SPECIAL EDUCATION, MASTER OF SCIENCE

Candidates for the Master of Science (MS) in Special Education may be recent college graduates or professionals experienced in fields other than teaching who wish to develop special education careers. The School of Education offers candidates the following options:

- Part-time master’s programs with various special education concentrations (Early Childhood Special Education, Mild-to-Moderate Disabilities, Severe Disabilities) leading to teacher certification (Generic Special Education). Students may begin one of these programs in any semester and have a maximum of five years to complete the program requirements.

- Part-time master’s programs in various special education concentrations that do not lead to teacher certification (for students who choose to pursue the Master of Science in Special Education degree but who do not wish to qualify for teacher certification). Students may begin one of these programs in any semester and have a maximum of five years to complete the program requirements.

Master’s Programs Leading to Teacher Certification

The following Master of Science in Special Education programs have been approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for Generic Special Education certification:

- Early Childhood Special Education (Infant/Primary)—birth through grade three.
  Note: The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this program.

- Mild to Moderate Disabilities (Elementary/Middle)—grades one through eight.

- Mild to Moderate Disabilities (Secondary/Adult)—grades six through twelve.

- Severe Disabilities—birth through grade 12.
  Note: Candidates pursuing the Severe Disabilities master’s concentration must already have acquired Generic Special Education certification.

Early Childhood Special Education (Infant/Primary Level) (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education)

(Note: The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this program)

This 39-credit program prepares teachers and related services professionals to work with infants, preschoolers, and children in grades one through three who are receiving early intervention or special education services. Students also learn techniques in working with families of young children with special needs. A combination of coursework and field experiences develops competence in legal and philosophical issues, typical and atypical child development, evaluation and assessment, curriculum and instruction, collaborative programming, and professional development.

Mild to Moderate Disabilities: Elementary/Middle and Secondary/Adult (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education)

This 39-credit program is designed for individuals who are seeking teacher certification to work with students who have mild to moderate disabilities, including learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities. Candidates can start the program at any point during the academic year (summer, fall or spring semester) and complete the program at their own pace. Candidates in the part-time program option must complete all program requirements within five years.

Special Educator certification options are available at the elementary/middle school (grades one through eight) or secondary/adult levels (grades six through twelve). The teacher certification program options provide instruction and applied experiences in legal issues, educational assessment, data-based decision making, instructional programming, behavior management, and collaborative programming among general and special educators. Students learn to apply specialized techniques within a continuum of educational settings, with a particular emphasis on urban settings.

Severe Disabilities (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education)

(Note: The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this program)

This 36-credit graduate degree prepares individuals to teach students whose educational priorities include specialized instruction and intensive support in areas of independent living and adaptive behavior. This degree also includes courses appropriate for teachers working with students identified with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The program’s curriculum addresses legal issues; instructional planning; applied behavioral programming; collaborative programming; medical and physical aspects; communication and social skills; augmentative communication instruction; motor, hearing, and vision management; community and independent living skills instruction.

Graduates of this program may be eligible to apply for Maryland special education certification (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education). In addition to completing the 36 credits of required coursework, the requirements for graduates seeking state certification include:

1. completing Reading prerequisites as specified by MSDE;
2. completing a second internship experience; and
3. passing the Praxis II in Special Education and Praxis II in Reading/Elementary exams.

Non-Certification Master’s Programs

The School of Education offers a number of program options for students not seeking certification but who wish to enhance their skills in a specialized area of special education.

Currently, the School offers three non-certification specializations:

- General Special Education Studies
  (Note: The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this program.)

- Severe Disabilities with an Emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders option

General Special Education Studies

(Note: The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this program)

The Master of Science in General Special Education Studies provides an individualized 36-39-credit program of study for individuals working in school and community organizations that support children, youth, and adults with disabilities. This program accepts certified special educators
and related services and community based professionals. Applicants must possess an academic background in special education or a closely related field and have experience working with individuals who have cognitive and/or developmental disabilities. (As part of the admissions process, applicants are required to submit proof of their initial State teacher certification in special education.)

Severe Disabilities with an Emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders Option
This 36-credit master’s degree program option prepares individuals to teach students on the autism spectrum—ages birth through adult—who have cognitive and/or developmental disabilities. (As part of the admissions process, applicants are required to submit proof of their initial State teacher certification in special education.)

Admission Requirements

Master’s Programs Leading to Teacher Certification
To be fully admitted, applicants must have earned at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and have earned a minimum cumulative average GPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0) in all previous undergraduate and graduate studies (including for incomplete programs of study and for programs still progress). Applicants must complete the online application and submit official transcripts from all accredited post-secondary institutions attended, a résumé or curriculum vitae, an essay indicating the candidate’s professional goals, and two letters of recommendation, plus achieve passing scores on one of the following tests: Praxis I/Core, SAT, ACT or GRE. (Please visit the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) website at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DEE/Certification/testing_info/praxis1.aspx to view the current state requirements.)

Non-Certification Master’s Programs
To be fully admitted, applicants must have at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university and have earned a minimum cumulative average GPA of 3.0 (out of 4.0) in all previous undergraduate and graduate studies (including for incomplete programs of study and for programs still progress). Applicants must complete an application and submit official transcripts from all accredited post-secondary institutions attended, a résumé or curriculum vitae, an essay indicating your professional goals, dispositions survey, and two letters of recommendation.

Note: In addition to fulfilling the above application requirements, applicants to the Master of Science in Special Education: General Special Education Studies are also required to submit proof of their initial State teacher certification in special education.

General Special Education Studies
Applicants must possess an academic background in special education or a closely related field and have experience working with individuals who have cognitive and/or developmental disabilities. (As part of the admissions process, applicants are required to submit proof of their initial State teacher certification in special education.)

