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Becky Druetzler: Hi, everyone. We will get started with our webinar momentarily. We're going to give it just a minute more for those who are trying to connect, and then we'll get underway.

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Becky Druetzler: Well, again, welcome, everyone. We appreciate your interest in Ball State's online graduate programs in elementary education. My name is Becky Druetzler. I'm a Lead Student Success Specialist with Ball State Online, and I serve as the academic advisor for graduate students in the master's and Graduate Certificate programs.

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Becky Druetzler: With the departments of Elementary Education and Early Childhood Youth and Family Studies.

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Becky Druetzler: Before we get underway, a couple of housekeeping items. First of all, so that you are aware, we are recording the information session this evening, and in the next one to two days, you should receive an email as follow-up, 00:01:43.270 --> 00:01:58.019

Becky Druetzler: and you will have a link to the recording if you want to go back and review any of the information that we present. Also, we will be having a Q&A session as part of tonight's presentation, and we'll address any questions that you may have.

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Becky Druetzler: After our presentation, we ask that you use the Q&A feature, in your Zoom toolbar to enter those questions. We won't have you off of microphone so that we don't have to try to manage audio. Please use the chat only to report any technical issues. Hopefully, we will not have to encounter that,

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Becky Druetzler: but we will also use the chat to post some information, so do use the Q&A feature for any questions.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, I'd like to have, our speakers introduce themselves. Dr. Martin.

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Nicole M. Martin: Hi, everyone! My name is Nicole Martin. I am the Director of Graduate Programs in Elementary Education. I'm a faculty in the Department of Elementary Education, and I specialize in literacy. I'm really excited to be here tonight to talk to you about our graduate programs.

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Linda Taylor: And I'll just jump in. I'm Dr. Linda Taylor. I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood, Youth, and Family Studies.

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Linda Taylor: Got it all out. I teach early childhood courses.

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Linda Taylor: And I work with students who are pursuing, the focus area of early childhood in the master's program, and then some certificates, which you'll hear about in a little bit.

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Linda Taylor: So, welcome!

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Becky Druetzler: And again, my name is Becky Druetzler. I'm a Lead Student Success Specialist in Ball State Online, and I work closely with these two departments.

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Becky Druetzler: So, information that we'll cover this evening. We will tell you about the fee waiver that you qualify for having registered for this webinar. We will provide you with an overview of all of our elementary education and early childhood graduate programs. We'll provide you with some information about what makes Ball State unique and some things that we

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Becky Druetzler: We offer to support graduate students.

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Becky Druetzler: We'll review tuition costs and financial aid.

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Becky Druetzler: And finally, we'll share some information on our admission requirements and upcoming application deadlines.

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Becky Druetzler: So, regarding the fee waiver, ordinarily for an application for admission.

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Becky Druetzler: Applicants would pay a \$60 application fee, but for having registered for this webinar, those of you who are attending live, as well as those of you who are seeing the recording for the first time.

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Becky Druetzler: You are eligible for an application fee waiver on an application submitted for the spring, summer, or fall 2026. For those of you who are attending live, the application fee waiver should automatically be waived, when you apply.

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Becky Druetzler: And for those who are watching the recording of the presentation, or if you're watching live and that fee waiver doesn't automatically apply.

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Becky Druetzler: You can select, a fee waiver option that is, I attended an informational session, and then you will enter the text, that basically identifies tonight's presentation, that, it was for, graduate programs in elementary education, and today's date of October 22nd, 2025.

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Becky Druetzler: Now, Dr. Taylor will, provide us with an overview of our graduate programs.

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Linda Taylor: Thank you, Becky.

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Linda Taylor: I am just really proud of our graduate programs in elementary education, for a number of reasons, and these are just a few.

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Linda Taylor: First of all, we have one of the most customizable master's programs in the nation.

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Linda Taylor: We have many choices for some of your coursework. Now, some of it, obviously, is identified for you, but there are opportunities for you to select from between a set of courses, and really make it what you need, that will benefit you the most.

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Linda Taylor: We also have graduate certificates, those are typically 15 credit hours, that can provide you with additional credentials that you can list on a resume.

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Linda Taylor: We intentionally keep class sizes small, so average class size in our graduate programs is 20 students, because we want to interact with you. We don't want to just be sitting back waiting to see what you submit for grades. We actually want to be interacting with you in discussions,

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Linda Taylor: And... Through announcements, messages, information, so we...

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Linda Taylor: And that's very impossible to do when you have 60 or 80 students, so that's why we keep ours to a limit of about 20. We might have 22 sometimes, but...

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Linda Taylor: We do limit class sizes.

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Linda Taylor: What's most important for some people is immediate application to your classroom. We're not gonna... well, sure, we'll talk about theory, but it's not gonna be the only thing we talk about. We're gonna also talk about how can you implement the ideas associated with this theory in your classroom.

