

NON-DEGREE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Adding a Content Area
- Professional Educator
- The Connecting Link

Admission to Non-Degree Programs in Education Students wishing to take graduate courses at Valparaiso University, but not seeking a graduate degree, must still be admitted to the Graduate School. There are two categories of non-degree seeking students. Descriptions of these categories and admission requirements for each category are described below.

Category I: Adding a Content Area

Students are considered non-degree education students if they have an undergraduate degree and are currently seeking an initial (first) teaching license in elementary or secondary education OR are adding an additional teaching area to a currently held teaching license (e.g., learning disabilities, reading, junior high/middle school, academic areas such as science). Admission requirements for students in this category include:

- [Graduate School and Department of Education application forms](#),
- Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate coursework. If you have received an undergraduate or graduate degree from Valparaiso University, you are not required to submit an official transcript from Valparaiso University;
- \$30.00 application fee,
- Reflective essay,
- Two letters of recommendation (three for Transition-to-Teaching, one if undergraduate degree was earned at Valparaiso University),
- Students must take and successfully pass the PPST (Pre-Professional Skills Test) and submit scores to the Office of Graduate Studies.

Note: Non-degree seeking students DO NOT need to take the GRE. However, students applying to the Transition-to-Teaching program must submit GRE scores and meet additional admission requirements, as stipulated by the State of Indiana. Consult the Graduate catalog for more details. Non-degree seeking students should meet with licensing adviser in the Department of Education to determine coursework needed to obtain initial teaching license or to add an additional teaching area to a currently held license. Students should bring a transcript of previous completed coursework when meeting with licensing adviser. Students should be aware that not more than nine (9) credits earned as a non-degree student may apply toward a degree program. Students accepted to the Transition-to-Teaching program cannot apply coursework toward degree programs. Students who wish to change to degree-seeking status must complete all application and admission requirements for the degree to which they seek admission.

Category II: Professional Educator

Professional Educators, currently active in elementary, secondary, or special education may take courses without formal admission to degree-seeking status, if and only if, they do not intend to use these credits toward a degree, for an initial teaching license, or to add a teaching area to a currently held license. Professional Educator status applies only to those who are (a) visiting students, (b) students seeking personal enrichment, or (c)

students fulfilling their 6 credit license renewal requirements. Those seeking a degree or initial/additional license must meet the requirements as stated above for Category I Non-Degree students. Admission requirements for professional educators are:

- [Graduate School and Department of Education application forms](#),
- Letter from the educator's current superintendent or principal verifying current teaching/professional status.

The following requirements are waived:

- Application Fee
- Letters of formal recommendation
- Reflective Essay
- GRE
- Transcripts of college coursework

Professional Education Graduate Courses offered through The Connecting Link

Valparaiso University's Graduate School and Department of Education in conjunction with [The Connecting Link](#) (TCL) offer a series of courses that teachers may take for license renewal to expand their teaching skills or for their personal enrichment. TCL is an educational training company that offers coursework for an educator's professional development. These courses are typically offered at various sites throughout the state of Indiana, and may not be offered on the campus of Valparaiso University. All such courses, as well as the instructors who teach them, have been reviewed and approved by the Department of Education at Valparaiso University. Students enrolled in these courses may earn Valparaiso graduate credits for coursework that is successfully completed. Students will be classified as Professional Educators when they enroll in TCL coursework. Transcripts are available approximately six to eight weeks after the completion of your course. Please wait a minimum of six weeks before requesting your transcript. If you would like a letter of completion with your final grade you may call [TCL](#) to request one. In addition to TCL forms, they must complete a short [Valparaiso University application form](#), submit a statement from a school administrator that verifies their current teacher status, and submit a copy of their current teaching license. Tuition, fees and other registration materials are collected by TCL course instructors at their first class meetings. Upon successful completion of a TCL course, the student is issued a grade report from the Registrar's Office when they want official verification that they have taken a TCL course for the purpose of license renewal or to apply for salary increases in their employing school agencies. Before enrolling in a course, teachers (particularly secondary educators) should consult the Licensure Adviser at Valparaiso University or another university closer to their residence, to ascertain that a particular TCL course will be acceptable for use in the license renewal process. Not all courses are appropriate for license renewal in all content areas at the secondary level. NOTE: TCL credits may not be used to renew emergency/limited licenses, as such teachers must be enrolled in a specified program of study at a local university to earn a regular teaching license if they are teaching on a limited license. Also, teachers in states other than Indiana should check with a licensing adviser in that state to determine if TCL credits will count for license renewal. The Valparaiso University licensure adviser cannot approve TCL courses for license renewal in state other than Indiana. For questions regarding licensing applicability, please email the licensing adviser, Dr. Perry Riffel, at TCL.Education@valpo.edu. To view courses and other information, visit the [Connecting Link Web Site](#). Use of TCL Credits at Valparaiso University TCL graduate credits may

be used to renew currently held teaching licenses as long as the TCL courses taken are relevant to the particular license being renewed. Currently, TCL professional education graduate courses may not be applied to any graduate degree programs in Education at Valparaiso University, and Valparaiso University does not guarantee that credits offered through TCL will be accepted as transfer credits in graduate degree or licensure program at other universities. However, these courses may be used toward some non-education master degree programs at Valparaiso University, including the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree and the Master of Arts in English Studies & Communication. If a teacher wishes to use TCL credits in a degree or licensure program offered at another university before enrolling in the TCL course to ensure its acceptability for the desired purpose. Educators in the state of Indiana are periodically sent TCL materials, including the application form. Further information on procedures for enrolling in Valparaiso University professional education graduate coursework through TCL is available from the Graduate School Office or call at 1-800-821-7685.

Additional Information Application Forms Applicants obtain all necessary forms from the Office of the Graduate School, 116 Kretzmann Hall. Completed forms are returned to 116 Kretzmann Hall. Transcripts Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate coursework. If you have received an undergraduate or graduate degree from Valparaiso University, you are not required to submit an official transcript from Valparaiso University. Reflective Essay Applicants are asked to write a 300-500 word essay in which they relate the proposed program of graduate study to their professional goals in the education field. The essay is submitted to the Graduate School along with all other admissions materials. This essay takes the place of the 250-350 word essay required by the Graduate School. Conditional Admission The Graduate School may grant conditional admission to applicants so that they may enroll in courses while collecting and submitting application materials. NOTE: Students must have all application materials submitted by the end of their first semester of enrollment. For Further Information To obtain further information about:

- the Master of Education (Teaching/Learning) or Master's degree programs in Special Education,
- the Education Specialist degree in School Psychology,
- adding a special education area to a currently held teaching license,
- gaining an initial teaching license, or adding Reading, Junior High/Middle School, and other academic areas to currently held teaching licenses, please contact:

Dr. Maryann Dudzinski 219-464-5473 Maryann.Dudzinski@valpo.edu

Request for Info To obtain application forms, catalogs, registration, or general information about Graduate School/requirements at VU, contact: Graduate School & Continuing Education 1700 Chapel Drive Kretzmann Hall 116 Valparaiso, IN 46383 Phone: 1-800-821-7685 Email: Graduate.School@valpo.edu [Click here](#) to fill out our online "Request Information" form.

[Click here](#) to apply online.

To learn more about the Department of Education, visit their department [website](#).