

University of Delaware

School of Education

*Master of Education (M.Ed.) in
Exceptional Children and Youth*

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Effective: Spring 2005

Part I. Program History

A. Purpose Statement

The Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Exceptional Children and Youth degree program is designed to develop professional educators committed to careers working with individuals with disabilities. Graduates are prepared to work as special education teachers, education consultants, and educational technology specialists. Areas of specialization are: (1) Elementary Special Education, (2) Secondary and Transition Special Education, (3) Special Education Technology, and (4) Severe Disabilities. The program is appropriate for teachers with certification in special education who wish to develop professionally and for individuals seeking to enter the field of special education.

B. Origin of the Program

The University's School of Education (previously the College of Education) has offered the M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth degree program for over 30 years to serve the state's need for highly skilled special educators. In 1991, the procurement of a personnel preparation grant from the U.S Office of Special Education Programs permitted the addition of the Specialization area in Special Education Technology. In 2002, in response to requirements for accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) programs, the M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth program embedded language development competencies in its Core courses. In 2003, in response to growing needs in the state, the program added the Specialization area in Severe Disabilities.

C. Administration and Faculty

The Committee on Graduate Studies in Education is the SOE-level committee that administers all the graduate programs, including the M. Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth Program. The committee is composed of five faculty members from the SOE, a graduate student member selected by the Education Graduate Association, and the Assistant Director of the SOE, who also serves as the SOE Graduate Coordinator.

The SOE is committed to the recruitment, support, and retention of full-time, tenure-line faculty members in the area of special education. Faculty members who teach graduate courses and advise graduate students in the SOE must have a doctorate or equivalent. In some instances, persons with a master's degree and special expertise in a relevant area of Education as a result of concentrated study, employment experience, or service may be recommended for graduate teaching. In such cases, the faculty member must have a record of successful teaching in the relevant area of Education, proven scholarly ability, and the endorsement of the Special Education faculty and the SOE Director.

Special Education faculty members review candidates for admission to the M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth Program, serve as advisors to candidates admitted to the program, teach courses in the program, and evaluate candidates' exhibits and other performance products.

D. Degrees Offered

The degree awarded to candidates who complete this program is an M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth. Most graduates who earn this degree seek to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their current teaching roles in Delaware public or private schools.

Part II. Admission

A. University Policy on Admission

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated minimum requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths.

B. University Admission Procedures

Applicants must submit all of the following items to the Office of Graduate Studies before admission is considered:

Completed applications are due by November 1 for admission in the subsequent Spring semester and by April 1 for admission in the subsequent Fall semester. Admission application forms are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, from the departments, and online (<http://www.udel.edu/admissions/appinfo.html>).

A \$60 nonrefundable application fee must be submitted with the application. Checks must be made payable to the University of Delaware. Applications received without the application fee will not be processed. Foreign students may utilize either a check or an International Postal Money Order to remit payment in U.S. currency.

An official transcript of all previous college records must be sent directly from the institution to the Office of Graduate Studies. Students who have attended the University of Delaware need not supply a transcript from Delaware. Transcripts issued in a language other than English must be accompanied by an official translation into English. If the rank of the student is not displayed on the transcript or diploma, an official letter of explanation and ranking from the institution where the degree was earned is required.

Applicants must submit at least three letters of recommendation. The Special Education faculty recommend that these letters be written by teaching supervisors and professors who know the applicant well.

If English is not their first language, international student applicants must demonstrate a satisfactory level of proficiency in the English language on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The TOEFL is offered by the Educational Testing Service in test centers throughout the world. TOEFL scores that are more than two years old are not acceptable. In order for a student visa to be issued, international students first must be offered admission to the University and provide evidence of adequate financial resources. The University has been authorized under federal law to enroll non-immigrant alien students. International students are required to purchase the University-sponsored insurance plan or its equivalent.

It is a Delaware State Board of Health Regulation and a University of Delaware mandate that all entering graduate students born after January 1, 1957 give proof of proper immunization for measles, mumps, and rubella. If immunization requirements are not met, the student will not be eligible to register. Specific information may be obtained from the Student Health Service at 302-831-2226.

C. Specific Requirements for Admission into the M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth

Admission decisions are made by the full-time faculty in Special Education. Students will be admitted to the program based upon enrollment availability and evidence that they meet or exceed the following minimum recommended entrance requirements:

- a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
- an undergraduate cumulative grade index of 3.0.
- a graduate cumulative grade index of 3.5 if graduate courses were taken.
- for students whose native language is not English, an officially reported TOEFL score of 600 for the paper-based test or 250 for the computer-based test.
- applicants with no prior teaching certification must submit an official copy of Praxis I scores as part of their application.
- three letters of recommendation from professors or supervisors.
- a personal statement of career objectives and interests.
- a writing sample on an important topic in the field of special education:
 - The applicant should address one of the following questions in a brief essay of 500 words or less:
 1. Select an important problem facing individuals with disabilities or the schools, teachers, parents, or other people who work with them and propose a solution to this problem.
 2. Describe an experience in your own life that influenced your decision to work with individuals with disabilities.

