Alternative Education Certification

-Frequently Asked Questions-

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Basic Information

Can you give me more information on the program?

Thank you for your interest in the Alternative Education Certification program at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

The Alternative Education Certification program consists of two courses (ED POL 534 Students at Risk and ED POL 535 Educating At-Risk Students) that when completed, allow an already DPI licensed educator to apply for an add-on certification to teach in alternative education settings for typically at-risk students. A mini-portfolio is also required, but is an embedded aspect of the two courses (i.e., the course assignments are evidence to be used for the portfolio).

We typically offer Ed Pol 534 and Ed Pol 535 online every fall, spring, and summer. For an up-to-date listing of courses you can visit: http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/

If you would like to take the courses as part of an accredited master's degree program you will need to apply to the graduate school. For more information on this please visit: http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/

If you just would like to take these courses to earn the certification and are not intending to use the courses for a graduate degree you may apply as an undergraduate university special student. Please visit the following website for information and email Dr. Raquel Farmer-Hinton (rfarhin@uwm.edu) for detailed instructions: http://www4.uwm.edu/admission/nondegree-audit.cfm

If I took the ED POL 534 and 535 courses would I qualify for the 952 Alternative Ed license?

Yes, if you’re a DPI licensed teacher and complete Ed Pol 534 and 535 with a B- or better, along with the embedded mini-portfolio, you would be eligible for the add-on license in Alternative Education.
Is it possible to enroll in Ed Pol 535 without having completed Ed Pol 534?

The courses do not have to be taken in order. You may take Ed Pol 535 before or while you are taking Ed Pol 534.

Do most people take the two classes at the same time?

Every student is different. It really depends on your personal schedule and timeline for needing to complete the courses.

Will the course be offered again in the same format?

Each semester we plan to offer both Ed Pol 534 and 535 online. For the most up-to-date information about course offerings please visit the following website (for each semester listed, the courses are found within the Educational Policy and Community Studies Department): http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/

Are these graduate or undergraduate classes?

These courses are considered to be undergraduate/graduate classes and may be taken at either status. For the most part students take these courses at the undergraduate level to save money on tuition as they just need the undergraduate level to get the certification. However, if you’re planning to take these courses as part of an accredited master’s degree you will need to take them at the graduate level. Please check with your employer to see what status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate status) is required if you plan to get reimbursed for tuition and fees.

Are there only the two classes needed for the certification? If so, when are they offered? Are both of these classes offered online?
Yes, these are the only two courses needed to gain the certification. During the courses, as a part of the coursework, you will be also required to complete assignments toward your mini-portfolio. The mini-portfolio is an embedded aspect of the two courses (i.e., the course assignments are evidence to be used for the portfolio).

Each semester we plan to offer both Ed Pol 534 and 535 online. For the most up-to-date information about course offerings please visit the following website (for each semester listed, the courses are found within the Educational Policy and Community Studies Department):
http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/

**What is the cost and are these 3 credit courses? If I am taking the courses online are they considered on campus or off campus?**

Yes, Ed Pol 534 and 535 are each 3 credit courses. When these courses are offered online they are considered to be off campus courses. The costs vary by undergraduate and graduate status. Since costs tend to change each year, it is best to check UWM’s Tuition and Fees page (select Tuition Rate Schedules and the pertinent semester) for the most up-to-date information:
http://www4.uwm.edu/bfs/depts/bursar/tuition.cfm

**I am trying to find out where Ed Pol 534 is being taught. Do you know or know how I can find out?**

You can check where classes are held in two ways. You can either check your PAWS account that you used to register for the course (you should see the courses you’ve enrolled with and location of the class upon logging in) or you may check the Schedule of Classes at:
http://www4.uwm.edu/schedule/

**Could you tell me what grade levels the alternative education certification license covers?**

The alternative education license is issued at the early adolescence-adolescence level (grades 5-12).
I don’t have a teaching license, but want to get one. Can I get my initial DPI license through your program?

Only those holding a teaching license are able to get the Alternative Education Certification. The Alternative Education Certification is just an add-on license that allows teachers to teach in alternative education settings.

If you are interested in an alternative method of getting a teaching license you can contact our Curriculum and Instruction department (414-229-4814 or cni@uwm.edu). Otherwise, if you are interested in taking these courses just to understand at-risk students better these courses are open to non-certification seeking students as well.

I am currently enrolled in a teacher education program. Can I get the add-on license concurrently by taking the two courses?

Yes, you can take the two courses along with your initial teacher certification courses and get both an initial and an add-on license at the same time.

Can I take these courses now and then enroll in a teacher education program and retroactively get the add-on license?

It would depend how long ago you took the courses. If you took them less than five years ago, they will count. If you took the courses over five years ago, contact the program coordinator, Dr. Raquel Farmer-Hinton (rfarhin@uwm.edu) to see if the courses you took will count towards the add-on certification or not. The courses are constantly updated with new information and research to ensure that the current issues with youth ‘at-risk’ are being addressed.

Applying and Enrolling

What do I need to do to enroll in these courses?

Typically there are four kinds of students that take these courses. Please identify under which category you fit and follow the steps indicated.

I am a licensed teacher and want to get my #952 add-on license to teach in an alternative education setting.

1. Complete a University Special Student Application. (Please note that there has been some confusion over items you must select
to be considered a University Special Student. Before completing the application please view the instruction sheet).

2. Generally, within 10 days of submission you will be notified by mail when you have been admitted as a non-degree seeking university special student.

3. In your admissions letter you will receive an ePanther ID and information on how to log into our online course registration system, PAWs.

