



## Program of Study: Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education for Certified Special Educators (Not Eligible for Credential)

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### Program Description

The Master of Education in Special Education for Certified Special Educators (Not Eligible for Credential) is a program designed for any individual interested in advanced studies in special education and who is currently certified to teach special education. The format and courses of the regionally accredited program are tailored to meet the needs of the adult learner and to maximize strengths that the student already possesses. Courses are taught by experts in their respective fields who share knowledge and experience in areas of learning disabilities, mental retardation, emotional and physical disabilities, and other physical and cognitive impairments. Opportunities are provided to apply concepts, theories, and research throughout the program. Assignments within each course guide students through observational and practice based experiences. Students must have access to a K-12 special education classroom to complete the program assignments. Graduates of the program will be prepared to work with special needs populations and implement individualized educational plans to accommodate various learning needs of students with special needs.

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description	Credits
Following are required in sequence shown:			
SPE 529N	Special Education Foundations and Framework	This course orients students to the special education program, the field. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and Council for Exceptional Children Standards, which guide special education research practices, are also discussed. It includes an introduction to creating a professional portfolio.	3
SPE 540N	Special Education Litigation and Law	Participants examine legal issues, recent court decisions, and current law relating to special education. Special attention is given to compliance, student and parent rights, local state and district policies and procedures, and advocacy through community organizations.	3
SPE 525N	Educating Learners with Diverse Needs	Emphasis will be placed on definitions, etiology, characteristics, and prevalence of various exceptionalities; laws and litigation protecting the rights of students with special needs and their families; current issues affecting persons with special needs; social perceptions, assessment, inclusion, and transition; and basic curriculum accommodations and supportive services for teaching students with special needs in the general classroom.	3

Choose one area of disability:

**Mental Retardation (MR)**

SPE 552N	Characteristics of Mental Retardation (MR) and Strategies to Teach Individuals with MR	The focus of this course is to provide the teacher candidate in special education with advanced knowledge of MR, including the history with attention to law and litigation, definition, causes, and characteristics of MR in children and adults. The impact of MR on the lives of individuals and necessary support systems for quality of life are investigated and assessment techniques and effective teaching strategies are addressed. Understanding and mastery of methods appropriate for meeting the educational needs of elementary and secondary students with MR will be emphasized. Effective teaching strategies for planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction based on appropriate assessment for elementary and secondary students with MR in special and regular education classes are investigated, planned, implemented, and evaluated based on appropriate assessment. Particular attention will be given to the structure and details of the lesson plans necessary to meet the individual needs of students with MR. Practicum hours – 15. Prerequisites: Fingerprint Clearance, SPE 529N, and SPE 525N.	3
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**Learning Disabilities (LD)**

SPE 554N	Characteristics of Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) and Strategies to Teach Individuals with LD	The focus of this course is to provide the teacher candidate in special education with advanced knowledge of LD, including the history with attention to law and litigation, definition, causes, and characteristics of learning disabilities in children and adults. The cognitive processes of students with and without learning disabilities are compared, unsubstantiated explanations and false claims relating to LD investigated, and assessment techniques and effective teaching strategies are addressed. Effective teaching strategies for planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction based on appropriate assessment for elementary and secondary students with LD in special and regular education classes are investigated, planned, implemented, and evaluated based on appropriate assessment. Particular attention will be given to the structure and details of the lesson plans necessary to meet the individual needs of students with LD. Teacher candidates will teach lessons in a class for students with LD. Practicum hours – 15. Prerequisites: Fingerprint Clearance, SPE 529N, and SPE 525N.	3
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**Emotional Disabilities (ED)**

SPE 556N	Characteristics of Students with Emotional /Behavioral Disabilities (EBD) and Strategies to Teach Individuals with EBD	The focus of this course is to provide the special education teacher candidate with advanced knowledge of ED, including the history with attention to law and litigation, definition, etiology, types, and characteristics of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Teacher candidates will investigate theories and models of emotional and behavioral disorders and related treatments. Assessment techniques and the factors involved in a diagnosis of behavior and emotional disorders are also addressed. Effective and specific individual and group behavior management models, programs, strategies, and interventions for elementary and secondary students with EBD in special and regular education classes are investigated, planned, implemented, and evaluated based on appropriate assessment. Particular attention will be given to the structure and details of the behavior management plan necessary to meet the individual needs of students with ED. Practicum hours – 15. Prerequisites: Fingerprint Clearance, SPE 529N, and SPE 525N.	3
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The following are required courses:

SPE 571N	Educational Implications for Students with Physical and Health Impairments	This course provides students with knowledge of physical and other health impairments and the impact of these disabilities on the lives of individuals. Students investigate means to enhance individuals' quality of life through participation in home, school, and community activities. Special attention is given to accessibility to appropriate curricula, modifications and adaptations, and effective instructional strategies to meet individual needs.	3
SPE 570N	Action Research in Special Education	This course is designed to provide theoretical foundation and framework of action research. Special emphasis is placed on an examination of the basic principles of qualitative research methodologies, which will lead to the design of a peer-supported action-research project. The student's research project will be personalized to his or her school.	3

SPE 530N	Effective Collaborative Processes	Emphasis of this class will be placed on practical applications of skills and strategies needed in fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of educators in meeting the needs of learners with disabilities in the general education classroom. Course content will focus on strategic instruction, behavior interventions, and the development and application of modifications and/or accommodations for diverse learners. Collaborative models and professional roles/responsibilities will also be addressed. Practicum hours – 15. Prerequisites: Fingerprint Clearance.	3
SPE 535N	Diagnosis and Assessment in Special Education	This capstone course in special education is designed to incorporate issues in collaboration and communication and to synthesize the special education process from assessment to delivery of instruction (i.e., evaluation, eligibility, placement, and instructional practice). Specific skill development includes assessing students with disabilities, completing special education forms, and conducting meetings and conferences with parents and school professionals. A school-based practicum provides participants with experiences in standardized testing and case studies, problem-solving meetings, cooperative team planning, and inclusion processes. Prerequisites: SPE 529, SPE 525, Characteristics and Strategies courses for MR, LD, or ED.	3
SPE 550N	Special Education Finance	Participants investigate the policies, practices, and issues relating to special education finance at the local, state, and federal levels, including sources, legal mandates, and budgeting. Prerequisites: Required course for Certification in Special Education	3
SPE 560N	Special Education Program Development	Participants will demonstrate understanding of principles and processes of special education program development by designing, implementing, and evaluating programs for students with special needs. Prerequisites: Required courses for Certification in Special Education.	3
SPE 590N	Assistive Technology in Special Education	Participants become skilled at applying modifications and adaptations available through current low-tech and high-tech assistive devices designed to address individual needs for an appropriate education.	3
SPE 595N	Global Issues in Special Education	Participants explore special education programs and issues and in countries throughout the world and establish direct communication with special educators worldwide	3

*Total Master of Education Special Education for Certified Special Educators (Not Eligible for Credential)  
Credits: 36*