENG 1010/30	English Composition I	3						
	ENG 1020/40	English Composition II	3						
	COM 1010	Introduction to Communication	3						
	ENG 2110-219	Introduction to Literature:	3						
Biblical Perspective									
	CST 1011	Survey of Old Testament	3						
	CST 1012	Survey of New Testament	3						
Historical & Social Perspective									
Choose 1:			3		**Other Graduation Requirements:**				
	HIS 1020	Modern Civilization since 1648			1) A cumulative 2.0 GPA.				
	HIS 2010	Development of Civilization to 1648			2) ENG 1010 and 1020 must be passed with a "C" or better.				
	HIS 2050	American Civilization I			**Minimum Semester Hours for Degree**			**60 hours**	
	HIS 2060	American Civilization II							
Choose 1:			3						
	ECO 2100	Principles of Microeconomics							
	POS 2110	American Government							
	PSY 1010	Introduction to Psychology							
	SOC 1010	Introduction to Sociology							
Artistic Expression									
Choose 1:			3						
	ART 2010	Art, Culture, & Values							
	MUS 2030	Music Appreciation							
	THE 2250	Theatre Appreciation							
Quantitative & Scientific Reasoning									
Choose 1:			3						
	EAS 2000	Introduction to Geology							
	EAS 2080	Life Science							
	NAS 1500	Survey of Natural Sciences							
Choose 1:			3						
	MAT 1060	Liberal Arts Mathematics							
	MAT 1110	College Algebra							

Bachelor of Science, Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education Trad. 2022-2023

Student's Name:					ID:		Evaluation By:		
Semester	**Course Code**	**Course Title**	**Hrs.**	**Grade**	**Semester**	**Course Code**	**Course Title**	**Hrs.**	**Grade**
Foundation Courses			**35 hours**		**Professional Education Courses**			**27 hours**	
Foundations for College Success						EDU 2000	TPP Fundamentals	0	
	FCS 1010	College Life & Christian Worldview	1			EDU 2110	Crit./Cont. Issues in Education	3	
Effective Communication						EDU 2130	Exploring Teaching and Learning	3	
	ENG 1010/30	English Composition I	3			EDU 2950	Teacher Technology	3	
	ENG 1020/40	English Composition II	3			EDU 3100	Exceptional Learners: EE	3	
	COM 1010	Introduction to Communication	3			*EDU 3250	Measurement and Evaluation	3	
	ENG 2110-2190	Introduction to Literature:	3			*EDU 4150	Clinical Practice: EE/SPED	12	
Biblical Perspective					**Elementary Education Courses**			**33 hours**	
	CST 1011	Survey of Old Testament	3			EDU 3300	Principles for Diverse Learners	3	
	CST 1012	Survey of New Testament	3			EDU 3550	Early Literacy: EE	3	
Historical & Social Perspective						*EDU 3580	Mathematics Methods: EE	3	
Choose 1:			3			EDU 3700	Classroom Management	3	
	HIS 1020	Modern Civilization since 1648				EDU 3755	Creative Arts & Health: EE	3	
	HIS 2010	Development of Civilization to 1648				*EDU 3800	Social Science Education: EE	3	
	HIS 2050	American Civilization I				*EDU 3820	Science Education: EE	3	
	HIS 2060	American Civilization II				EDU 4010	Children's Literature	3	
Choose 1:			3			EDU 4015	Reading & Language Arts	3	
	ECO 2100	Principles of Microeconomics				*EDU 4020	Diagnostic/Corrective Reading	3	
	POS 2110	American Government				EDU 4025	Math Diagnostic for EE	3	
	PSY 1010	Introduction to Psychology			**Special Education Courses**			**9 hours**	
	SOC 1010	Introduction to Sociology				*EDU 3000	Ethics, Policies, & Procedures	3	
Artistic Expression						*EDU 3360	Curriculum Methods I	3	
Choose 1:			3			*EDU 4090	Curriculum Methods II	3	
	ART 1500	Art Fundamentals			**Additional Foundations**			**19 hours**	
	ART 2010	Art, Culture, & Values			Take the following courses:				
	DAN 2260	Dance Appreciation				HIS 1020	Modern Civilization to 1648	3	
	MUS 2030	Music Appreciation				HIS 2050	American Civilization I	3	
	MUS 2430	World Music				HIS 3140	Georgia History and Literature	3	
	THE 2250	Theatre Appreciation				MAT 1150	EE/MGE: Arithmetic & Algebra	3	
Quantitative & Scientific Reasoning						MAT 1160	EE/MGE: Msmt. & Analysis	3	
Choose 1:			4			NAS 1010	Physical Science I	4	
	CHE 1030/1031	General Chemistry I			**Other Graduation Requirements:**				
	EAS 2010/2011	Physical Geography			1) A cumulative 2.0 GPA.				
	EAS 2020/2021	Geology			2) The minimum acceptable grade in a course required of or applied to the major or minor is "C". ENG 1010 and 1020 must be passed with a "C" or better.				
	NAS 1010/1011	Physical Science I							
	NAS 1020/1021	Physical Science II			Additional graduation requirements apply to all education majors. Requirements are based on state and national guidelines, and education majors must meet all graduation requirements in existence at the time of their graduation. Current requirements may be found in the Teacher Preparation Program Handbook. All HIS courses count in Content GPA.				
	BIO 1010/1011	General Biology I							
	BIO 1020/1021	General Biology II							
	PHY 1030/1031	General Physics I							
Choose 1:			3						
	MAT 1060	Liberal Arts Mathematics			**Course must be taken at Shorter University.				
	MAT 1110	College Algebra							
	MAT 1120	Precalculus			**Minimum Semester Hours for Degree**			**123**	
	MAT 2610	Calculus I							

Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway
Field Experience Plan of Support
Elementary Education

Name

Certification Area

Name of Current School

Job Title

Grades Taught

Name of Mentor Teacher

Email address of Mentor Teacher

Year of Experience of Mentor Teacher

GA Certification ID # of Mentor Teacher

Course	Content	Grade Level Band	Required Hours	Semester/Year	School
EDU 2110	-		15 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 2000	-		5 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 3100	Special Education		5 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 3300	-		20 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson)	Fall/	
EDU 3580	Math		20 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Fall/	
EDU 3800	Social Studies		20* (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/	Spring/	

			small groups, coteach)		
EDU 3820	Science		20* (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Spring/	
EDU 4010	Reading		40 (observation, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Fall/	
EDU 4015	Reading		40 (observation, coteach, work w/ small groups, teach/record 1 whole group lesson and 1 small group lesson)	Fall/	
EDU 4020	Reading		40 (observation, coteach, work with small groups, must work w/individual student to implement interventions, progress monitor, and analyze progress)	Fall/	
EDU 4025	Math		40 (observe, coteach, work w/ small groups, must teach 1-2 lessons, must work with individual student to implement interventions, progress monitor, and analyze progress.	Fall/	
Clinical Practice	-		540 (coteach, must teach at least four lessons; help w/small groups, solo teach at least 20 days; semester long experience)	Spring (or Fall)/	

Practicum Hours- 320 (235 in current setting; 85 in at least two other settings to meet grade level band requirements; special education hours must be completed in special education setting)

Clinical Practice Hours- 540 in current setting

GaPSC Mandated Grade Level Bands- PK-K, 1-3, 4-5

*5 classroom hours; 15 alternative hours

I understand that the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requires that candidates complete field experiences in a variety of specified grade level bands and in more than one setting. For this reason, I am working with my principal (or the Innovative Programs Specialist at Shorter) to arrange opportunities to meet the requirements.

Candidate Signature_____

Date_____

Principal Signature_____

Date_____

Paraprofessionals to Teachers Pathway
Field Experience Plan of Support
Special Education General Curriculum/Elementary Education

Name

Certification Area

Name of Current School

Job Title

Grades Taught

Name of Mentor Teacher

Email address of Mentor Teacher

Year of Experience of Mentor Teacher

GA Certification ID # of Mentor Teacher

Course	Content	Grade Level Band	Required Hours	Semester/Year	School
EDU 2110	-		15 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 2000	-		5 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 3100	Special Education		5 (observation)	Summer/	
EDU 3300	-		20 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson)	Fall/	
EDU 3580	Math		20 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Fall/	
EDU 3800	Social Studies		20* (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Spring/	

EDU 3820	Science		20* (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Spring/	
EDU 3360	Special Education		15 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Spring/	
EDU 4010	Reading		40 (observation, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Fall/	
EDU 4015	Reading		40 (observation, coteach, work w/ small groups, teach/record 1 whole group lesson and 1 small group lesson)	Fall/	
EDU 4020	Reading		40 (observation, coteach, work with small groups, must work w/individual student to implement interventions, progress monitor, and analyze progress)	Fall/	
EDU 4025	Math		40 (observe, coteach, work w/ small groups, must teach 1-2 lessons, must work with individual student to implement interventions, progress monitor, and analyze progress.	Fall/	
EDU 4090	Special Education		15 (observation, teach/record 1 lesson, help w/ small groups, coteach)	Fall/	
Clinical Practice	-		540 (coteach, must teach at least four lessons; help w/small groups, solo teach at least 20 days; semester long experience)	Spring (or Fall)/	

Practicum Hours- 320 (235 in current setting; 85 in at least two other settings to meet grade level band requirements; special education hours must be completed in special education setting)

Clinical Practice Hours- 540 in current setting

GaPSC Mandated Grade Level Bands- PK-K, 1-3, 4-5

*5 classroom hours; 15 alternative hours

I understand that the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requires that candidates complete field experiences in a variety of specified grade level bands and in more than one setting. For this reason, I am working with my principal (or the Innovative Programs Specialist at Shorter) to arrange opportunities to meet the requirements.

Candidate Signature_____

Date_____

Principal Signature_____

Date_____

Innovative Program Specialist Duties and Responsibilities Related to the Paraprofessional Pathway:

- Serve as the first point of contact for candidates and district partners.
- Work with Dean and other faculty members to recruit candidates for the program.
- Work with district partners to ensure that candidates can maintain their paraprofessional job while completing field experience and student teaching. Some districts require candidates to take educational leave during student teaching.
- Host informational sessions for prospective candidates- either on campus or in local schools.
- Complete district MOU's and secure needed signatures.
- Work with candidates and building level principals to map out the field experience plan of support.
- Serve as a candidate success coach offering additional support as needed in areas such as key assessments, GACE preparation, time management, etc.
- Organize "check ins" with candidates each semester.
- Work with field experience coordinator to arrange student teaching placements for candidates who must take educational leave during student teaching.
- Maintain clear and accurate program records.