

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE  
IN EDUCATION STUDIES**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University for a Bachelor of Science in Education Studies in the College of Human Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this program.

**Description of proposed program.** The education landscape is broad and ever-changing and there are many career options within the field of education that go beyond traditional classroom teaching roles. This includes educators interested in out of school settings, such as museums, zoos, or libraries, and community-based education, international education, educational technology, instructional design or educational policy. For students interested in careers in education and education-related fields outside of classroom teaching, Iowa State University does not have an undergraduate degree program that meets their needs. Currently, the School of Education (SOE) offers one undergraduate degree, a B.S. in Elementary Education, and a secondary undergraduate major in education which can be added for students whose primary major is outside the SOE. Additionally, there are education degrees at ISU that fall outside of the SOE, such as agricultural education or English education, but that are part of the Educator Preparation Program. All these degree programs lead to teacher licensure in K-12 classrooms.

Therefore, to meet the needs of students who are interested in education but not in becoming a K-12 classroom teacher, the SOE is proposing a B.S. in Education Studies. This proposed new degree program would be a non-licensure degree that would prepare undergraduate students for professions in and related to education, but outside of classroom teaching. This degree seeks to equip educators across the education landscape with the ability to design, implement and assess educational programming that advances teaching and learning for all.

Students in this new degree program would take classes that meet ISU general education and college-level requirements along with the SOE core education courses in the first two years to provide a foundation in education theory and practice. In the third year, students in this new degree program would pursue coursework focused on one of three emphasis areas (Teaching, Learning & Leadership, Innovation, Technology, & Society, or STEM) before participating in a semester-long internship in their final semester related to their career goals.

The emphasis areas in this degree are multidisciplinary and flexible to reflect current trends and issues in education and prepare students for a broad and ever-changing education landscape.

- **Teaching, Learning & Leadership** – this emphasis area is for students who are interested in teaching and learning across a range of educational settings, contexts, and learners. Students can pursue a variety of careers related to education including international education, informal or community-based education such as museum or library educators, support for K-12 classrooms, or educational programming, policy, or consulting.
- **Innovation, Technology, & Society** - this emphasis area is for students who are interested in the intersection of innovation, design, educational technology, and the impact on society. This concentration would build upon expertise of education technology faculty and with collaborations across campus to explore current technology-based innovations

and learning technologies in educational settings, such as game-based learning, computer science, artificial intelligence, and human computer interaction for educators. Students could pursue careers in instructional design, technology-based learning, educational or technology firms, online learning, educational consulting or educational entrepreneurship.

• **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)** - this emphasis area is for students who are interested in learning and teaching as it relates to STEM contexts and environments. This concentration seeks to equip educators across STEM fields with the ability to design, implement, and assess research-based educational programs that advance the goals of STEM education for all involved. Students could pursue careers in museums, science or nature centers, out of school STEM programs and camps, curriculum development and testing, educational programming for STEM-related industries, such as business or healthcare.

Academic objectives. Students pursuing the education studies degree program would pursue the following objectives to build a well-rounded foundation that would allow them to make meaningful contributions to the field of education.

- 1) Study various educational systems, including their structures, policies and practices.
- 2) Build foundational knowledge and understanding of educational theory, research and practice to better understand how people learn and how to facilitate effective learning experiences.
- 3) Learn to design and implement engaging and effective educational materials and programming including innovative technology-based learning.
- 4) Participate in a program of study that aligns with career aspirations and interests that includes a semester-long internship experience.

Need for program. The need for a degree program for students interested in education beyond becoming a certified, classroom teacher was determined through multiple avenues. First, in discussions with the academic advisors in the SOE, there has been a trend that when students choose to change majors and/or opt out of completing ISU's teacher education program that many of these students are still interested in working in educational settings and with children. It is often that students no longer want to be formal K-12 classroom teachers. Students who are interested in education more broadly, but do not want to be the lead teacher in a classroom, often choose other majors in the hopes that they will be able to circle around and make their way back into education. The Education Studies major would allow these students to continue in a program of study that meets their future interests of working in the larger field of education.

