What degree will I earn?
Degree: Master of the Arts in Teaching (MAT)
Virginia Teaching License: Preschool – 3rd grade Early Childhood Educ. (ECED)

When does it start and how long does it take?
The program begins in the fall (August). Full-time students can complete the program in three semesters and one summer. Part time students are subject to varying timelines. Graduation is always the end of the fall semester in early December.

Who is eligible to apply?
Anyone who already holds a bachelors degree or anticipates receiving his or her degree within the year.

How many students are in the program?
Each fall approximately 15-18 candidates enter the program. If you are a full-time student, you can expect to have the same group of classmates for all of your classes.

Who are these students?
The range of students’ backgrounds is diverse. Bachelor’s degrees include business, the arts, social sciences, sciences, technological careers, and the like. Some students enter the program directly from having received their undergraduate degrees, but many students return for their Master’s degrees years after having received their undergraduate degree.

What kind of practical experience will I receive?
Each semester teacher candidates participate in area schools, one to two full days per week for the entire semester. Candidates who work as teacher aides may be permitted to use that experience to meet practicum requirements. Students who work are encouraged to seek employment that enriches their teacher education studies.

When are the classes and can I work and take classes at the same time?
Fall & Spring semester classes are held late afternoon and evening to allow candidates to work as graduate assistants, substitute teachers, or teacher aides. Summer classes are held during the second, six-week session, mid-June-July. The final fall semester includes a 12-week, full-day student teaching internship and 2 additional classes.
In order to get the most out of the graduate school experience, part time work is appropriate except during student teaching when students are expected to be FULLY available to the demands of that experience. Good financial planning will enable students to take full advantage of the opportunities within the program and the University.
Can I student teach outside the area as opposed to near Harrisonburg?
Although student teaching out of the area is permitted in certain locales, requests are not guaranteed. Students will be expected to travel to campus about 5 times during the student teaching semester.

Can I afford it?
To get the most of this experience, a loan may help you achieve your goal without other pressures and help you reach your goal sooner. The financial aid office is available to assist you. In addition to graduate tuition for 39 credits, there are textbooks, miscellaneous fees, and various tests required by the State of Virginia. See details under the “tests and fees” section.
Small departmental and college-wide scholarships are available January-February for currently enrolled students. Students are encouraged to apply for as many scholarships for which they are eligible.