Part III. Degree Requirements for the M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth

A. Degree Requirements

The M.Ed. in Exceptional Children and Youth requires a minimum of 33 credits of graduate-level coursework, including 6 Core courses (18 credits) and 5 Specialization courses (15 credits). Degree candidates enter into one of the following three tracks:

1. Candidates entering the M.Ed. with Special Education Teacher Certification:

Required Core coursework	18 credits
EDUC 623, Applied Human Development in the Schools	
EDUC 679, Methods of Instructing Learners with Mild Disabilities	
EDUC 680, Educational Diagnosis	
EDUC 681, Techniques for Behavior Change	
EDUC 682, Research in Special Education	
EDUC 745, Collaborative Teaming in Special Education	
Specialization Area Coursework	15 credits
Students choose a specialization in one of the following areas: elementary, secondary, severe disabilities, and special education technology. Students take 15 credits in their area of specialization including one course in assistive or educational technology.	
Students may choose to complete a Master's Thesis for 6 credits and take an additional 9 credits of coursework to satisfy this requirement.	
TOTAL CREDITS FOR DEGREE	33 credits
Non-Registered Degree Requirements for this Concentration:	
All students will complete either a thesis (see option above) or a case study final paper as an exit requirement for this degree.	

2. Candidates entering the M.Ed. who are seeking initial certification in elementary special education:

Required Core coursework	18 credits
EDUC 623, Applied Human Development in the Schools	
EDUC 679, Methods of Instructing Learners with Mild Disabilities	
EDUC 680, Educational Diagnosis	
EDUC 681, Techniques for Behavior Change	
EDUC 682, Research in Special Education	
EDUC 745, Collaborative Teaming in Special Education	
Specialization Area Coursework	15 credits
EDUC 609, Assessment & Instruction of Reading Difficulties: Primary Grades	
EDUC 668, Assessment & Instruction of Reading Difficulties: Intermed. Grades	
EDUC 652, Intro. to Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation OR	
EDUC 653, Computer-Assisted Instruction in Remedial/Special Education OR	
EDUC 655, Assistive Technology	
EDUC 658, Discipline and Classroom Management	
One additional course selected with advisor	
TOTAL CREDITS FOR DEGREE	33 credits
Non-Registered Degree Requirements for this Concentration:	
All students will complete either a thesis (see option above) or a case study final paper as an exit requirement for this degree.	
All students in this track who are seeking initial certification are required to show evidence of having taken a state-designated content area knowledge test, such as Praxis II. This test will be considered an exit requirement, and students must take the test no later than the point at which they have earned 27 graduate credits in the program.	
All students must complete a supervised student teaching experience in order to	

be eligible for certification. Students may complete this requirement by registering for either EDUC 400, Student Teaching or for EDUC 808, Internship in Education. These credits do not count towards M.Ed. degree requirements.	
Students in this track who are seeking initial certification as an elementary special education teacher may need to complete the additional coursework below as pre-requisite courses, depending upon their previous educational background and coursework.	
EDUC 697, Education of the Exceptional Child	
EDUC 608, Teaching Reading OR EDUC 620, Foundations of Reading Instruction	
EDUC 635, Teaching Mathematics in the Elementary School	

3. Candidates entering the M.Ed. who are seeking initial certification in secondary special education:

Required Core coursework	18 credits
EDUC 623, Applied Human Development in the Schools	
EDUC 679, Methods of Instructing Learners with Mild Disabilities	
EDUC 680, Educational Diagnosis	
EDUC 681, Techniques for Behavior Change	
EDUC 682, Research in Special Education	
EDUC 745, Collaborative Teaming in Special Education	
Specialization Area Coursework	15 credits
EDUC 673, Transitions from Secondary Special Education	
EDUC 674, Instructional Methods in Secondary Special Education	
EDUC 652, Intro. to Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation OR EDUC 653, Computer-Assisted Instruction in Remedial/Special Education OR EDUC 655, Assistive Technology	
EDUC 658, Discipline and Classroom Management	
EDUC 610, Assessment in Secondary Special Education OR EDUC 628, Strategy Instruction in Reading & Writing for Students with LD	
TOTAL CREDITS FOR DEGREE	33 credits
Non-Registered Degree Requirements for this Concentration:	
All students will complete either a thesis (see option above) or a case study final paper as an exit requirement for this degree.	
All students in this track who are seeking initial certification are required to show evidence of having taken a state-designated content area knowledge test, such as Praxis II. This test will be considered an exit requirement, and students must take the test no later than the point at which they have earned 27 graduate credits in the program.	
All students must complete a supervised student teaching experience in order to be eligible for certification. Students may complete this requirement by registering for either EDUC 400, Student Teaching or for EDUC 808, Internship in Education. These credits do not count towards M.Ed. degree requirements.	
Students in this track who are seeking initial certification as an elementary special education teacher may need to complete the additional coursework below as pre-requisite courses, depending upon their previous educational background and coursework.	