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Linda Taylor: So there's a practical application portion.

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Linda Taylor: And then, of course, the education degrees from Ball State are nationally recognized.

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Linda Taylor: I can't tell you how many conferences I go to

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Linda Taylor: where people ask where I'm from, and I'm seeing Ball State, they might know what... not know what city I'm in, but they know about the university, particularly its education programs.

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Linda Taylor: So that often gives me an opportunity to talk more about our programs, and of course, where we're located.

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Nicole M. Martin: So now that we've learned a little bit about Ball State's programs, we're going to dive into our graduate programs. We offer a number of graduate programs. This slide provides a nice diagram of the offerings that we have. At the bottom, you can see our certificate programs. We offer a certificate in early childhood program administration.

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Nicole M. Martin: Early Childhood Master Teacher Certificate, and then a Graduate Certificate in Literacy Instruction. As Dr. Taylor said, there are 15 hours, or about 5 classes.

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Nicole M. Martin: It's a great way to sort of get started with graduate education, find out kind of what is involved, and get a lot more information and build your skill set without committing to a full graduate degree.

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Nicole M. Martin: The nice thing about the certificates, all three of them, is that they fold nicely into our master's in elementary education program. So, if you get started, you like your certificate, you finish it, and you decide in a little bit that you want to come back.

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Nicole M. Martin: You can come back and you can fold all those 15 credits into your master's program. You can also pursue your master's and get this certificate as well, if you want to get the additional credential when you're doing your master's degree.

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Nicole M. Martin: At the top, you'll see our doctoral programs. We currently offer a PhD and an EDD program in elementary education, and it's aimed for people interested in elementary education, early childhood education, and literacy education. This is not the focus of tonight's webinar, however, we can certainly answer questions about the programs in our Q&A session.

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Nicole M. Martin: Before we get started talking about the master's program, we do want to make one note. So, the master's programs, our certificate programs, the actual master's program, and our PhD and EDD programs, these do not lead to teacher licensure. So, that's kind of an important distinction.

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Nicole M. Martin: Completing the programs will not lead to licensure in Indiana. We do, however, have an initial licensure program. It's a separate program. It's 24 credit hours. You can see a little bit more about it on this slide.

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Nicole M. Martin: How it folds nicely into our master's program. So, we have many students who complete the

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Nicole M. Martin: initial licensure program, the transition to teaching program, get their credentials, spend a little time in the classroom, and decide to come back to complete their master's degree. The coursework folds nicely into our master's program.

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Nicole M. Martin: But what's just important to keep in mind is that if you're seeking initial licensure, the Transition to Teaching program is the one for you. And again, although it's not the focus of our program tonight, we're happy to answer questions about it during the Q&A portion of this session.

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Nicole M. Martin: Now, we'll dive into our master's program. So, as Dr. Taylor mentioned a few slides ago, our program emphasizes customization.

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Nicole M. Martin: It's a great opportunity to learn about what really interests you. And so, people who enter the master's program can choose one of three concentration areas. You're seeing the first concentration option on the slide right now. It's those who are particularly interested in the elementary education concentration.

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Nicole M. Martin: This is a 30-credit master's program, so it's 10 courses.

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Nicole M. Martin: And the coursework is almost all specializing in further study of elementary education. You can see on the slide a sampling of some of the courses. So, we have a great course that really focuses on differentiation of instruction for

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Nicole M. Martin: all kinds of learners in the elementary classroom, how to better use data to inform teaching and learning, and how to build classroom community and restorative justice in the online

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Nicole M. Martin: Or in the elementary classroom. Our master's program is 100% online and asynchronous. We can talk a little bit more about that in a little while.

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Nicole M. Martin: This is the concentration that the T2T program folds nicely into, so if you seek your initial licensure, that would be the one to pursue when you come back.

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Nicole M. Martin: Our second concentration area is for those who are particularly interested in learning more about reading and literacy. So, like the previous program, it also is a 30-credit master's program, so that's 10 courses. It is also 100% online and asynchronous.

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Nicole M. Martin: The certificate in literacy instruction folds nicely into this, so all the coursework can be applied to this particular concentration area when you're pursuing your master's. You can see a sampling of the courses. As Dr. Taylor said, our courses are very focused on, practice and application and leadership.

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Nicole M. Martin: And so, our learners who go through this concentration develop a great deal of knowledge about literacy, but more importantly, a lot of really useful skills for optimizing children's literacy development for all types of learners.

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Nicole M. Martin: And then I'll turn our third concentration area over to Dr. Taylor to talk about.

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Linda Taylor: So, as with the first two that Dr. Martin talked about, this is also a 30-credit master's program, 10 courses, 100% online and asynchronous.