4. After logging in you will see “Enrollment Dates” along the right side of the screen. If the enrollment date for the semester in which you would like to take the course has passed you may register for the courses.

5. To register for the courses click “Enroll” in the upper left area under “Academics,” click the correct semester, do a class search, enter the course subject (Ed Policy), and finish enrolling in the course.

*Note: University Special Students are non-degree seeking students and are typically not eligible for financial aid. There is no application fee for a non-degree seeking University Special Student.

*I am a licensed teacher and want to get my 952 license while working towards an accredited master’s degree. OR I am a licensed teacher and I need to take graduate courses for my professional development.*

1. You will have to apply to the graduate school for admissions into the master's program of your choice.

2. After you’re accepted you may take the two courses as part of your program.

*I am currently an enrolled student at UWM and want to take these courses to have a better understanding of alternative education settings.*

1. Log into your PAWS account to view your enrollment dates.

2. After the opening day of your enrollment period you may register for the courses.

*I am not an enrolled student at UWM and do not hold a teaching license, but want to take these courses to have a better understanding of alternative education settings.*

1. If you are not currently enrolled at UWM, you must apply before being able to register and take courses. If you do not wish to pursue a degree you may register as a University Special Student. You may follow the same steps as the first category in this section.
I got accepted into the program. Do you have an idea when I would be able to sign up for the courses?

In your admissions letter you should have received an ePanther ID and information telling you how to log into to our online course registration system, PAWS. After logging in you will see “Enrollment Dates” along the right side of the screen. If the enrollment date for the semester in which you would like to take the course has passed you may register for the courses. Students are typically allowed to register 6-8 weeks in advance of the new semester start date.

Can I register as an Undergraduate Special Student (Non-Degree) and receive the certification after completing the two courses?

Yes, this is the easiest way to apply and get accepted into the program. Please review the Application Instructions before filling out the online special student application. Remember, this is an add-on certification to your teaching license.

If I apply as a special student am I required to pay the $15 application fee?

No, you should not have to pay an application fee when applying for this program.

I applied wrong. I am considered to be a graduate student, but wanted to take the courses for undergraduate credit. What can I do?

Contact the Office of Adult and Returning Student Services at 414/229-5932 or 414/229-2222.
Taking the Courses Online

Could you please provide some information on the structure of the online version of the course? Since they’re online can I start them early?

Being an online course does not mean that they function like correspondence courses might. In fact, when the courses are offered online they tend to resemble a seminar course in that students are expected to complete readings and participate in meaningful discussions with fellow classmates via UWM’s online course platform, Desire2Learn (D2L).

I just registered for ED -Pol 535 Educating At-Risk which will be taught online. I was just wondering if I would receive information prior about what I need to do before the start of the class?

Most instructors for online courses email their students a week or so before the course begins to let them know what texts they need to purchase. If they don’t require texts to be purchased they often email students as to when the course will be available for them to view. If you do not hear from your instructor by the beginning of the semester please feel free to email them.

I am enrolled in the online course, how do I find my courses?.

To visit an online course you will need to visit D2L, our online course system. You will need to follow these steps:

1. Log into D2L using your username and password (your username and password will be the same as your ePanther ID and password that you were sent/used to enroll in the courses) at http://d2l.uwm.edu/

2. Under "My UW-Milwaukee Courses" you should see your online course(s) listed under the particular semester in which you are taking it (e.g., Spring 2011).

3. Click the name of the course to view the corresponding course site.
Alternative Education Certification #952

Do I need to have a teaching license to obtain the Alternative Education Certification?

Yes, to get the add-on 952 DPI certification you need to possess a teaching license.

If I took the ED POL 534 and 535 courses would I qualify for the 952 Alternative Ed license?

Yes, if you’re a DPI licensed teacher and complete Ed Pol 534 and 535, along with the embedded mini-portfolio incorporated in the coursework, you would be eligible for the add-on license in Alternative Education.

Could you tell me what grade levels the alternative education certification license covers?

The alternative education license is issued at the early adolescence-adolescence level (grades 5-12).

I don’t have a teaching license, but want to get one. Can I get my initial DPI license through your program?

Only those holding a teaching license are able to get the Alternative Education Certification. The Alternative Education Certification is just an add-on license that allows teachers to teach in alternative education settings.

If you are interested in an alternative method of getting a teaching license you can contact or Curriculum and Instruction department (414-229-4814 or cni@uwm.edu). Otherwise, if you are interested in taking these courses just to understand at-risk students better these courses are open to non-certification seeking students as well.
I've completed the courses and the mini-portfolio. What do I have to do to get my add-on 952 license?

Remember, in order to receive a State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) 952 license certification for Alternative Education you must have a State of Wisconsin Teaching Certificate.

Once you have completed ED POL 534 and 535 and your grades have been posted, you must:

• Fill out the Alternative Education Licensing Request Form found online here:

https://milwaukee.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_emwl7ujqCkOcptr

Your data will be uploaded to DPI’s Educator Licensing Online system and validated. It can take up to four weeks for endorsement and recommendation to DPI for licensure. After this time, you will receive an email with a date to apply for your license using DPI’s Educator Licensing Online (ELO) system.

If you have any further questions about getting your add-on license, please contact our Certification Officer, Kathy Berry, at 414-229-4721 or cert-licensing@uwm.edu

I just finished the courses and submitted by Certification and Licensing Completion Form. Can I get proof of completion for my employer?

Once your materials are received in the Certification Office and deemed to be complete a verification letter will be sent to you. Please contact our Certification Officer, Kathy Berry, at 414-229-4721 or cert-licensing@uwm.edu.