EDUC 697, Education of the Exceptional Child	
EDUC 608, Teaching Reading OR	
EDUC 620, Foundations of Reading Instruction	
EDUC 635, Teaching Mathematics in the Elementary School	

B. Non-Registered Degree Requirements

Students will pursue one of two options as a final demonstration of learning:

A. Case Study Final Paper

Students will write a paper that demonstrates their ability to apply the knowledge gained in the program to educational practice. This final paper will require integration of scholarly knowledge with practical expertise and problem solving.

B. Master's Thesis

A student may desire to complete a master's thesis in place of the final paper and two of the required courses. The student must follow the approved *Policy and Guidelines for the Completion of a Master's Thesis in the School of Education*. Students will register for six credits of EDUC 869: Master's Thesis.

To be eligible to conduct thesis research, a student must have:

1. completed all core graduate courses (except those for which the thesis will be substituted) and at least half of the courses that are required in his/her Specialization area,
2. achieved a cumulative graduate grade point average of 3.3 or higher,
3. identified a faculty member in the School of Education who has agreed to supervise his/ her thesis research, and
4. received written approval from his/her faculty advisor and the faculty coordinator of the Exceptional Children Program for the degree requirements that will be waived for the master's thesis.

Part V. General Information

A. Financial Assistance

Financial assistance for full-time students in the M.Ed. program is obtained from a variety of external sources and will therefore vary in form and availability. Assistance will be awarded on a competitive basis to applicants best fitting the needs of the granting agencies and sponsoring faculty. Students receiving full stipends will be expected to work up to 20 hours per week on faculty projects and students are expected to maintain full-time status.

B. Application for Advanced Degree.

To initiate the process for degree conferral, candidates must submit an "Application for Advanced Degree" to the Office of Graduate Studies. The application deadlines are February 15 for Spring candidates, May 15 for Summer candidates, and September 15 for Winter candidates. The application must be signed by the candidate's adviser and by the Director or the Assistant Director of the School of Education. There is an application fee of \$35 for master's degree candidates and a \$95 fee for doctoral degree candidates. Payment is required when the application is submitted.

C. Graduate Grade Point Average.

Students must have a minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to be eligible for the degree. In addition, the grades in courses applied toward the degree program must equal at least 3.0. All graduate-numbered courses taken with graduate student classification at the University of Delaware are applied to the cumulative index. Credit hours and courses for which the grade is below "C-" do not count toward the degree even though the grade is applied to the overall index. Candidates should see that their instructors have submitted all final grades.

D. Time Limits for the Completion of Degree Requirements.

Time limits for the completion of degree requirements begin with the date of matriculation and are specifically expressed in the student's letter of admission. The University policy for students entering a master's degree program is ten consecutive semesters to complete the degree requirements. Students who change their degree plan and have transferred from one degree program to another degree program are given ten consecutive semesters from the beginning of the first year in the latest program.

E. Extension of the Time Limit.

An extension of time limit may be granted for circumstances beyond the student's control. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing and approved by the student's adviser and the Director or Assistant Director of the School of Education. The Director/Assistant Director will forward the request to the Office of Graduate Studies. The Office of Graduate Studies will determine the student's eligibility for a time extension and will notify the student in writing of its decision to grant an extension of time.

F. Transfer of Credit Earned as a Continuing Education Student at the University of Delaware.

Students who complete graduate credits with the classification of CEND (Continuing Education Nondegree) at the University of Delaware may use a maximum of 9 graduate credits earned with this classification toward their graduate degree. The CEND credits, grades, and quality points become a part of the student's academic record and grade point average. CEND credit can be transferred provided that: (a) the course was at the 600 or 800 level, (b) the course was taken within the time limit appropriate for the degree, (c) the course was approved by the student's adviser and the Director/Assistant Director of the School of Education, and (d) the course was in accord with the requirements for the degree.

G. Transfer of Credit from Another Institution.

Graduate credit earned at another institution will be evaluated at the written request of the student. Such a request should be submitted first to his or her advisor using a Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit form. A maximum of 9 credits required for the degree will be accepted provided that such credits: (a) were earned with a grade of no less than B-, (b) are approved by the student's adviser and the Director/Assistant Director of the School of Education, (c) are in accord with the requirements of the degree, (d) are not older than five years, and (e) were completed at an accredited college or university. The credits, but not the grades or quality points, are transferable to University of Delaware graduate records. Graduate courses counted toward a degree received elsewhere may not be used. Credits earned at another institution while the student was classified as a continuing education student at that institution are not eligible to be transferred to one's graduate degree at the University of Delaware. Credits from institutions outside of the United States are generally not transferable to the University of Delaware.

H. Transfer of Credit from the Undergraduate Division at the University of Delaware.

Students who wish to transfer credits from their undergraduate record to their graduate record may transfer a limited number by arranging with the department to have these courses approved by their instructors before the courses are taken. These courses must be at the 600-level, and the student must perform at the graduate level. They must be in excess of the total required for the baccalaureate degree, must have grades of no less than B-, and must not be older than five years. The credits, grades, and quality points will transfer.