

# SECU Partnership East (PE) Frequently Asked Questions

**Note:** Many questions may be answered by reviewing the information and documents located on the ECU College of Education State Employee's Credit Union (SECU) Partnership East website at: <http://www.ecu.edu/pe>

The East Carolina University College of Education, with the support of the State Employee's Credit Union Foundation, has established SECU Partnership East. Through collaboration and innovation, the partnership focuses on preparing teachers who will help meet the demand for well-trained professionals in the classrooms of North Carolina and beyond. SECU Partnership East provides degree completion programs in elementary education and special education. Participants must complete a portion of their studies at a North Carolina community college prior to enrolling in SECU Partnership East.

## **How do I determine which SECU Partnership East Coordinator to contact?**

Carteret, Craven, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico,  
Contact Ms. Jenifer Marquis at (252) 638-6492 or [marquisj14@ecu.edu](mailto:marquisj14@ecu.edu)

Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Nash, Northampton, Vance, Wake, Warren, Wilson  
Contact Ms. Kathy Bradley at (252) 451-8212 or [bradleyk@ecu.edu](mailto:bradleyk@ecu.edu)

Cumberland, Duplin, Greene, Harnett, Johnston, Sampson, Wayne  
Contact Mr. Clay Smith at (919) 739-7012 or [smithclay@ecu.edu](mailto:smithclay@ecu.edu).

Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell, Washington  
Contact Ms. Karli Ruscoe at (252) 940-6384 or [ruscoek@ecu.edu](mailto:ruscoek@ecu.edu)

If you are located in any other county in North Carolina  
Contact Ms. Karli Ruscoe at (252) 493-7659 or [ruscoek@ecu.edu](mailto:ruscoek@ecu.edu)

## **When should I meet with a PE coordinator?**

You should meet with a PE coordinator as soon as you have decided to pursue a degree in teacher education or even before you have made a final decision. The earlier you are advised, the more likely you will enroll in the required general education courses at the community colleges. Your freshman year is not too early to meet with the coordinator for the first time. The coordinator will review your current college record to assist you in planning. Please bring a copy of each college transcript to the meeting. They do not need to be official copies.

## **Will I need to drive to the hub site to talk to the PE coordinator?**

Face to face meetings are recommended when possible. PE Coordinators visit many local community colleges on a regular basis to advise current and potential students. Check with the coordinator for your area to schedule a time that is convenient.

Students can also visit the PE Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/ecuPE](http://www.facebook.com/ecuPE) to view dates that PE coordinators will be visiting community colleges in their region. Likewise, students may be able to find information on upcoming PE coordinator advising dates at their community colleges through e-mailed announcements or flyers sent by community college advisors to student e-mail. Virtual students may be advised by phone, Skype, or face to face with a coordinator.

## **What courses should I take at the community college?**

There are articulation agreements and checklists for both program areas (elementary and special education) which list the courses you need to complete at the community college. Most of the courses are considered general education or foundation courses. Articulation agreements and checklists are located on the PE website. <http://www.ecu.edu/pe>

### **What if I took courses on the old community college quarter system?**

Courses taken at the community college on the quarter system may or may not transfer. A PE coordinator would need to review your transcripts to advise you on which courses may transfer to ECU.

### **What happens if I have been enrolled in the community college but have not been enrolled in a college transfer program?**

The PE coordinator will be glad to meet with you to evaluate course work to determine if any of the courses taken in programs other than college transfer will transfer to the university. Transcripts will need to be brought to the advising appointment with the PE coordinator.

### **If I have a D in a course, will it transfer?**

ECU only gives transfer credit for grades of C or higher on transfer courses.

### **When do PE courses meet?**

PE courses are offered through a 100% online delivery model. Students access courses through East Carolina University's Blackboard and/or Moodle sites.

In addition, **all students** will be required to attend a mandatory PE orientation and may be required to attend face to face meetings twice a year on campus. During the senior year, **all students** will be required to come to the ECU campus to attend three (one day each) mandatory senior seminars. **All students are required to participate in one advising session per semester (fall/spring). Advising sessions can be held face-to-face, via the web, or by phone.**

All students are required to complete field experiences each term during the day in local public schools. Hours vary each semester but may range from 20 to 40 hours during a 15 week semester. The internship requires one full-day each week in the Senior I semester. Senior II is a full-time internship requiring interns to report and remain for the entire teacher workday every day of the semester.

### **Where will my practicum or field work take place?**

All field (clinical) placements are facilitated by the Office of Clinical Experiences. You will be asked to request a school system and public school in your local area where you would like to be placed for your field work. The Office of Clinical Experiences attempts to place you in the county in which you live. If this is not possible, you will be placed in the next most convenient area to your home. School district personnel determine policies for placing teacher assistants in their counties for field experiences and the internship. The policy for teacher assistants during the Senior Year internship may be found at: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/teached/InternForms.cfm>.