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Linda Taylor: Here we have some options to bring in those certificates that Dr. Martin mentioned earlier. We have the Certificate in Early Childhood Administration, which is 15 credits, or the Master Teacher Certificate, which is 15 credits. And those fold nicely into this early childhood concentration.

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Linda Taylor: And there are some options about where you bring in those courses. So, again, there's still flexibility there. So here you've got, an example of some of the courses, observation and assessment, because we know that we still need to be, identifying children's learning even in those young years, a course on play and creativity.

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Linda Taylor: And then, with the focus on all of the literacy development that occurs in the early years, there is a course on early literacy development. So, again, the certificates fold nicely into this.

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Linda Taylor: We recommend you choose one or the other because there is some overlap between the certificates, but they do fold in nicely.



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Nicole M. Martin: We do have some additional options for learners who are interested in some specialized topics.

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Nicole M. Martin: So, we call them focus areas, and this is a series of coursework that is taken in conjunction with either the early childhood or the elementary education concentration areas. So, what ends up happening is that about half the coursework is taken in one of these specialized areas. So, if, for example, someone's really interested in learning a lot more about teaching English to speakers of other languages.

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Nicole M. Martin: About half the coursework will be specifically focused on that, and then the other half is the elementary education, or, for some of these, the early childhood education, concentration coursework. So, those who are interested in some of these specialized topics, get a little bit of both.

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Nicole M. Martin: One important note about this, though, is that it's really difficult to do more than one of these focus areas. So, usually when learners come in and they're interested in a focus area, they choose one. So, if you are kind of leaning that way,

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Nicole M. Martin: Most feasible is to choose one and then complete. The other half of the coursework would be early childhood or elementary education.

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Linda Taylor: So what can Ball State offer you as a learner? Again, that student-faculty engagement, the connection with your instructors. Again, with a small class size, we want to make sure that you can reach out to your instructor, have conversations. I have students right now who are preparing to do a fairly in-depth project between now and the end of the semester.

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Linda Taylor: I've also offered to have individual Zoom meetings with them, to do a phone call with them if they have questions, or if they find themselves struggling, because we want you to be successful.

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Linda Taylor: We don't want you going through our program and saying, you know, I never got to know my instructors, or I was barely successful. We want you to feel successful, and so we want to support you as you're going through this program.

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Linda Taylor: Again, you have a dedicated student success specialist, which in our case is Becky, and we are very fortunate to have her. And then there is also an online advising community, so you can have resources at your fingertips. We do use Canvas as our learning management system.

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Linda Taylor: So that's always nice. You have access to university libraries. If you were in Indiana and a resident of Indiana, you can log in to the university libraries. You can check out books and have them mailed to you. You can access, online articles.

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Linda Taylor: So you have the University Libraries as a resource. It's a little bit more difficult if you live out of state, but at least you have the University Libraries if you're in-state.

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Linda Taylor: And then we provide a variety of other services. The Career Center, the Writing Center, the Learning Center, our newest center, the Speaking Center, which has a focus on public speaking.

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Linda Taylor: And disability services. So, if you are a little concerned about coming back and writing a paper in a graduate course you can get some feedback through the Writing Center.

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Linda Taylor: So again, you're not alone in doing this work. You have resources.

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Linda Taylor: And then for those who are seeking a teaching license, which again, the master's program does not offer, but if you're trying to figure out, how do I renew my teaching license now that I've got my master's degree, and I want to count that work.

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Linda Taylor: We have the Office of Teacher Education Services that can help you with your license for your renewal, particularly if you graduated from Ball State with your undergrad.

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Becky Druetzler: We receive a number of questions about tuition and costs. We know that that is something that is often on the mind of students when you're researching programs and, considering what will, not only meet your needs, but what's a good fit for you. So, our tuition is based on a per-credit assessment.

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Becky Druetzler: And these are our costs through summer of 2026. If you are an Indiana resident, tuition will be \$489 per credit.

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Becky Druetzler: That includes a base tuition rate of \$464 per credit, and then for online programs at Ball State, there is a \$25 per credit online course fee. So, the \$464 and the 25 brings us to \$489 per credit. If you are living outside of Indiana.

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Becky Druetzler: That will be \$721 per credit. The base tuition is \$696, and then adding the \$25, online course fee, brings us to \$721 per credit.

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Becky Druetzler: As an online student, your total cost per semester will include several components, one being tuition. Then all Ball State students pay a technology fee, and this is based on the total number of credits that you register for this semester. At the graduate level, if you are working full-time, and have other commitments and responsibilities.

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Becky Druetzler: It's recommended that you not try to take any more than 6 credits, per semester. That's also the minimum threshold for financial aid at the graduate level. So, with 6 or fewer credits for the semester, that would be a flat fee of \$100. And if you, would be in a position to take more than that.

