Licensure FAQs

1. What is “Early Childhood License”?

Candidates who complete the SEED early childhood licensure program are eligible for the Early Childhood Education, (birth-grade 2) license, which authorizes them to teach children from birth through grade two in Illinois public schools.

2. Where can I find specific information for licensure testing?

For the Early Childhood Education, (birth-grade 2) license, you must take three tests as summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>When to take</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Skills or TAP or ACT + writing or SAT</td>
<td>This test evaluates the candidate's basic skills in reading, mathematics, and writing.</td>
<td>This score will be needed prior to student teaching. If you completed the ACT+writing or SAT you may substitute the scores in for the TAP. If you choose this option must submit the scores to the State as soon as possible but prior to student teaching (the deadline for the listing of the scores on the State website will be published by the department). If you choose this option it is your responsibility to verify the scores are listed in your ELIS account.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Area Test</td>
<td>These tests address the content knowledge required for each subject area or field. Examples include mathematics, elementary education, and principal/general administration. For teacher candidates, passage of the test is required prior to student teaching. All licensure candidates must pass the relevant content-area test prior to issuance of the license.</td>
<td>All candidates are required to pass this test prior to student teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment)</td>
<td>This is a nationally available assessment of teacher candidates’ readiness to teach.</td>
<td>The edTPA is not required to receive your graduate degree but is required for recommendation to the State Board of Education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Office of Teacher Licensure provides important information regarding teaching licensure. You can find more licensure testing information in their website (http://niu.edu/educator-licensure/requirements-testing/index.shtml) For registration and
testing places/dates, visit Illinois Licensure Testing System (ICTS)’s website (https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Licensure.aspx)

3. I found that some required courses for licensure are very similar, if not the same, to what I took in another school. Is it possible that I don’t have to take them again here?

You need to contact the graduate adviser and provide necessary documents, such as copies of transcripts and course syllabi to seek a course waiver or transfer. Your faculty mentor may approve some course waivers for licensure only.

4. What is “Early Childhood Special Education Approval”?

Candidates who complete the SEED early childhood licensure emphasis are eligible to earn the early childhood special education approval by completing the following coursework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Graduate Coursework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Special Education Method</td>
<td>SESE 524: Instructional Systems for the Education of Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Special Education Assessment</td>
<td>SESE 523: Assessment in Early Childhood Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEEC 521: Educational Diagnosis and Assessment for Young Children with Special Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical and Atypical Language Development in Young Children</td>
<td>LTLA 537: Acquisition of Spoken and Written Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Community Relationships in Early Childhood Special Education</td>
<td>SESE 526: Working with Families of Young Children with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What range of classes/students can I teach with an early childhood special education approval with a Professional Educator Licensure endorsed for ECE?

Approval on top of Early Childhood Education, (birth-grade3) allows you to teach preschoolers with disabilities either in inclusive classrooms or self-contained classrooms.

6. I already have Early Childhood Education, (birth-grade3) licensure. Now, I am planning to get “Early Childhood Special Education Approval.” What do I need to do besides taking the required courses?
Taking the required courses is the only requirement, and please contact graduate adviser for additional information. There is no test for this approval.
Clinical Experience FAQs

1. I have some experiences with young children, but I am not sure if I am qualified to seek course waiver for some of clinical course.

Life experience may be substituted for part or all of pre-student teaching clinical experiences and student teaching if the following four conditions are met.

- Full time employment in the grade level and discipline for which the candidate is seeking licensure and for an appropriate length of time, as determined by the program.
- Documentation that the life-experience was a single, continuous experience that was monitored and/or evaluated at a satisfactory level of performance to meet the CAEP Standards, ISBE student teaching requirements, and program objectives.
- Letter of recommendation from the administrator of the school in which the experience was completed verifying that the candidate’s performance was equal to or greater than that of a student teacher or clinical student successfully completing a traditional experience.
- Written recommendation from the NIU licensure program supervisor that the candidate’s performance in the experience was equivalent to or greater than that expected of a candidate successfully completing the traditional student teaching or clinical experience.

