Florida Southern's Elementary Education Program Ranks First Among All Florida Private Colleges

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Annual Program Performance Report (APPR) named Florida Southern College’s Elementary Education program the best among all private colleges in the state and tied for second out of 75 public and private elementary education programs. The FLDOE annually evaluates every state-approved teacher-preparation program based on a critical analysis of teacher placement, retention, evaluation, and other such factors that attest to the quality of each institution. The ranking is based on APPR Summative Rating Scores that includes data comparing 287 education programs from 127 different institutions. The report card gives results of outcome-based performance metrics determined by the Florida Legislature through statutes and rules.

Florida Southern College was ranked as one of the top five institutions in the state of Florida for student first attempt pass rates on the Florida Teacher Certification Exam-General Knowledge Test (FTCE-GK) on all four subtests.

It is a great honor to be recognized as one of the top performers in the state of Florida!

The Florida Department of Education announced that Florida Southern College Education majors earned top scores on all parts of the FTCE-GK in comparison to all other public and private teacher preparation institutions statewide.

The Florida Teacher Certification Exam-General Knowledge Test is a rigorous exam with four subtests that all Education majors must pass in order to obtain a Florida Professional Teacher Certificate. Each subtest is ranked individually.

Florida Southern ranked number one on both the FTCE-GK Essay Exam and FTCE-GK Mathematics Exam. Florida Southern ranked number five overall among all public and private colleges and universities on the FTCE-GK Reading, as well as the FTCE-GK English exam.

These top rankings reflect the excellent preparation the FSC School of Education provides for all Education majors as they embark on their journey toward Professional Teacher Certification.

These rankings demonstrate further evidence of the positive and consequential impact that the School of Education graduates will have upon the students they will teach.

“For Florida’s students to have the learning opportunities they deserve, Florida-trained educators must have the preparation they need. This report is a major milestone for Florida, placing us again in the very top tier of states in the country in making commitments to college and career readiness for every student. I commend our teacher preparation programs for their collaboration on this great effort,” said Education Commissioner Pam Stewart.

Florida Southern College has a long and outstanding reputation for preparing future teachers. This report is further evidence of the hard work and dedication of our students, faculty, and staff, as well as our institutional credibility. FSC graduates are making a difference with the children they teach through a curriculum that embraces engaged learning and provides authentic clinical experiences from the beginning.

Dr. Tracey D. Tedder, Dean of Education
Our faculty members are passionate about preparing future teachers and educational leaders for the next generation. Florida Southern College’s School of Education is committed to implementing research-backed learning techniques that make the most powerful impact on pre-service teachers.

Students complete coursework that combines theory and practice for a hands-on experience, honing their skills through distinguished internships. Upon graduation, each student-teacher becomes eligible for a Florida Professional Teaching Certificate. This would make the student eligible to earn a Master of Education (MEd) in Transformational Curriculum and Instruction. After two years of professional teaching experience, one may pursue the Master of Education in Educational Leadership. Those interested in advancing in their field can pursue a doctoral degree in Education at Florida Southern College. The Doctor of Education is designed for individuals to make new discoveries in their field of interest including higher education, non-profit organizations, government, and other areas all while utilizing the professional skills they have acquired in our program. The Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership is designed for individuals interested in playing a critical role in leading and shaping the future of education in colleges and universities, school districts, and public and private schools. Both degrees prepare students for the highest levels of leadership with results that will make a difference in the lives of others.

I am privileged every day to witness the innovative, inspiring, and collaborative efforts our teachers put into our leadership programs. FSC’s School of Education is one of the nation’s best education schools!

Tracey D. Tedder, EdD
Dean of the School of Education,
The Hal and Marjorie Roberts Endowed Chair in Learning and Literacy
The FSC School of Education has been recognized numerous times by the Florida Department of Education for the continued high performance of our students on the Florida Teacher Certification Exam.

Elementary Education K-6
Our program curriculum equips students with the latest pedagogical innovations and time-tested best practices for classroom success. SMART technologies are integrated throughout the program, preparing students to teach in today’s state-of-the-art classrooms. Learning communities have been designed to provide education majors with teaching techniques and strategies at the Roberts Academy, where the art and science of teaching comes to life.

All education majors complete more than 370 hours of clinical work that is embedded in coursework, and they participate in a full-time internship during their final semester prior to graduation. Students work in the local school district directly with a highly qualified teacher and are supervised by an FSC faculty member.