### **Can I work while attending ECU as a PE student?**

PE Part-time models are designed for working adults. However, students must be able to complete the required practicum hours (field experiences in public schools) and the internship during the regular public school day.

In both the full-time and part-time models, the Senior I Semester requires the interns to attend one full day each week in the assigned public school. The final semester or Senior II semester is a full-time commitment. Interns report to the school setting each day of the semester prior to the arrival of the students and remain at school until after all school planning, activities, and meetings are completed.

Students should not work during the full-time internship semester. The Senior II internship is the capstone experience for all teacher education programs. As such, the internship requires a significant time commitment such that working during this semester would hinder a student's ability to be successful in the internship. The full-time elementary model is not appropriate for those who work.

### **May I attend PE full-time?**

Only the elementary degree program offers full-time enrollment at this time. Full-time elementary students should expect to be enrolled for 16 hours in the fall and spring and 5 to 7 hours each summer session. Part-time enrollment is an option for elementary, middle grades, and special education. Part-time students are normally enrolled in 6 to 9 hours each semester and in 3 to 6 hours each summer session.

### **May I take extra courses while enrolled in PE so that I can graduate sooner?**

PE students **may not** speed up their course planners since courses are scheduled in a specific sequence during consecutive semesters. An excellent advantage of the PE cohort model is that registration for needed courses is guaranteed. Seats in online courses are reserved each semester for PE students in planned sequences so taking courses that deviate from assigned cohort planners is not permitted.

### **May I simply take courses from ECU online to get my elementary or special education degree without being part of a PE cohort?**

The only way to complete an elementary or special education degree totally online from ECU is through SECU Partnership East. Although you may be able to take some courses online from ECU, most courses are not offered online except through PE.

### **What are the criteria for admission in the PE part-time programs?**

- Minimum 2.5 GPA (grade point average)
- Praxis Core scores within 5 points of passing each section or within 5 points of the composite score requirement, equivalent ACT scores, or equivalent SAT scores (score information located on PE website).
- General education courses completed (See articulation agreements.)
- Interview with a PE coordinator (virtual students may interview via phone, Skype, or email).
- Students must meet university requirements for admission.
- Students must be admitted to ECU.
- Candidates who are employees from partnering districts and/or students from NC community colleges are given priority for enrollment.

### **What are the criteria for admission in the PE Full-time Elementary program?**

- Minimum 3.0 GPA (grade point average)
- Passing Praxis Core scores, or equivalent ACT scores, or equivalent SAT scores (score information located on PE website).
- General education courses completed (see articulation agreements).
- Interview with a PE coordinator (virtual students may interview via phone, Skype, or email)
- Students must meet university requirements for admission.
- Students must meet the ECU requirements for admission to the institution. Students are encouraged to apply early as participation is contingent upon successful admission to the university.
- Candidates who are employees from partnering districts and/or students from NC community colleges are given priority for enrollment.

### **What are the passing scores required on the Praxis I tests?**

Praxis Core passing scores are 150 in Math, 156 in Reading, and 162 in Writing OR a composite score of 468.

**What are the equivalent SAT and ACT scores needed to meet Praxis I requirements?**

In lieu of Praxis I, students may submit a composite score on ACT of 24 or SAT of 1100 (counting only the verbal and math portions). **OR** An SAT score of 550 on math or ACT score of 24 on math will meet the Praxis I requirement for math and/or an SAT score of 550 on verbal or an ACT score of 24 on verbal will meet the Praxis I score for reading and writing. You may use passing scores from different tests. (Ex. SAT of 550 and Core-Math of 150).

**What if my GPA (grade point average) is lower than 2.5 at the community college?**

A minimum 2.5 GPA is required to enter teacher education and East Carolina University. If you have an Associate of Arts degree and a 2.5 GPA from the degree granting NC Community College, you may be eligible for admission to ECU, even if earlier grades from a former college would result in a lower cumulative GPA. Contact a PE coordinator for advice and strategies to raise your community college grade point average.

**What is Praxis Core?**

Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core) is a series of 3 tests (Reading, Writing, & Math) that is required for all students in North Carolina who wish to enter a teacher education program. In order to take the upper level classes in the College of Education, the state requires that all students pass Praxis Core. The test is designed to ensure that a student is able to read, write, and solve mathematical problems on a college level. Information about Praxis Core may be found at [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis).

