Hello my name is Dr. Frank Stonier. I am a professor in the Department of Learning and Teaching. I first would like to congratulate you on being accepted into one of the two graduate programs we offer in Early Childhood Education. Having been admitted into the program you will be assigned an advisor. Your advisor will be able to help you with specific questions you may have and to tailor your course choices to your areas of need and interest.

So where should you begin? Our department website has a number of resources that will be relevant to your program of study. I am going to show you around and give you a few tips that may make this part of your experience a little easier. You will want to begin by taking a good look at the program sheets for your degree. Let’s get started with our Master’s degree program sheet. This is our current program sheet for the Master’s in Early Childhood Education. The program is typically 36 hours. The reason your amount could be different is if you transferred in credit from another university or enrolled in an endorsement that may add on an additional course or courses. You can see there are four main sections: required courses, professional specialization, research & assessment, and related studies & electives. There are a lot of different directions you can start but I would recommend starting with CURR 6575 and then either a course from professional specialization or possibly one of your research courses. Something else to consider is an endorsement. Classes for the endorsement can fill elective slots and certain ones can sometimes replace an appropriate professional specialization course.

If you are in the Specialist program your course of study does not have as much flexibility in choices but your path is clear. Your program is 27 hours and has 5 main areas. The five main sections are: students as learners, societal issues, classroom issue, research and inquiry, and your elective choice. You will want to take ECED 8271 and ECED 8272 early in your program. Keep in mind courses in the research and inquiry section must be taken in sequence. The second part of societal issues and your elective choices are where you get to decide what course most interests you.

Regardless of your program there are some things to keep in mind. Classes fill up and are sometimes offered only certain semesters. Plan ahead for the courses you need and want. The projected course offerings section on the department can help you make some of those decisions. Another useful tool is the class bulletin. Click on the appropriate semester and from there you can look up specific courses, their times, location, format, and the professor. When you communicate with your advisor be sure to tell them how many classes you plan to take per semester and if you have any special plans in mind, like an endorsement.

Once you know what classes you want to take you will register through Banweb. You can log in a few different ways but I prefer using myUWG as it gives you a few more options. For example in “My Campus” you can also see your Tk20 account, I will talk to you more about that in a minute. For now click on the tab labeled “Banweb”. My menu is a little different than yours but you will select “Student Services & Financial Aid” then “Registration & Fee Payment” and then “Add/Drop Classes” from there pick your semester and select your classes. Sometimes you may
have a hold on your account. There are three main categories: a financial hold where you have some unpaid fees you need to take care of, an immunization hold which can only be removed by health services, or an advisor hold like we see on the screen. Contact your advisor, they may have a few questions for you, but they can remove the advisor hold from your account.

Another piece you will need to complete your program is access to Tk20. This is basically the College of Education’s assessment and evaluation tool used for accreditation. If you completed your undergraduate program here at West Georgia you probably have an active account already as your subscription lasts for 10 years. If not, there is a fee, but you can pay for your Tk20 subscription online or at the University Bookstore. There are key assessments that you will be required to upload in several of your courses regardless of your program so be sure you have the ability to do so.

In your final semester of your program you will complete an exit exam. If you are in the master’s program you will complete a portfolio. If you are in the specialist program you will complete a comprehensive exam. Keep an eye on graduation registration and dates as you will register for graduation the semester before you actually graduate.

Again welcome and congratulations on your choice to Go West!