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Becky Druetzler: Sometimes that happens during the summer, when our students have, potentially more time available, \$150 per semester, for 7 or more credits. And then,

additional costs can come from, those, costs and fees for books and any other educational materials that you may need, such as a laptop and other things.

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Becky Druetzler: So, regarding financial aid, our online master's students can be considered for financial aid. That is not applicable for certificates. A master's degree is a full degree, whereas a certificate, while it's an educational program and provides a credential, it doesn't meet the degree requirement for financial aid.

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Becky Druetzler: So, for master's students, Forms of aid can include loans, grants, scholarships, or employee benefits.

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Becky Druetzler: Additional sources might be state benefits, veterans' benefits, and if you have questions that are specific to financial aid.

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Becky Druetzler: We encourage you to reach out to our Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. They have many resources on their website, and in fact, that includes information

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Becky Druetzler: about the FAFSA that you would need to complete every academic year. FAFSA is the free application for student financial aid.

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Becky Druetzler: And, but there's many resources on that website, as well as information about how to arrange for an appointment to speak with someone.

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Becky Druetzler: Ball State is a member of the Federal Academic Alliance, and what the Alliance does is that it allows those who have a relationship, either through civil service or are a dependent of someone who works for the federal government, as well as retirees who are living outside of Indiana, to have reduced tuition at the same rate as in-state tuition for graduate-level courses that are taught through Ball State Teachers College.

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Becky Druetzler: Eligibility, again, applicants must be a current federal government, employee, spouses, or dependents. It can also be retirees. It's applicable only for non-Indiana residents, because the benefit is that you are eligible for in-state tuition. Students may enroll in a maximum of 12 credits per semester.

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Becky Druetzler: And you need to maintain a GPA of a 3.0 or higher within the first 9 credits and beyond, in order to continue receiving that tuition discount. We have a dedicated webpage that provides more information, and I've listed that on this slide. You can also simply go to the Ball State website and enter FAA, and you can be directed to that page.

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Becky Druetzler: Now, Dr. Taylor is going to provide you with some information about some scholarship opportunities.

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Linda Taylor: For those interested in doing the Early childhood concentration. There, is funding to assist with tuition, books, and materials. And this is through the Teach Early Childhood Indiana, which is administered by the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children.

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Linda Taylor: And so, if you are a teacher, assistant teacher, director or administrator, own your own family home childcare, or an employee meeting the following criteria, you can apply. You must be living and working in Indiana. You must be working at least 30 hours per week.

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Linda Taylor: Part-time scholarships are available with the exception of bachelor and graduate level scholarships, so you would need to be working at least 30 hours per week.

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Linda Taylor: You must be working in a licensed, legally exempt, or registered childcare setting, and you must earn \$25 or less per hour, as a teacher, teacher assistant. This eligibility condition is waived for the graduate degree scholarship, so that one you don't have to worry about.

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Linda Taylor: I also want to make you aware that, we have a very generous donor for our early childhood program, who funds and will assist with a full scholarship, I believe, for the Master Teacher Certificate.

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Linda Taylor: And so, if you are interested in applying for the Master Teacher Certificate we can put you in touch with the individual who, who sort of makes sure that, the applicants have met the requirements and that, and received the funding for that, that would cover those 15 hours of the certificate. And then, if you wanted to, you could use that funding and then use this

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Linda Taylor: the second funding, usually the TEACH funding, for the last 15 hours of the master's degree. And so, there are ways to piece things together so that you can actually not have to spend as much money out of pocket, as you might have to otherwise.

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Linda Taylor: These are just really great programs, and I'm happy to steer you to the folks who lead those programs, so that we, that you have access to that funding.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, so, if you are considering applying for one of our programs, then, here are our admission requirements and, your next steps on how to apply. So, to be considered for admission, you must hold a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited school and have earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of a 2.75.

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Becky Druetzler: Ball State University, for these particular programs, does not require you to take the GRE exam, so it is just the application, and this undergraduate GPA. You will find, our application online, if you go to the webpage for our graduate school, or

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Becky Druetzler: on many of our webpages, in the upper right-hand corner, you will have a button that says Apply Now, that will direct you to the page to get started with an application. We use one online application for all programs, and as you are creating your application.

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Becky Druetzler: you will select the program from the list of all of the programs that we offer here at Ball State. If you've indicated that you want to take an online program, then it shortens that list so that you're only seeing online programs.

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Becky Druetzler: If you are applying for both the master's program and a certificate program, you will need to complete a separate application for each program. And then, you will need to provide copies of transcripts. The master's program requires transcripts from all schools attended, even if you had credit transfer from one school to the next. This is a graduate admissions requirement, and it is a check and balance to authenticate transcripts.