Qualified professional experiences must be documented. For pre-student teaching experiences, a letter is required from the supervisor of the program in which you worked. The letter should state the following: 1) ages of the children you taught; 2) length of time in the position and average hours per week; 3) your responsibilities (should include planning and conducting activities, guiding young children, etc.); and, 4) confirmation of your satisfactory performance in the position. The letter must be signed and on organization letterhead. For the 585 Student Teaching experiences, both a letter and an evaluation are required. The letter should have the same elements as described above. The evaluation form is the Early Childhood Student Teacher Evaluation.

2. What are the clinical courses?

The State of Illinois requires that early childhood teacher candidates have different levels of clinical experience with different age groups within the licensure age range of birth to age eight (or grade three). Clinical experience includes both pre-student teaching and student teaching. Especially for those seeking an initial (first) Illinois teaching license, these clinical experiences must be thoroughly evaluated and documented. To complete clinical experiences, you have to take the following classes:
### Clinical Infant/Toddler Pre K Primary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages of Children</th>
<th>Clinical</th>
<th>Infant/Toddler</th>
<th>Pre K</th>
<th>Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>SEEC 586</td>
<td>SEEC 582</td>
<td>SEEC 582</td>
<td>SEEC 582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Observation)</td>
<td>(Pre-student teaching)</td>
<td>(Pre-student teaching)</td>
<td>(Pre-student teaching)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEEC 585A</td>
<td>SEEC 585A</td>
<td>SEEC 585B</td>
<td>SEEC 585B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Student Teaching)</td>
<td>(Student Teaching)</td>
<td>(Student Teaching)</td>
<td>(Student Teaching)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like many other courses, these clinical experience courses are not offered every semester. It is the responsibility of students to know and check when each course is offered, please see the [Course Rotation](#). In no case will an exception be granted because students plead ignorance of, or contend that they were not informed of course rotation.

#### 3. What are the requirements for each clinical course?

The following is the summary of each course, including placement and requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Responsibility of Placement</th>
<th>Requirement before your placement</th>
<th>Requirement during your placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEEC 586</td>
<td>Students in consultation with their faculty mentor</td>
<td>✓ The <a href="#">NIU School Safety for Preservice Teachers</a> Tutorial. ✓ Submit “Infant-Toddler Placement Record” form. ✓ Mandated Reporter. If you already completed a workshop or course, <strong>please provide a copy of the completed tutorial or course to the SEED graduate secretary</strong>, 162 Gabel Hall. In you need to complete a tutorial please start at the <a href="#">SEED clinical office website</a>. ✓ Criminal Background checks are completed at the location for your placement.</td>
<td>✓ Minimum of 30 contact hours of observation/participation (check with the graduate adviser to determine the number of credit hours). ✓ Submit 2-3 page reflective paper to their faculty mentor. ✓ Submit document that shows your observation dates/hours (e.g., sign-up sheet).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEC 582</td>
<td>Early childhood faculty</td>
<td>✓ The <a href="#">NIU School Safety for Preservice Teachers</a> Tutorial. ✓ Criminal Background checks are completed at the location for your placement. ✓ Mandated Reporter. If you already completed a workshop or course, <strong>please provide a copy of the completed tutorial or course to the SEED graduate secretary</strong>, 162 Gabel Hall. In you need to complete a tutorial please start at the <a href="#">SEED clinical office website</a>.</td>
<td>✓ Minimum of 30 contact hours of hands-on participation. ✓ A minimum of two weekly evaluations. ✓ A final evaluation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SEEC 583 | Clinical Office | ✓ These are due one month prior to starting the pre-k clinical. | ✓ The **NIU School Safety for Preservice Teachers** Tutorial.  
✓ Criminal Background checks are completed at the location for your placement.  
✓ Mandated Reporter. If you already completed a workshop or course, **please provide a copy of the completed tutorial or course to the SEED graduate secretary**, 162 Gabel Hall. In you need to complete a tutorial please start at the SEED clinical office website.  
✓ Contact Clinical Office at least 6-8 months before you take the course.  
✓ Attend a meeting with Clinical Office personnel to complete paper work. | ✓ Minimum of 60 contact hours of hands-on participation.  
✓ A minimum of four weekly evaluations.  
✓ A final evaluation. |
| SEEC 585A/585B | Clinical Office | ✓ Have Clinical course work completed.  
✓ Test of Academic Proficiency or ACT+writing or SAT.  
✓ The **NIU School Safety for Preservice Teachers** Tutorial.  
✓ Mandated Reporter. If you already completed a workshop or course, **please provide a copy of the completed tutorial or course to the SEED graduate secretary**, 162 Gabel Hall. In you need to complete a tutorial please start at the SEED clinical office website.  
✓ Pass the **ECE Content Area** test #206.  
✓ Criminal Background checks are completed at the location for your placement.  
✓ Complete TB test may be required by your district.  
✓ Your district | ✓ Satisfactory grade during full-time teaching experience.(8 weeks in Preschool/Kindergarten and 8 weeks in first, second, or third grade). |
✓ One year before student teaching semester, attend a meeting with Clinical Office personnel and complete paperwork to obtain a placement or to obtain permission to complete student teaching in an employment context.