Course concentrations are offered in STEM Education and the Orton-Gillingham Approach — a research-based instructional practice of reading that has proven effective with students with dyslexia and other reading difficulties. These techniques equip students with specialized expertise along with the option of a fifth-year graduate program that allows students to earn their Master of Education in just three semesters.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
All FSC Elementary Education majors will be prepared as a future teacher by earning eligibility for the Florida Professional Teaching Certificate and ESOL endorsement upon graduation.

Bernardo Blanco, PhD, Associate Professor of Education states, “ESOL instruction is a critical component to the academic and professional growth of our Education majors due largely to the culturally and linguistically diverse school environments in the U.S. and particularly in Florida. ESOL techniques are directly infused into the curriculum, preparing our student-teacher candidates for success.”

Reading Endorsement
Elementary Education graduates will be eligible for the Florida Department of Education Reading Endorsement upon earning their degree. This distinction will put FSC graduates ahead of the rest through the extensive preparation they will receive through five reading courses that will satisfy all state of Florida requirements for teaching elementary reading.

Throughout the teacher preparation program, clinical experiences in local K-6 public schools allow teacher candidates to work hands-on with K-6 students and professionals in the field.

The Florida Reading Endorsement is an outstanding opportunity to prepare future teachers. I have seen first-hand how the FSC School of Education continues to prepare the best future teachers. This Reading Endorsement is another example of how the School of Education prepares the very best in education!
At Polk County Public Schools, our mission is to provide a high-quality education to our students. To fulfill our mission, we need prepared, professional, talented teachers who are committed to giving their very best to their students each day. Florida Southern College produces exactly the type of teacher we are eager to hire. For this, Florida Southern is both a trusted source of outstanding educators and an invaluable partner to the school district. Go Mocs!
All Master of Education in Transformational Curriculum and Instruction courses are delivered online, which conveniently allows professional educators to complete coursework in four accelerated semesters.

Ashley Bailey, MEA ’16
First Grade Teacher, Frank E. Brigham Academy
Polk County Public School District

This environment has allowed me to collaborate with colleagues near and far from the convenience of my home. The Florida Southern Master of Education has opened my eyes to a multitude of areas within the field that I had little experience with before. As a graduate of a large university for my undergraduate degree, I cannot emphasize enough how much more personalized the virtual learning education is at Florida Southern.
FSC graduate education programs prepare students to be educational leaders and classroom innovators.

Master of Arts in Transformational Curriculum and Instruction (MAT)

Considering a move into the rewarding field of teaching? The MAT is designed for those with bachelor’s degrees in a field outside of education. If students have a degree in the arts, humanities, or sciences and want to share their passion for teaching, the MAT will prepare them for a successful career in education. Following the completion of coursework, students will apply what they’ve learned in a final capstone seminar and internship that will give them the classroom experience they need to start their career as educators.

Master of Education (MEd) in Transformational Curriculum and Instruction

This MEd program is designed for educators who currently hold a Florida Professional Teaching Certificate and is focused on further developing the advanced knowledge and accomplished practices of the most professional and career-minded teachers. The curriculum provides both practical knowledge and professional networking opportunities through partnerships with practitioners who work in schools every day.

School leadership has never been more challenging than it is now. Therefore, preparation has never been more important. FSC’s Master’s in Educational Leadership offers a blend of engaging face-to-face and online courses designed to optimize and equip students with the skills to positively impact the students and teachers they lead. With support from professors and practicing administrators, students will have the opportunity to apply theory to practice in the field. This 36-credit hour program is unique in its approach and outcomes.

Julie Hasson, EdD
Assistant Professor of Education
Program Coordinator for MEd in Educational Leadership
The Nina B. Hollis Endowed Chair in Education
Doctor of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership

Students will experience robust, active, and faculty-led collaborative projects, providing a rigorous academic program geared toward enriching their leadership, management, and motivational abilities. These skills are the keys to success in today's ever-changing world of education.

Our outstanding faculty brings a wealth of research and practical experience to the courses, preparing students to navigate today's most complex and challenges in education. This degree can increase their knowledge and build their skills to become exceptional leaders in administration, college and/or university teaching, and policy development.

A combination of online and face-to-face instruction gives students the flexibility to maintain a busy work schedule while achieving their own academic goals. By completing the course sequence — two courses per semester — students can complete all of their coursework in two years, plus a dissertation.