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Becky Druetzler: For certificate applications, if you are only applying for a certificate, then we can accept just one transcript from the highest degree that you have earned.

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Becky Druetzler: Some important dates, in the upcoming year, so if you're considering applying for the Spring 2026 semester, the spring semester is 16 weeks. It begins on Monday, January 5th, and goes through May 1st.

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Becky Druetzler: Applicants must submit a completed application and all of your materials by Sunday, December 21st, in order to enroll for spring.

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Becky Druetzler: And I will say that, while we have this deadline, I strongly encourage you to apply prior to that date. Reason being is that we have an extended period where the university is closed between the holidays, we close on the afternoon of December 23rd, all the way through Sunday, January 4th, the day before the semester begins. So, we want to make sure that students have gotten everything in, and you have your admission decision.

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Becky Druetzler: You're able to register for classes, take care of ordering books, so that when it comes to January 5th, you are set to go, and, no, no last-minute stress, because of the way that the calendar falls.

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Becky Druetzler: So, if you're thinking of applying for the summer, our summer semesters are 10 weeks, and for 2026, the semester begins on Monday, May 11th, runs through Friday, July 17th.

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Becky Druetzler: And, Applicants must submit all materials by Sunday, April 26th in order to be able to enroll for summer. And then, for Fall 2026, this is not a typo. Our university calendar is going to be transitioning so that, the spring and fall semesters will be 15 weeks, starting with fall of 2026. 00:32:45.010 --> 00:32:54.570

Becky Druetzler: So, that fall semester begins on August 24<sup>th</sup> ends December 11th, and those who are interested in applying for that full semester must apply by Sunday, August 9th.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, we are coming to the end of our formal presentation, and so I wanted to provide contact information, while you consider your questions. I know that we may have attendees here this evening who joined us after the initial introduction. We ask that you use the Q&A feature in your Zoom taskbar, to enter any questions, and we'll get to those here shortly. I am going to provide you with a link in the chat.

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Becky Druetzler: We appreciate having feedback on our presentations, so that way we know if we are meeting your needs, if there is anything that we could be doing to make your experience better.

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Becky Druetzler: We would welcome any feedback that you have for us. So, I am going to enter a link to a survey. It's just a quick Qualtrics form.

00:34:01.520 --> 00:34:15.129

Becky Druetzler: You will also find this link when you receive your follow-up email, but if you'd like to go ahead and do that this evening, the link is there for you. And again, we really appreciate that input.

00:34:15.130 --> 00:34:32.170

Becky Druetzler: So, we'll go ahead and start with Q&A. So, our first question is for Dr. Martin, and the question is, do you need a master's degree to pursue a PhD or EDD degree?



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Nicole M. Martin: That's a great question. So, at Ball State, our programs are governed by the graduate school, and so we also need to be mindful and follow their rules, and for the doctoral programs at Ball State University, a master's degree is required.

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Becky Druetzler: Thank you.

00:34:52.739 --> 00:35:18.030

Becky Druetzler: So, our next question, and I will, I will lead on this one, and then, ask my colleagues, to add any additional information. So, the question is, is it possible to do the master's in elementary education with a special focus on emotional and behavioral disorders.

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Becky Druetzler: Or would it have to be the master's in elementary education with the concentration in elementary education to add the special focus? So, lengthy question, but I know where you're going with this. So, with those different focus areas that Dr. Martin described.

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Becky Druetzler: It's possible to do one of two things, and it really depends on your pathway, and I would encourage you to carefully consider how you are going to be using that specialization.

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Becky Druetzler: Most often, we have students, opting for the focus area and incorporating that into the master's program, and that keeps the master's degree at 10 courses, 30 credits.

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Becky Druetzler: So, in this case, if you wanted to do a focus, this master's, with the focus area in emotional and behavioral disorders, what your plan of study would include, there would be 5 courses from the elementary education concentration, and these are, this provides the framework for elementary concentration.

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Becky Druetzler: But instead of some of those courses that you would normally take if it was exclusively early child, or excuse me, elementary, five of those courses would be an approved substitution for the five courses that are part of that certificate.

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Becky Druetzler: Sometimes what we see is that students say, "I want to do both, and that is entirely possible." And in that case, you could complete a full 30-credit master's with your concentration in elementary education.

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Becky Druetzler: And you could add, any number of graduate certificates or if you are adding a content area to an existing license, there are some licensure programs that figure in there as a focus area as well. And you could do both.

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Becky Druetzler: That will extend your program to a total of 15 credits, maybe a little less than that, if it is truly a licensure program. But it really depends on, what your educational goals are, what credentials you want to earn, as part of your program. So, you can go either way, with that. But I would say most commonly, students will, try to incorporate that focus area, and stay within that 10-course, 30-credit, program plan.