The information is just a summary. Please, read the Handbook of Clinical Experience carefully. The handbook includes very specific information regarding clinical, including all the required forms.

4. According to the Handbook of Clinical Experience, students arrange their placement for SEEC 586. Are there any criteria for its placement?

Yes, you must arrange your placement in a NAEYC-accredited center, which has an infant/toddler classroom(s). Then you need to seek the approval of your faculty mentor.

5. According to Handbook of Clinical Experience, SEEC 586 requires students to submit reflection paper. Are there any specific guidelines for the paper?

You will be asked to submit 2-3 page reflective paper to their faculty mentor. During your observation, you may engage in reflective thinking about what you observe in the classroom on educational issues, such as a classroom environment, daily schedules, interaction between caregivers and children, safety and health, and relationships with family. You may discuss some of those issues in the paper, along with specific evidence/examples of your observation.

6. May I take SEEC 582 and SEEC 583 in one semester?

Yes, you may, but please note that the courses are not offered every semester. Clinical Office provides very specific information of the course on their website (http://www.cedu.niu.edu/partnership/clinical/teaching/earlychildhood.shtml). Be sure that your adviser and the clinical office are aware that you are taking the courses together because your schedule will need to be adjusted.

7. May I take SEEC 582/583 before SEEC 586?

Yes, you may complete the practicum courses in a flexible order. However, you must complete all practicum courses before you begin student teaching.

8. Where can I find the class schedules for SEEC 582, 583, and 586?

For SEEC 586, you need to meet with your faculty mentor for your placement and class requirements. For SEEC 582/583, visit the Clinical Office website to find specific
information about the courses, including course syllabi and important dates/responsibilities http://www.cedu.niu.edu/seed/clinicals/earlyChildhood/

9. How soon do I need to contact Clinical Office for my student teaching and SEEC 583?

For SEEC 583, contact Clinical Office at least 6-8 months before you take the course. Attend a meeting with Clinical Office personnel to complete paper work. For student teaching (SEEC 585A, 585B), at least one year before student teaching semester, contact Clinical Office and ask them about a meeting to complete paperwork. Clinical Office posts their meeting dates/places on their website http://www.cedu.niu.edu/seed/clinicals/earlyChildhood/

10. I am afraid that my placement will be arranged far away from my living place.

Early Childhood faculty and the Clinical Office do their best to find your placements that meet your needs; however, it often happens that your placement is a distance from your living place due to limited availability of classrooms and schools.

11. Where can I find information on how to obtain the criminal background check?

Contact the Clinical Office for the policy for the Criminal Background check. http://www.cedu.niu.edu/seed/clinicals/earlyChildhood/

12. Do I have to take the TB test whenever I take each clinical course?

TB tests are valid for one year. Students may have to repeat TB tests as needed for each clinical or student teaching.

13. Where can I find all the required forms, such as placement request forms?

The Handbook of Clinical Experience includes the following forms:

- Infant-Toddler Placement Record
- Pre-K/Primary Clinical Placement Request
- Weekly Evaluation (early childhood clinical experiences)
- Evaluation of Early Clinical Experience
- Early Childhood Student Teacher Evaluation

The Clinical Office website also provides several types of evaluation forms. Visit http://www.cedu.niu.edu/seed/clinicals/earlyChildhood/ for more information.

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