

# Master of Science in Education Special Education with a Concentration in Early Childhood Special Education (MSEd)

## Master of Science in Education, Special Education

TBA, Graduate Program Director

122 Child Study Center

Within the Master of Science in Education, major in Special Education, there are three, endorsement specific concentrations for those who seek both an advanced degree in special education and either initial teacher licensure or endorsement in special education. The special education graduate program is committed to a philosophy of serving as a catalyst to promote awareness, understanding, and acceptance of individuals with disabilities. The course work focuses on the improvement of the quality and scope of educational and related services available to individuals with disabilities from infancy to adulthood. *The Master of Science in Education, Special Education, Initial Licensure is offered on-line only.* For more information regarding the other programs listed below, please contact the department.

Note to students in Washington State from the Student Achievement Council (SAC) concerning the Master of Science in Education-Special Education: Eligibility for initial educator certification in Washington is based on completion of a state approved educator preparation program. This program is approved in Virginia and is authorized for field placements in Washington by the Professional Educators Standards Board. Even though you may be residing in Washington while in this program, your application for educator certification in Washington will be processed as an out-of-state application. Go to <http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/archive/outofstate> (<http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/archive/outofstate/>) for more information. Teachers are advised to contact their individual school districts as to whether or not this program may qualify for teacher advancement.

## Master of Science in Education, Special Education - General Curriculum K-12, Adapted Curriculum K-12, or Early Childhood Special Education Concentrations

The master's degree program with special education licensure prepares teachers and agency personnel to design and implement programs for individuals with disabilities in a variety of settings. This program can be completed in approximately two years and enrolled students will specify a special education concentration in General Curriculum K-12, Adapted Curriculum K-12, or Early Childhood Special Education (Birth to 5). In addition to meeting the Master of Science in Education degree requirements, this program targets the coursework required to satisfy the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) special educator licensure endorsement competencies. Due to changing national accreditation standards and state licensure regulations (i.e. assessments, certifications), the programs in teacher education are under constant revision. Any student pursuing Virginia licensure should speak with their Graduate Program Director regarding requirements.

Graduates are prepared to work effectively with children, adolescents, and adults who require special educational services. Classroom instruction is supplemented by field experiences with children, adolescents, and adults in a variety of settings. Teacher interns have been placed in children's

hospitals, special education classes in public and private facilities, regional education programs, residential psychiatric hospitals, mental health centers, and community agencies.

Graduates in special education serve as key members of child study teams and are prepared to address educational, emotional, and physical disabilities. They also find employment as educational therapists, psycho-educational diagnosticians, and special education teachers and staff members in public and private schools.

## Admission

Admission to the graduate program in special education is granted by the department's graduate program director in conjunction with special education faculty. The following requirements are necessary for admission to the master's degree program.

## Regular Admittance Requirements

1. a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution;
2. an undergraduate grade point average of 2.80 or better in an academic content area; and
3. a 400-500 word goal statement indicating why the student wishes to enroll in the special education program.

## Provisional Admittance Requirements

Provisional admittance may be offered to students with marginal grades. In this case, provisional admittance requires:

1. a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution;
2. an undergraduate grade point average of 2.70 or better in an academic content area; and
3. a 400-500 word goal statement indicating why the student wishes to enroll in the special education program.

## Curriculum Requirements

### Special Education, Licensure - Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement

The early childhood special education program is designed to prepare students to teach children from birth to age five who manifest disabilities or who are at risk of later school failure. Students endorsed in the area of early childhood special education will be eligible to teach in infant and preschool programs in both public and private settings. The program combines course work, supervised practica and internship to facilitate the integration of theory and practice in the development of evidence-based interventions applicable for infants and young children. Program practica and internship allow students opportunities to apply management, instructional and problem-solving skills in one-to-one and group settings. Students following the early childhood special education endorsement will take the prerequisite, core, and early childhood special education course blocks and teacher candidate internship.