Doctor of Education (EdD)
The EdD program integrates the fields of education, business, and public policy to provide diverse knowledge, skills, and experiences. Doctoral students will engage in rigorous study and research under the guidance of expert and highly respected researchers, scholars, and practitioners from varied disciplines. The flexible format allows students to complete the program in two years. Qualified candidates may begin working on their dissertation after completing 20 credits so that dissertation research need not wait until students have finished all of their coursework. Graduates possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and resources to have a consequential impact on their organizations and to become exceptional leaders in administration, policy development, college and/or university teaching, or research.

Victoria Giordano, EdD
Associate Professor of Education
Program Coordinator for the EdD Program

Engaging learners in study and academic research with peers and expert faculty from varied academic backgrounds, the Doctor of Education program at Florida Southern provides a unique approach to explore ideas, problems, and issues encountered with, and design solutions for, adult learners in teaching and learning environments. Program graduates gain lifelong sources of inspiration and purpose and the knowledge and skills to create meaningful shared paths for learning for others.
In keeping with Florida Southern College’s history and reputation of excellence, the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership offers quality face-to-face and online courses. With personal support from accessible faculty, students will have the opportunity to complete their degree in 30 to 36 months. Join a committed cohort of educational practitioners in learning and research designed to optimize your skills and equip you to make that positive and consequential impact as an educational leader.

“...”

Steve Petrie, EdD
Associate Professor of Education
Program Coordinator for EdD in Educational Leadership
The Hazel H. Haley Chair in Education
The Roberts Academy Distinguished Internship Program offers something students won’t find anywhere else: a comprehensive introduction to the Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach to literacy education.

The instructional method at the Roberts Academy is a research-based, multisensory approach called Orton-Gillingham. This approach has been proven to make a significant impact on students with dyslexia and those who struggle in reading, writing, and spelling. The positive impact is evident through a student’s daily performance and test scores. Students using this approach show improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem. They begin believing in themselves, meeting their potential and seeing the possibilities of limitless success. It is inspirational and rewarding to be part of the Roberts Academy at Florida Southern College and to work with such a highly qualified and dedicated group of teachers and staff who make an immense impact on the students they teach.

*Kimberly Kelley, E4D ’17  
Associate Head of School  
Roberts Academy at Florida Southern College*
Early Learning Laboratory
For over 40 years, the Early Learning Laboratory/Preschool at Florida Southern College has provided an engaging, interactive learning environment for students and teachers.

Open to children from the Greater Lakeland community, the preschool lab provides a safe, fun, and dynamic learning environment that prepares young children for school by teaching the foundations of reading and mathematics infused with state-of-the-art instructional technology.

Education majors gain experience by working directly with preschool children, practicing under the guidance of veteran teachers. Students will design and implement age-appropriate lessons that meet Florida standards and challenge students using higher-level thinking skills.

Roberts Academy
The Roberts Academy is Florida’s only transitional school for talented children with dyslexia and one of only a few such schools in the nation. Offering a full curriculum for grades two through eight, the Academy’s mission is to prepare students with dyslexia to achieve academic success upon their return to public or private schools.

Students will gain firsthand experience in working with children who have reading difficulties through clinical coursework assisting teachers at the Roberts Academy. The Roberts Academy also offers distinguished semester-long internships to FSC education majors.

Roberts Center for Learning and Literacy
The Roberts Center for Learning and Literacy was established to train teachers how to identify learning differences among young students, especially in reading and literacy so that interventions can be implemented as early as possible.

Education majors attend workshops and seminars hosted by the Center and hear from world renowned scholars in the field of dyslexia, sensory-processing challenges, and other learning differences through the Roberts Center Lecture Series.

Teacher Workshop Programs
The Florida Southern College Teacher Workshop Program has supported thousands of teachers in earning and renewing their Florida Professional Teaching Certificate. Completely online, workshops are offered throughout the year and provide the convenience working professionals need to enrich their students’ learning and acquire additional skills and strategies proven effective through research-based techniques. Courses are approved by the Florida Department of Education and have been serving education professionals nationally and internationally for over 20 years.

Elementary Education majors in the School of Education are able to apply for the Roberts Academy Distinguished Internship Program. This program engages students in valuable teaching experiences using the Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach to literacy. Interns work with elementary and middle school students under the direction of expert Roberts Academy faculty. This internship strengthens student-teacher interactions and provides FSC Education majors the opportunity to practice and build their skills in preparing to be excellent educators. The Distinguished Internship is a one of a kind opportunity only available at Florida Southern College.

Judy Senzamici, MA
Instructor of Education, Director of Internships