**What if I took the old Praxis I?**

Prior to September 1, 2013 the Praxis I was called the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST). Passing cores from the previous Praxis I (PPST) will be accepted. A composite score of 522 on Reading, Writing, and Math is required for the PPST. If you have taken the PPST but not passed it, consult with your Partnership East Coordinator for information.

**What is a hub site?**

SECU Partnership East is organized in regional partnerships or consortia made up of the public schools and community colleges in several counties. Each consortium has a central location at a community college where students meet to attend the face to face ECU classes in the evenings. A map showing the areas (consortia) is located on the website. [www.ecu.edu/pe](http://www.ecu.edu/pe)

**What is a cohort?**

East Carolina delivers each SECU Partnership East program through a cohort model. A cohort is a group of students who begin the ECU program at the same time, take all the classes together in a planned sequence, and graduate at the same time. Charts showing cohort schedules (planned sequences of courses) may be found on the website.

**Is there any financial aid for the programs offered through ECU/PE?**

Financial aid varies depending on the student's economic situation, the student's employment status, and scholarship funds that may vary from year to year. All students must complete a FAFSA to be considered for ECU financial aid. The forms may be completed at [www.fafsa.org](http://www.fafsa.org). PE is not a financial aid program, but a student may qualify for financial aid from the government or the university depending on need. Some scholarship opportunities may be found at [www.CFNC.org](http://www.CFNC.org). Due to the generosity of the State Employee's Credit Union, scholarships are available to eligible PE students during their senior year to include tuition support and a stipend. Information about scholarships will be provided to students by their PE Coordinator.

**How much does it cost to take classes during the SECU Partnership East Program?**

Cost varies due to legislation. PE students are charged distance education tuition rates and pay an hourly technology fee. Current rates may be found on the ECU distance education website. <http://www.ecu.edu/options/>. Click on the question, "How much does it cost?"

**If I am a public school employee, is there any financial assistance available to help pay for my tuition and books?**

There may be funding available for school employees. School district employees should check with the Human Resources Department in their district to determine if local funds are available.

**What if I already have a four-year degree?**

SECU Partnership East does not serve second-degree students. East Carolina University's College of Education offers a wide variety of alternative licensure programs. For information on alternative licensure through East Carolina, visit [www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/alternative\\_licensure/index.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/alternative_licensure/index.cfm).

**Is it mandatory to have Internet connections at my home to participate in PE?**

The PE model is delivered primarily through online instruction. Students should have consistent access to reliable high speed Internet service. Additional information about technology requirements may be found on the PE website. The document used to inform all students is titled, "Technology Requirements."

**PE students are required to have a technology back-up plan to ensure access to the Internet and computers in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as electrical outages due to adverse weather, computer malfunctions and Internet outages.**

**What if I am not sure which teaching program or grade levels I prefer?**

If you are unsure about which teaching program or area you prefer, it is advised that you call several local schools in your area and observe classes. This will help provide you with some insight into what is required of teachers in each area or grade level.

**Which teaching degree completion programs are offered through PE?**

Elementary Education and Special Education-General Curriculum.

**Are education degrees offered through SECU Partnership East that will license a graduate to teach high school content?**

No, there is not a degree being offered in secondary education at this time. If you plan to pursue a secondary education degree (high school teaching), you will need to attend classes at ECU's campus in Greenville. Some courses may be available online but are often filled by seniors and graduate students. The Special Education-General Curriculum degree does lead to a teaching license in grades K-12. It does not qualify students to teach a content area, but rather to support or teach special needs students in high school.

**Do I have to obtain official transcripts to enroll in PE?**

You may use unofficial transcripts for your advising conference with the PE coordinator. However, when you apply to ECU, the ECU Admissions office will require official transcripts from every college or university attended. Students may be required to provide high school transcripts as well when applying.

**If I enroll in PE, will I ever need to go on campus in Greenville?**

Students will not be required to attend on-campus courses but will have up to two events on campus per year and three events on campus the senior year. However, PE students are considered ECU students and may choose to use some of the resources on campus, such as the library. They may also join campus clubs associated with education. PE students may order textbooks online and have them mailed to their homes. ECU cordially invites all PE students to attend graduation at ECU, which is held on campus in Greenville.

**How will I access books and materials from the ECU library?**

The Coastal, North Central and South Central hub sites maintain a Teacher Resource Center where students may check out materials and books. In addition, PE students, through the InterLoan Library system, may check out many books and materials from ECU library and other colleges and universities. Through the InterLoan Library system, books and materials may be mailed to the students' homes or local community college libraries for students to check out. The K-6 Textbook Collection which includes teacher editions of each adopted text in grades K-6 for the subjects of Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies is available as a reserved Interlibrary Loan collection exclusively for PE students.