

Special Education MEd, Cross Categorical Disabilities Emphasis

The M. Ed. Program in Special Education explores important core knowledge in Special Education. The program's primary goal is to empower professionals as thoughtful educators who use best practices when assisting and empowering students with disabilities. Research and data-based decision-making are emphasized throughout the program. Graduate students will apply learned and evaluated research into practice in their courses, and learn to analyze multiple types of assessment data. The M.Ed. Program in Special Education consists of an initial required core of courses, a concentration area corresponding to the chosen emphasis area, and a capstone or exit course block.

When graduate students are accepted into the program, their transcripts may be reviewed, as necessary, to identify compliance with state education certification guidelines. Students who wish to be certified in the education of children with cross-categorical disabilities will be required to fulfill general certification requirements, as well as graduate coursework. Upon completion of this advanced degree, professionals will have developed an in-depth knowledge-base related to

- various learning contexts within and outside of the school setting
- the multiple influences on educational practices in schools
- the characteristics and instructional needs of learners with disabilities
- assessment strategies for monitoring instruction
- instructional best practices
- using research to inform practice in the classroom
- diversity awareness
- contexts that affect student learning
- the powerful interactions between setting events and specific learner outcomes
- a life-perspective of students with exceptional learning needs, both young children who transition into kindergarten and those transitioning into adulthood.

Required Foundation Courses

Students are required to complete the following courses within the first 15 hours of study.

TCH ED 6010	Examining History, Community and Social Justice in Education	3
ED PSY 6030	Instruction, Learning, and Assessment	3

Required Special Education Courses

ED PSY 6545	Consultation in Schools and Related Settings	3
SPEC ED 6325	Positive Behavior Interventions for Individual, Classroom and School-wide Systems	3
or SPEC ED 6437	Applied Behavior Analysis: Functional Assessment and Interventions	
SPEC ED 6415	Disability Law & Policy	3

Special Education Concentration Electives 9

Choose one of the following concentrations:

Autism and Developmental Disabilities Concentration

SPEC ED 6620	Assessment and Interventions for Children and Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder
SPEC ED 6610	Foundations of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Research to Practice
SPEC ED 6430	Characteristics and Education of Individuals with Low-Incidence Disabilities

Early Childhood Special Education Concentration

SPEC ED 6372	Screening and Diagnosis of Developmental Delays: Birth to 5 Years
SPEC ED 6462	Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education
SPEC ED 6463	Curriculum, Methods, and Materials for Early Childhood Special Ed

Cross Categorical Disabilities Concentration

Choose two courses from the following and an additional course from any concentration for a total of three courses.

SPEC ED 6315	Speech & Language Interventions that Assist Children with Disabilities
SPEC ED 6345	Characteristics and Education of Students with High-Incidence Disabilities
SPEC ED 6342	Transition Education for Adult Life
SPEC ED 6346	Reading Instruction and Intervention in Special Education
ED PSY 6542	Social-Emotional and Behavior Interventions

Required Research Courses (6 hours)

These two research courses should be taken in sequence (not concurrently) at the end of the program. Candidates will design and execute a piece of original practitioner research and present their findings in a public forum.

TCH ED 6909	Teacher Action Research I	3
TCH ED 6910	Teacher Action Research Capstone	3

Total Hours 30

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

- Interpret and apply historic and current special education laws and policies related to student identification, rights and responsibilities, access, support, and transition.
- Design student-centered programming that facilitates the active involvement and empowerment of individuals with disabilities and their families in the educational planning process.
- Describe how abilities/disabilities may interact with development and learning and apply this knowledge to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with disabilities across curricular content areas.
- Identify a variety of formal and informal assessments, data sources, and practices to implement and guide educational decisions for individuals with disabilities.
- Select, adapt, and implement a repertoire of evidence-based practices to advance learning and quality of life of individuals with disabilities.

- Collaborate with families as well as partners in the school system, service system, and community to improve student and post-school outcomes.
- Develop essential skills and dispositions (e.g., attitudes, perceptions, values, and beliefs) to guide professional practice, engage in lifelong learning, and advance positive change as leaders in classrooms and communities.
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- Utilize inclusive frameworks, strategies, and practices, including alignment of individualized education program goals, in grade level curriculum/standards and assessments within an inclusive educational environment;
- Analyze policies and research to guide the use of inclusive education evidence-based practices as well as to support advocacy skills as a leader in the field;
- Develop collaborative partnerships with families, educators, related service providers, and paraprofessionals to support academic and social inclusion for individuals with disabilities.