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Becky Druetzler: So, Dr. Martin, would you like to add anything as far as opportunities for specialization and, those possibilities?

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Nicole M. Martin: I think that you did a fabulous job explaining the focus areas. They tend to be quite confusing.

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Nicole M. Martin: But the only, maybe, additional thing I would add is, if there is somebody who wants to do the master's and add additional certificates, which is perfectly fine and can be pursued simultaneously, the limit is not on elementary education.

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Nicole M. Martin: So, because you're pursuing the full 30 credits as well as the certificates in that particular case, it could be any of the three concentration areas. So, if you're interested in early childhood, you could do your early childhood full master's degree, and

then do additional certificates on top of it, if you chose to do both. If you want to stay within that 30, though, as Becky has said, these additional focus areas will allow you to do that. But then there's a preset list of coursework for those other 5 classes.

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Becky Druetzler: And I'll also add that, when you start adding programs, it's not free substitution.

00:39:45.610 --> 00:40:04.740

Becky Druetzler: It has to align with certain objectives that are approved for each of those individual programs. To give you an example of how somebody combined programs, we had a student recently who, some time ago, had done, our graduate,

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Becky Druetzler: I don't remember if it was the certificate or license, for gifted and talented. Those courses could roll into the master's program, so after they were away from Ball State for a couple of years, they came back.

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Becky Druetzler: added the courses, and that would be the elementary framework, you know, to obtain, that master's program. And then they decided it might be beneficial for them, where they are professionally, to do the certificate in literacy instruction. So, they completed all of those programs and, you know, with the different offerings that we have, it's possible to do all of that at Ball State.

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Nicole M. Martin: And Becky, what you were saying made me think of something else as well. So, if you are a person like the learner in the case that Becky just mentioned, Ball State actually hosts a large number of certificate programs. It's not just the ones that are listed on the side that we displayed earlier. And so, if you're thinking about doing both a master's degree and then pursuing other certificates before the degree, or after the degree, or alongside it.

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Nicole M. Martin: on top of the degree, there are a wide variety of additional topics of study that you could choose to pursue. But as Becky said, all of these programs have specified coursework. It's not just picking any topic; it's following the certificate's plan of study.

00:41:42.410 --> 00:42:05.900

Becky Druetzler: All right, our next question, and I will, I will direct this, first to Dr. Taylor, and then, Dr. Martin, you may want to add, some additional context. The question is, how do course schedules accommodate working teachers, and what is the approximate weekly workload?

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Linda Taylor: the question everybody wants to ask but was always afraid to ask. So, because the courses are asynchronous, you can work on them when you have time.

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Linda Taylor: None of the courses will require you to have a synchronous session. They may offer them, but they will not require them. So, for example, a couple of times I have offered, sort of get-to-know-you sessions where anyone could just join a Zoom meeting where I'd send out the link.

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Linda Taylor: Just to actually see and talk to their classmates, but not everybody wants to do that, or not everybody has the time. So, it was not a requirement, could not be made a requirement, but it was, again, an opportunity made available to students.

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Linda Taylor: So, really, it's a matter of what works best for you. If you're an early morning person, you might want to get up in the morning, work on some coursework, work on them over a lunch break, work on them in the evening, or, as I can tell that some of my students work on them late at night by the submission times of their assignments, I fully understand that. Sometimes I'm grading late into the night, so it's really what works best for you.

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Linda Taylor: And typically, we have students take only two courses per semester because we are expecting you to do a fair amount of reading.

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Linda Taylor: And, so for the courses I have developed over the years, there's typically reading of either articles or book chapters. I try to locate videos on the topic.

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Linda Taylor: And there may be a PowerPoint with additional information for you to review. Some... and with the expectation that students will participate also on a discussion board every week.

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Linda Taylor: So, I don't expect people to do that all in one night. You have typically, 2 weeks to complete a module. In some instances, 3 weeks to complete a module, and so you can sort of space things out into when it best fits for you.

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Linda Taylor: I think we all try to be conscious of when there are fall breaks, either at the university or within schools. I'm very conscious of what's going on with

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Linda Taylor: Thanksgiving break, knowing that schools and programs have all sorts of different lengths of Thanksgiving break. So, we try to work and make them realistic, but we do expect that students will make sure that they log in or check-in about at least once a week.

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Linda Taylor: To see what needs to be done that week, but then once you download materials, or if you have a reading and a textbook, of course all of that can be done offline. So, you're not online the full time working.

00:45:16.900 --> 00:45:42.369

Nicole M. Martin: So, to add on to what Dr. Taylor has said, our courses, one of the things we like to joke about here at Ball State is that we were doing online way before it became cool, and so almost all faculty have extensive experience teaching online, and most faculty structure the learning activities into modules, and so typically they'll open up, like, at the beginning of the week.

