

CURRICULUM POLICY

Curriculum Policy - the principles on the formation and implementation of the curriculum for the Teacher Training Program at the Faculty of Education

The Teacher Training Program at the Faculty of Education at Kagawa University consists of three courses. Students in the Early Childhood Course need over 109 credits in classes from the faculty. Students in the Elementary and Junior High School Course need more than 103 credits. Students also need 32 credits from general education classes.

A breakdown of these classes is as follows: basic specialised subjects, 2 credits; specialised subjects in basic research, over 16 credits; practical research, over 42 credits; and developmental studies, over 24 credits.

In order to undertake teaching practice which is a compulsory class in the third year, students are required to have more than 60 credits in their second year.

In the Early Childhood Education teacher training course, 141 credits or more are required for graduation. In the Elementary and Junior High School teacher training course, 135 credits or more are required for graduation.

1. Linguistic competence

We aim to improve students' language skills. These are the foundation of the general education communication classes at the university. In their second and third years, students take specialist classes. Students in the Early Childhood Education Course take Early Childhood Teaching Practice and Guidance for Early Childhood Teaching Practice classes. Students aiming for teaching licenses in elementary or junior high schools also take the Preparatory Class for Teaching Training. All students must complete the necessary teacher practice classes. These classes help students acquire skills in communicating and making presentations. In their fourth year, students acquire the specialised terminology related to their fields and also the skills to use it in writing their graduation theses and in the Childcare and Teaching Practice class.

2. Knowledge and comprehension skills as a graduate in education in the twenty-first century

In order to acquire basic knowledge about education, students take general education classes students to cultivate their viewpoints and perspectives. They also take specialised classes in basic research and the Introduction to Teaching class in their first year. In the Introduction to Teaching class, students deepen their knowledge and understanding of the field of teaching through groupwork. In their second and third years mainly, students enrol in specialised classes in their respective majors to acquire the basic knowledge of their field of specialisation. They also take classes related to basic research, practical research and developmental studies for their respective early childhood, elementary and junior high school courses. Developmental research classes focus on pedagogy and teaching methods for each major in the students' second to fourth years. These classes afford students the opportunity to experience PBL, project based learning. There is also classes offered during the students' first to third years focusing on teaching and understanding students, and finally, students write a dissertation in their final year.

3. Problem-solving and information gathering skills

Students learn the basic methods of how to identify problems and solve them in the general education Shudai B classes, Various Problems of Modern Society and the Seminar in Academic Literacy classes. In their second year, students deepen their understanding of the issues related to schools and teaching in their specialised fields and how to resolve these in Early Childhood Teaching Practice, Guidance for Early Childhood Teaching, and the Pre-Teacher Training classes. Students' abilities in exploring concrete issues in education is developed in their third and fourth years through classes before and after their teaching training, and also early childhood teaching practice classes. Students in their fourth year develop their comprehensive academic skills in their graduation dissertations with PBL, project based learning.

4. Ethical and social responsibility

Students learn how to live as citizens of the twenty-first century in the Shudai A class, Life and Careers. They also learn about ethics and social responsibility in classes such as Introduction to Teaching at the faculty, as well as Seminar in Academic Literacy, a general education class.

In the second year faculty classes, Early Childhood Teaching Practice, Guidance for Early Childhood Teaching, students in the Early Childhood Education course deepen their recognition of a teacher's ethical and societal responsibilities through direct contact with schools. Elementary School and Junior High School course students deepen their recognition of a teacher's ethical and social responsibilities through direct contact with schools and institutions in the two faculty classes, Volunteer Work at Care Facilities, and Pre-Teacher Training.

In their third and fourth years, students acquire ethical and social responsibilities, and the skills needed to act as a member of society through internships in classes before and after their teaching training, as well as their teacher training itself, and a final review seminar class in their fourth year. Volunteer activities can be taken by students in any grade. These help students learn about ethical and social responsibility by experience.

5. Regional knowledge and understanding (community-mindedness)

The Shudai C Regional Knowledge general education classes focus on motivating students' interest in their local communities. After having received a certain level of specialised education and understanding from a variety of perspectives, students take practical courses in social studies and education and as an option, Special Needs Education Teaching Practice, and deepen their knowledge of the local area and their specialised field of education. Students can deepen their understanding of the local region through taking part in the volunteer activities and intercultural exchange classes. In all these classes, students can experience a variety of teaching methods including PBL, project-based learning, teaching practice, and group work, and gain further practical understanding of the actual situation and issues facing the local community and its schools.

6. A sense of mission regarding teaching and self-development

Contents of all classes in the faculty relate to the teaching profession and a career in education. The volunteer courses open to students of each grade encourage a sense of mission for the teaching profession.

In their first year, students enrol in the faculty class Seminar in Academic Literacy and gain an understanding of schools and the teaching profession.

In their second year, the focus is on developing an understanding of children in classes in classes such as teacher training practice classes for students in the Early Childhood Education teacher training course, and a course in volunteer work at care facilities and a class for teacher trainees prior to their teaching practice for students in the Elementary and Junior High School teacher training courses.

In their third year, students deepen their knowledge and experience of the teaching profession in classes before and after their teaching training.

In their fourth year, students improve their knowledge and understanding of the teaching profession through the further teacher training classes and Special Needs Teaching Practice classes. In this way, students gain a bird's eye general overview of the teaching profession from their first year to their fourth year, with Introduction to Teaching in the first year, and wind up this process with the a final class reviewing teacher training and the teacher profession in their fourth year. This sets them up well for their careers after graduation.

Evaluation of a student's academic achievements as mentioned above is based on a strict five-point system, including GPA, the student's grade point average. The student's graduation thesis is evaluated comprehensively on its selection of the research question and its practical solutions to the issue addressed. Lecture-style classes are evaluated according to the degree the student has acquired the knowledge focused on in the class. For classes at the university and teacher practice classes outside, it is the degree to which students can apply the knowledge they have gained to the school and their classes which is evaluated.

A student's a sense of mission regarding teaching and self-development, item six listed above, is evaluated by the students themselves by means of a booklet distributed to all students in their first year. From the first year till their fourth year, students fill in and keep a record of their studies and comments on it. This booklet is used to ascertain the quality of their acquisition of the qualities necessary to be a teacher.