Second, through projects and discussions with stakeholders and partners across the state, SOE faculty and staff have been asked to share their expertise through the creation of educational materials and programming as well as with the development of future educators from non-school settings. Some of these efforts have included library educators and programming, development of out-of-school curriculum materials and programming such as STEM-Lit-to-go, assisting with the State Science Fair, informal science teaching and various STEM summer camps. In working with these projects and partners, the need for a pathway for individuals who are interested in contributing to the field of education but who may not necessarily want to become licensed teachers has become more apparent. Furthermore, as the education landscape continues to evolve and is driven by various factors, such as technological advancements, shifts in societal needs, and the needs for diverse and inclusive learning environments, we see a rising demand to prepare educators who can work in and across these diverse educational settings and contexts.

Third, while examining recruitment trends and exploring possible new markets of students, the SOE has not historically had large numbers of undergraduate international students in other majors. For many, a common end goal is to go back and teach or advocate for educational issues in their home country and earning a U.S teaching license is not required. There is a market for international students seeking a degree in education without a licensure requirement.

Finally, in examining Hanover Research data on student demand for this type of degree program, ISU found that the number of bachelor's level graduates/completers in Education Studies has increased by 11% nationally and 25% in Iowa from 2018 to 2022. The number of degree programs has grown by 4% nationally in that same period. The process for determining the potential need for the program started with a collection of anecdotal evidence from students, advisors, and faculty. Next, members of the SOE Undergraduate Curriculum Committee formed a task force to determine if the SOE should move forward in pursuing the program. The task force convened on multiple occasions and studied the degree pathways of similar majors at ISU designated peer institutions (both the Board of Regents and IPEDS peer list) and at the programs of other public and private institutions in Iowa (Iowa, Northern Iowa, and Drake).

The committee determined there is a need to offer a non-licensure education studies degree because there are ISU students who are interested in education-related fields beyond traditional classroom teaching but do not have an option to pursue this at ISU. Additionally, student demands shows that general education programs are growing and that many of our peer institutions offer some type of degree designation in education studies.

Relationship to existing programs at the institution. The proposed program will be similar to existing programs currently offered by or in conjunction with the SOE because SOE and educator preparation students complete a set of foundational or core courses in their first two years along with ISU and college-level general education required courses. Students in this new proposed program will complete this same core as those courses provide an important foundation in education theory, research and practice for anyone working in the field of education. A key difference in this proposed program is that once students complete the core education courses, they will not take formal methods of teaching courses with the educator preparation students but will choose from a series of electives in one of the three emphasis areas (Teaching, Learning & Leadership; Innovation, Technology, & Society; or STEM) to prepare them for a career outside of the traditional classroom.

The elective coursework is flexible and can include courses outside of the SOE, therefore holding the potential to enhance learning and pair well with other content majors across the university for those students who are interested in bringing an education perspective to a range of disciplines and industries. For example, there are science majors who want to work at the Science Center of Iowa or do outreach at a local county conservation office who could complete content-focused electives along with the core education courses.

This proposed program will not duplicate existing programs at the university as there is currently not a program or pathway for students interested in education outside of the educator preparation program.

Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities. In Iowa, the University of Iowa offers an undergraduate non-licensure education major for their students (Education Studies and Human Relations Major) and the University of Northern Iowa offers this as a minor (Educational Studies Minor).

The list of private institutions of higher education that offer a similar degree in Iowa includes Drake University, Buena Vista University, William Penn University, Loras College and Morningside University.

Resources to establish a high-quality program. The current curriculum for the first two years of the new proposed Education Studies degree is already in place as students in this degree will take their core courses alongside other SOE students, the infrastructure (personnel, facilities, and equipment) is already in place. The three emphasis areas have been chosen strategically as the additional elective coursework and faculty expertise needed for each of the emphasis areas currently exists in the SOE, College, and across ISU. The current secondary education adviser in the SOE will serve as academic adviser for all education studies majors as this adviser currently advises students across multiple departments in the first two years of the program of study and would be able to assist with advising duties. This allows for the program requirements needed to establish and maintain a high-quality program to consist of unique combinations of existing personnel and coursework coupled with a content specific internship.