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Nicole M. Martin: And faculty will share, you know, here's what we're going to be doing this week. Most faculty include readings, video content, and then activities that support the learning outcomes. And then.

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Nicole M. Martin: the module will specify when specific things are due. So, across our program, modules are different lengths. So, some classes are mostly one-week module, some are even longer than... than three weeks. They might be 4 weeks or longer. It kind of depends on, what's happening, which semester it's in. And, so, and...

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Nicole M. Martin: all courses have syllabi, and most faculty will post course schedules that lay out the semester, including readings and assignments and things, so that people can put it into their planners, plan ahead, that sort of thing. The other thing that I would like to add is that

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Nicole M. Martin: As Dr. Taylor talked about earlier in the presentation; our faculty teach graduate classes. It's like a special treat, because we are highly invested in the learners who go through our programs. We care a lot about students, and so we spend a lot of time building community and creating

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Nicole M. Martin: these spaces where we can talk about our professional experiences, where we can learn from each other, where we can really think about how to apply what we're reading into practice, and how to deal with those little nuances that always come up. And as part of that, you know, this is not a self-study, kind of student-led program.

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Nicole M. Martin: The instructors are very much actively teaching and do design collaborative experiences as well. It's not for every course, it's definitely not for every project, there's lots of independent work. But, there are opportunities to get to know your colleagues. I've been teaching for a long time in the graduate program, and I often find students who find other students and become really good friends, and they start to do a lot of, you know, things professionally together, and really benefit from those rich relationships. So, that is also a part of this program as well.

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Becky Druetzler: Thank you.

00:47:59.890 --> 00:48:03.399

Nicole M. Martin: We have a couple of really great questions, so maybe we should move on.

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Becky Druetzler: So, our next question, what's the timeline to complete the master's in elementary education, if you are a full-time teacher? And I will go ahead and answer that one. So, Ball State allows students, across all disciplines to complete a master's program, over a 6-year timeline. So, there is a lot of flexibility

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Becky Druetzler: For those who may need it, programs are structured so that, with a 30-credit master's program, 10 courses, you could complete that program in about 2 years, taking 2 courses per semester.

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Becky Druetzler: And if you are applying for financial aid, you will need to be enrolled in a minimum threshold, which is going to equate to two courses in these programs. Students who are not pursuing financial aid, we have students who take courses one at a time.

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Becky Druetzler: Students may, start out, take one course in a given semester, increase that to two, and vary that throughout the program. So again, as long as you are within that 6-year timeline, you will complete, your program online. For certificates, it's slightly less than that. You have up to 5 years. 5 years to complete 5 courses, and so that is very doable.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, this next question is for both of you. We'll start with Dr. Martin. Do the professors and the faculty have classroom teaching experience?

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Nicole M. Martin: extensive, so that's one of the conditions of being hired. We always look for that. I've been on the hiring committee several times, so I can say that for sure. I think it's also important to note that even though, we do teach college classes, the faculty in the Department of Elementary Education... Oh, I'm gonna have to say ECYF, because I don't think I can get the whole name out right now.

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Nicole M. Martin: We still remain tightly connected to classrooms, so we spend a lot of time in classrooms in various capacities. So, several of our faculty serve as what are called PDS liaisons, so they partner with schools to do a variety of projects and to provide support. You know, we also go into courses as

00:50:35.350 --> 00:50:55.130

Nicole M. Martin: into schools as part of courses. We conduct research in schools and alongside schools, and many of us also do a variety of other teaching. For example, I homeschool. I have, participated in community-engaged projects where I tutor,

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Nicole M. Martin: children who are, like, 3rd grade, younger, that sort of thing. So, and I know that Dr. Taylor does quite a bit of that as well as part of her professional service work. So, even though we're teaching in college classrooms, we all have long histories with teaching, and we maintain those connections across time.

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Linda Taylor: And I would simply add that in

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Linda Taylor: For instructors in early childhood, not only do we typically have classroom experience, but many of us have experience either as directors or administrators of early childhood programs, or have taught in early childhood programs, or have worked with them as professional development schools.

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Linda Taylor: Again, so yes, we have lots of relationships that have been developed, I know that,

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Linda Taylor: There are at least 3 of us who serve on, the board of directors of local childcare programs, so we hear what's happening every month about what they're dealing with, so yes, there is lots of involvement. We feel like we have rich connections with, the education field.

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Nicole M. Martin: And Becky, may I add one more quick thing I thought of as Dr. Taylor was searching?

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Nicole M. Martin: Across our faculty, we all of us have a lot of diverse experiences, and so, you know, for example, many of us in the elementary education department have experiences in preschool, in those other kind of settings as well, even though our home is



elementary education. We have experiences in special education classrooms, we have experiences in a variety of instructional leadership positions, like coaching and specialists.

