

- 3.6.1 The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. **(Post-baccalaureate program rigor)**

Judgment of Compliance

Compliance

Narrative

Albany State University's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, master's and doctoral degree programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs. Undergraduate programs at Albany State University are designed to provide sixty semester credit hours of broad general education core curriculum followed by sixty semester credit hours of courses within the major. Undergraduate education students are certified at the initial level, nursing undergraduates earn the designation "registered nurse" by completing degree requirements and passing a national certification test, and students in other disciplines graduate prepared to enter their fields of study. Graduate programs extend and enhance content knowledge acquired during the completion of the undergraduate program. The graduate programs assist post-baccalaureate students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study, teaching, and research in an environment that promotes freedom of expression, intellectual inquiry, and professional integrity. Additionally, the graduate programs provide activities that are relevant and responsive to the needs of students, while maintaining a high standard of excellence in graduate education. Quality of the university's graduate programs is substantiated by national accreditations earned in the fields of education (NCATE), business (ACBSP), nursing (NLNAC), and Public Administration (NASPAA).

Increasingly Rigorous Standards and Prerequisites for Admission

Students must document progressively more rigorous qualifications to gain admission to progressively more advanced academic programs at Albany State University. The admission requirements ensure that students are prepared to undertake the progressively more advanced curriculum required for more advanced degree levels.

Degree Level	Qualifications Required for Admission
Baccalaureate [1]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Diploma or GED • College Preparatory Curriculum completed in high school • Minimum high school grade point average of 2.0 • Minimum SAT (430 Verbal, 400 Math) or ACT (17 English, 17 Math) scores
Master's [2]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baccalaureate degree • Miller Analogies Test, Graduate

	<p>Record Exam, or Graduate Management Admissions Test scores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate teaching certificate for graduate level teachers, Nursing License for graduate level nurses, prerequisite courses in the discipline for other graduate degrees • College grade point average minimums ranging from 2.5-3.0 for regular admission
Education Specialist [3]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's degree from an accredited or approved institution • Professional certification equivalent to a master's level certification in the state of Georgia or course work in the equivalent of a master's degree in education • Graduate level grade point average of at least 3.0 • Miller Analogies Test or Graduate Record Exam scores

Admission standards and prerequisite preparation rises progressively from the baccalaureate through the educational specialist level because the course work is progressively more advanced in academic content as the curriculum for each successive degree program builds on the foundation established in the one completed before.

Students lacking pre-requisite courses may be accepted to graduate programs with the stipulation that they complete the preparatory course work in addition to courses required in the degree program. For example, the MBA degree requires 18 semester hours of pre-requisite courses, the MSN program requires a baccalaureate degree in Nursing, and the M.Ed. program requires that entering students not holding initial certification pass a Georgia teacher certification exam, and the Education Specialist program requires completion of coursework for a Master's degree in education in addition to completion of all Education Specialist course work for the degree.

Increasingly Rigorous Research Requirements

Graduate programs at Albany State University include increasingly rigorous requirements for research as student progress from the baccalaureate level to the education specialist level. The hierarchy is best documented in the College of Education, where all three levels of degrees at the university are offered. Baccalaureate level teachers focus on activities that will prepare them as entry-level teachers in Georgia's public schools. Educators at the master's level are significantly more advanced and have applied research components in their programs of study. The Education Specialist program culminates with an action research field experience where the students put their research training from earlier courses and degree programs into action with an extensive applied research project that must result in a presentation of implications for change presented to school system leaders.

Degree Program	Research Courses
B.S. in Early Childhood Education	No research courses required
B.S. in Special Education	No research courses required
M.Ed. in Special Education	EDUC 5501 Educational Research (3) A study of research methods, procedures and design, including preparation of research abstracts. Writing reports in the field of education and related areas is presented.
Ed. Specialist in Educational Leadership	EDUC 7701 Advanced Educational Research (3) A study of research methods, procedures and design, including preparation of research abstracts. Writing reports in the field of education and related areas is presented. Action research is focused on current problems in schools. EDAS 6709 Leadership Field Experience (3) <i>Pre-requisite: prior advisor approval and EDUC 7701</i> Planned research experiences of at least 120 clock hours of administration and/or instructional leadership in an elementary school, secondary school, or central office under a practicing administrator or supervisor. A publishable research project is required.

Capstone Experiences are increasingly Rigorous

Continuing with the example of Albany State University's College of Education, capstone experiences become increasingly rigorous as degree levels advance. The capstone experience for entry level teachers at the baccalaureate level is student teaching. Student teaching is required for an entry level teaching certificate and is the culminating experience of the baccalaureate education degree. Student teaching is a one-semester experience that involves observation and teaching under the direction of an approved supervising teacher in selected schools. The capstone experience at the master's level is a comprehensive examination requiring graduating students to respond effectively to three to four essay questions designed to ascertain their overall knowledge of current research, recent developments, and general principles in the student's major field of study.

Additional Differences between Undergraduate and Graduate Instruction

All graduate courses are taught by Graduate Faculty who must apply for that status and be approved by Graduate Studies to teach at that level. Graduate Faculty must be nominated by the department head and approved by the dean prior to submission of an application to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty Senate for approval.

Graduate Faculty must hold a terminal degree, have proven effectiveness in teaching based on student or peer evaluations, and demonstrate evidence of scholarly endeavors [4].

Graduate courses are significantly different from undergraduate courses in terms of content. For this reason, Albany State University does not cross-list graduate and undergraduate courses. Graduate courses cover significantly more material and assume a level of existing knowledge not necessary in undergraduate courses. Graduate courses tend to require more synthesis of ideas, more writing, and more long term project work. Additionally, graduate courses tend to have smaller class sizes enabling more personal interaction between students and faculty.

Supporting Documentation

- [1] [Admissions Requirements, ASU Undergraduate Catalog 2004-2007, pages 16-17](#)
- [2] [Admissions Requirements, ASU Graduate Catalog 2006-2009, pages 53-54](#)
- [3] [Admissions Requirements, ASU Graduate Catalog 2006-2009, pages 74-75](#)
- [4] [Graduate Faculty, Faculty Handbook, pages 43-48](#)