Student demand. Evidence of the demand can be seen in examining Hanover Research data for this type of degree program. The number of bachelors level graduates/completers in Education Studies (CIP code - 13.0101) has increased by 11% nationally and 25% in Iowa from 2018 to 2022. Additionally, the number of degree programs has grown by 4% nationally in that same time

Additional evidence of student demand for this program can be seen from examination of non-licensure or non-certification education degrees at peer institutions. 16 out of 29 peer institutions examined offer majors and/or minors (Michigan State, Kansas State, Missouri, Ohio State, North Carolina State, Penn State, Purdue, Oregon State, Arizona State, California-Davis, Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, Kentucky, Texas A&M, Minnesota- Twin Cities, Buffalo, and Wisconsin-Madison) and both of the other Regents' institutions offer an education studies degree or minor.

Workforce need/demand. Education is a sector that will always need qualified professionals. Even though a good portion of the workforce demand will continue to be for licensed classroom teachers, there is an opportunity for the development of an education workforce that will work outside of the traditional classroom. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment in the area of education, training, and library occupations is projected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations and will result in about 857,600 openings per year.

Related to national workforce preparation and demand, this degree would allow for students to make a positive impact on education and prepare them for a wide variety of careers, such as out of school educator, teaching assistant or paraprofessional, support roles for school districts or education agencies, tutor, community-based education, international education, museum educator, instructional designer, educational program manager, or education consultant. Additionally, a number of business occupations benefit from foundational education coursework, such as, professional development facilitators, curriculum designers, education policy consultants or education leaders in facilities such as museums, science centers and learning centers.

Funding and Cost. Students in this proposed degree will be enrolled in courses alongside other SOE majors (both elementary education and secondary major in education) for the first two years and then enroll in elective coursework for courses that currently exist within the SOE and across ISU, so there will be no significant additional financial resources needed related to creating coursework as the costs will be absorbed into the programs and coursework that are currently offered. These core SOE courses have multiple sections each semester and there is currently

space across the sections that would be able to accommodate the proposed number of students in this program without needing to create new sections.

As it relates to advising, the current secondary education adviser in educator preparation will serve as academic adviser for all education studies majors. Because this adviser currently advises secondary education majors who take the education professional core, the same adviser will already be advising students across multiple departments in the first two years of the program of study, thus will be the best person to advise students in this new degree program. For the field experiences, the earlier practicum experience that is taken alongside other SOE majors will be included as part of the workload of the Teacher Education Services Unit within the SOE that currently serves all educator preparation students across ISU and will not require additional financial resources.

There would be a need for financial resources to cover the semester-long internship experience, but the plan is to utilize college level resources for this component of the program.

Projected student enrollment.

Undergraduate	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Majors	5-10	15-20	30	40	50
Non-Majors	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Accreditation. There is no requirement for accreditation of this program at the state or federal level. The program will remain in compliance with HLC standards.

Date of implementation. 2025.

Letter of Support



July 11, 2024

To the Board of Regents:

The Council of Provosts discussed the Iowa State University proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Education Studies and reviewed associated documentation. The university has the resources and expertise for this program already in place through the College of Human Sciences and its School of Education. As a non-licensure degree, this will prepare students interested in careers in community-based education, industry-based training, or any number of others. There is evidence of student demand among current students and workforce benefit in the state of Iowa and throughout the Midwest. The plan indicates due diligence with the other Regent universities regarding related programs and support for this program at ISU. Based on the evidence and documentation, this program is likely to benefit Iowa State University and the state of Iowa.

The Council of Provosts is supportive of the program and wishes Iowa State the best in its implementation.

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