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Nicole M. Martin: And so, across your program, you will have an opportunity, to interact with faculty who have all those experiences. So, if you're an early childhood person who is taking, you know, a course from somebody in elementary education, it doesn't mean that you also won't be able to talk shop about elementary ed... Early childhood, for example.

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Nicole M. Martin: And same way, probably, for the early childhood folks as well.

00:53:08.710 --> 00:53:26.739

Becky Druetzler: All right, our next question, Melissa actually submitted a couple of questions. I'm going to start with the second question first. So, this is for Dr. Taylor, and, the question is, am I right that I can get my certificate for Master Teacher in early childhood

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Becky Druetzler: And also, the concentration for early childhood within the elementary... the elementary education master's, and that would be a total of 30 credits.

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Linda Taylor: And yes, that is correct. I thought I recognized your name.

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Linda Taylor: So it was nice to see that you've already taken some coursework with us. And so, yes, you're correct, you would need to revalidate some of those courses, and... which would basically involve

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Linda Taylor: Demonstrating that you have kept up to date on the content of those courses, and...

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Linda Taylor: we would send specific guidelines to you about what would need to be done. I will need to defer to Dr. Martin. I'm not sure if she does that initially, or if...

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Linda Taylor: I see her nodding her head yes, so we would make sure that that process would occur. And then you would actually have some flexibility, because if you would revalidate ECYF630 and ECYF640,

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Linda Taylor: You could either...

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Linda Taylor: One option, of course, would be to retake the courses, which I don't think you'd really want to do. We... and we don't encourage it. We really want people to continue expanding their skills. So you could do, if you wanted, you could do some electives with some courses that perhaps you might not take otherwise.

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Linda Taylor: And so, there are some options that you could consider.

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Becky Druetzler: And I'll just clarify, that was actually the first part of, Melissa's question, and we didn't state that, and, if you're seeing this live, you wouldn't be able to see this question box. So, Melissa asked about coursework that is outside of that 6-year timeline. So, we have that happen sometimes. Life happens. Professional goals change.

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Becky Druetzler: The university, if you've earned the coursework at Ball State, you can make a request to the academic department, really, to extend that timeline, and that whole process is referred to as revalidation.

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Becky Druetzler: There is a specific process where the department basically validates what you learned previously in those courses. So, if that is relevant to others, just know we've got a process for that.

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Becky Druetzler: And then, just to reiterate again, with those certificate courses in early childhood are part of the master's program; you're going to be taking those anyway. And the only differentiation would be; you do get to select between a few courses, just to take one of those to meet a specific requirement.

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Becky Druetzler: If you're doing a certificate, you would just select the course that aligns with that certificate program.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, the final question that we have currently, in the Q&A box, has to do with, the on-campus residency requirement. So, do two courses a semester qualify you to live on campus at Ball State?

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Becky Druetzler: I am not certain, since I advise students in online programs. My understanding is that you have to be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits, or 3 courses.

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Becky Druetzler: But I am not an expert in this area, so I would strongly recommend that you reach out to the Office of Residence Life, and they will be able to answer that question for you pretty quickly.

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Becky Druetzler: All right, we are right up against time.

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Becky Druetzler: So, you have our contact information on the screen. If there are questions that maybe you didn't want to ask in a group setting, or you think about additional questions later, do feel free to reach out. You can also contact our main office at Ball State Online, and just let them know which program or programs you are considering.

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Becky Druetzler: And they will get you, whether it's a question that's coming to me for a program that I work with, or whether it's another graduate program of interest to you, they will be sure to connect you with the person who can get that information for you. So, as a final reminder, again, in the chat, we have that link for the evaluation of tonight's presentation.

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Becky Druetzler: And, also wanted to remind you about that fee waiver. So, again, for those of you who are attending live this evening.

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Becky Druetzler: It should automatically be applied, but if it appears that it doesn't do that, you would follow the same steps as we explained for those who are viewing the recording, in that you'll have an option to select the reason for your request of the fee waiver that you attended an information session, and then you would just provide Information that identifies tonight's presentation as the webinar that you attended.

00:59:10.180 --> 00:59:14.889

Becky Druetzler: All right, well, thank you again for your interest in graduate programs at Ball State.

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Becky Druetzler: We wish you well as you consider what your next steps will be, whether it is a program with us or to do some additional research. But, whatever you decide, we wish you well in your pursuits. And again, look for that email that's coming within the next day or so with some follow-up information, and if we can be of assistance at all, don't hesitate to reach out.

00:59:42.920 --> 00:59:44.709

Becky Druetzler: Thank you, everyone, and good night.