## Curriculum

### Prerequisite Courses (or Undergraduate Minor or BS in special education)

SPED 313	Fundamentals of Human Growth and Development: Birth through Adolescence	3
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### Required Graduate Courses: Special Education Core

SPED 620	Advanced Foundations of Special Education: Legal Aspects and Characteristics	3
SPED 615	Advanced Classroom and Behavior Management Techniques for Students with Diverse Needs	3
SPED 623	Adv Instructional Design II: Curriculum Procedures and Individualized Education Planning	3
SPED 622	Advanced Collaboration and Transitions	3

SPED 626	Advanced Procedures in Reading and Writing for Students with Diverse Learning Needs	3
<b>Early Childhood Special Education Core:</b>		
SPED 504	Characteristics and Medical Aspects of Disabling Conditions	3
SPED 541	Teaching Students with Severe Physical and Sensorimotor Disabilities *	3
SPED 569	Communication/Language Development/ Intervention for Students with Significant Disabilities	3
SPED 560	Teaching Preschoolers With Diverse Abilities *	3
SPED 561	Developmental Assessment of Young Children with Diverse Abilities *	3
SPED 567	Family-Centered Practices in Early Childhood Intervention *	3
<b>Teacher Candidate Internship</b>		
Select one of the following:		9
SPED 586	Teacher Candidate Internship for Special Endorsement	
SPED 669	Directed Field Internship Special Education, K-12 **	
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>45</b>

- \* Requires a 45-hour practicum  
 \*\* Requires valid provisional, or renewable VDOE-issued teaching license

## Additional Requirements

### Fast Track Teacher Preparation Admission Policy

Please refer to the appropriate section in the undergraduate catalog.

### Continuance

Students must:

1. complete the Pre-Task Rating Form at time of admission;
2. complete the CITI Responsible Conduct of Research, Social and Behavioral Research training modules. See the Responsible Conduct of Research site (<https://www.odu.edu/impact/responsible-conduct-of-training/>) for more information;
3. maintain a grade point average of 3.00;
4. achieve a grade of B or better in all field experience practicum coursework and a grade of B- or better in all additional course work; and
5. successfully complete all competencies relative to their area(s) of emphasis.

### Exit

Program exit entails successful completion of both master's degree requirements and teacher licensure competencies. Students must:

1. maintain a grade point average of 3.00, achieve a grade of B or better in all field experience practicum coursework, and achieve a grade of B- or better in all additional course work;
2. obtain passing scores on the written comprehensive examination (with no more than one successful re-examination);
3. successfully complete either SPED 586: Teacher Candidate Internship or SPED 669: Directed Field Internship in Special Education\*
4. obtain passing scores on the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)\*\*

5. obtain passing scores on the Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary assessment (Test Code 5205) (Special Education General Curriculum K-12 only)\*\*
6. obtain certificate of completion in First Aid/AED/CPR, Dyslexia Awareness Training, Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Training, Regulations Governing the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Elementary and Secondary Schools, and Cultural Competence Training.\*\*
7. complete a Graduate Student Assessment;
8. complete the Post Task Rating Form

\*Student must hold a valid provisional, or renewable teaching license in special education from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to be eligible for SPED 669.

\*\*Due to changing national accreditation standards and VDOE licensure regulations, the special education program requirements are frequently revised. Any changes resulting from these factors supersede the program requirements described in the catalog. Students should verify current program exit requirements with the appropriate Graduate Program Director and/or program coordinator/academic advisor.

## Comprehensive Examination

All students seeking a master's degree in special education must successfully complete a written comprehensive examination during the final semester of coursework, prior to graduation. The comprehensive examination is comprised of general special education content questions and specialization questions congruent with the student's endorsement-specific academic and professional preparation. The comprehensive exam is administered only one time per semester, in October, March, and June, and students must apply to take the comprehensive examination during semester prior to graduation. Specifically, comprehensive exam applications must be submitted by December 1st for the spring semester exam, March 1 for the summer semester exam, and July 1 for the fall semester exam. See the Special Education Exit Requirements (<https://www.odu.edu/cdse/academics/sped/grad/msed-endorse/exit/>) for application. If not passed during the first administration, the comprehensive exam may be repeated **only one time**. Failure to successfully complete the comprehensive examination will preclude the awarding of the Master of Science in Education degree.

## Program Requirements

Successful completion of the master's degree requires a minimum of 30 to 33 semester hours of graduate study in special education. For all students who have successfully (C-grade or better) completed undergraduate coursework in special education, the graduate program director will review course content to determine if Virginia Department of Education teacher endorsement competencies were satisfied by previous course completion. Course(s) in special education taken at the undergraduate level that satisfy Virginia Department of Education competencies for licensure may be substituted for coursework required in the master's degree program; however, the undergraduate credit does not count as transfer graduate credit. Students enrolled in a teacher preparation program are expected to demonstrate dedication to special education students through the effective use of differentiated strategies for assessment and planning and application of evidence-based practices. Furthermore, student are expected to demonstrate behaviors indicative of effective, professional educators and reflected in the program's technical standards and professional dispositions policy.