Program Requirements

Depending on the specific concentration, students complete 36 to 39 graduate credits for their master’s degrees. Students must work with a faculty adviser to develop a program of study that includes required and elective courses. All classes are offered at the Columbia campus.

Master’s Programs Leading to Teacher Certification Internship Requirements
Students seeking State certification are required to complete two internships during their program. Prior to the first internship, students will be required to undergo a criminal background check. Students wishing to enroll in an internship course must let the special education program coordinator know at least one semester prior to the one in which they plan to complete the internship. Students are responsible for completing all requirements prior to each internship and should frequently review the information shared on the Special Education Program Community Page on Blackboard. The final internship should be completed during the last semester of classes and cannot be taken without first achieving a passing score on the Praxis II exam. Students must earn a grade of B or better in each required internship. If a student earns a grade below B in an internship, the student must repeat the internship, and earn a grade of B or A. Students may not register for any other course until they complete the repeated internship. If a student earns a grade below B in subsequent internships, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Program of Study
Depending on the specific area of concentration, students complete 36 to 39 graduate credits for their master’s degree. Students must work with a faculty adviser to develop a program of study that includes required and prerequisite courses. (Note: Students who take courses outside their approved program of study do so at their own risk—there is no guarantee that credits earned from unapproved courses will be accepted.) In addition to coursework, students must successfully complete the internships and graduate student project (with presentation), pass Praxis II and comprehensive examinations, and fulfill any other program-specific requirements prior to graduation. Upon graduation, students will be eligible to apply for Maryland State certification under the appropriate specialization area.

Early Childhood Special Education (Infant/Primary Level) (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education)
Graduates of this program are eligible for certification in generic special education in Maryland. Along with the required coursework, graduate students must achieve qualifying scores on the Praxis I/Core exam (or one of the alternative State approved tests) prior to admission and pass the Special Education Praxis II exam prior to the second internship. All students must complete two internships, a Graduate Student Project (with presentation), a Graduate Student Internship Portfolio, and pass all required Praxis and Comprehensive exams before program completion.

Program Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisite Courses</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ED.871.501</td>
<td>Introduction to Children and Youth with Exceptionalities (online course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.882.511</td>
<td>Human Growth and Development: A Lifespan Perspective</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<th>Core Courses</th>
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<tr>
<td>ED.871.510</td>
<td>Legal Aspects, Service Systems, and Current Issues in Special Education (online course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.871.512</td>
<td>Collaborative Programming in Special Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.871.513</td>
<td>Applied Behavioral Programming</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<th>Specialized Courses</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ED.872.500</td>
<td>Seminar: Current Trends and Issues in Early Childhood Special Education</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>
Required Praxis and Comprehensive exams before program completion. (with presentation), a Graduate Student Internship Portfolio, and pass all students must complete two internships, a Graduate Student Project the Special Education Praxis II exam prior to the second internship. All students must achieve qualifying scores on the Praxis/Core I exam (or education in Maryland. Along with the required coursework, graduate Graduates of this program are eligible for certification in generic special (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education) Mild to Moderate Disabilities: Elementary/Middle and Secondary/Adult (MSDE Certification—Generic Special Education) Graduates of this program are eligible for certification in generic special education in Maryland. Along with the required coursework, graduate students must achieve qualifying scores on the Praxis/Core I exam (or one of the alternative State approved tests) prior to admission and pass the Special Education Praxis II exam prior to the second internship. All students must complete two internships, a Graduate Student Project (with presentation), a Graduate Student Internship Portfolio, and pass all required Praxis and Comprehensive exams before program completion.

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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.884.502</td>
<td>Assessment of Literacy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.884.505</td>
<td>Materials for Teaching Reading (required for Elementary/Middle candidates only)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.884.500</td>
<td>(Introductory Processes and Acquisition of Reading)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concentrations**

Select one of the following:  
- Elementary/Middle Concentration (p. 3)  
- Secondary/Adult Concentration (p. 3)  

**Total Credits**

1 Prerequisite Courses for both Elementary/Middle (15 credits) and Secondary/Adult Concentrations (12 credits) (may be taken elsewhere)

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<td>Instructional Planning and Management in Special Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED.871.513</td>
<td>Applied Behavioral Programming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.871.514</td>
<td>Characteristics of Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities: Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, and Intellectual Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.874.513</td>
<td>Educational Assessment of Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities: Elementary/Middle</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.874.524</td>
<td>Spoken and Written Language: Methods for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED.874.525</td>
<td>Mathematics: Methods for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.874.526</td>
<td>Classroom Management: Methods for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED.874.541</td>
<td>Reading: Methods for Students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED.874.860</td>
<td>Mild to Moderate Disabilities Internship: Induction - Elementary/Middle</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED.874.861</td>
<td>Mild to Moderate Disabilities Internship: Culmination - Elementary/Middle</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.892.562</td>
<td>Access to General Education Curriculum with Technology Accommodations (online course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Credits**

1 Prerequisite Courses for both Elementary/Middle (15 credits) and Secondary/Adult Concentrations (12 credits) (may be taken elsewhere)
Students are responsible for completing all requirements prior to each internship and should frequently review the information shared on the Special Education Program Community Webpage on Blackboard. Students must pass the Praxis II exam prior to enrolling in second internship.

Students must earn a grade of B or better in each required internship. If a student earns a grade below B in an internship, the student must repeat the internship, and earn a grade of B or A. Students may not register for any other course until they complete the repeated internship. If a student earns a grade below B in subsequent internships, the student may be dismissed from the program.

**Program Requirements**

Depending on the specific concentration, students complete 36 to 39 graduate credits for their master’s degree. Students must work with a faculty adviser to develop a program of study that includes required and elective courses. All students must complete a Graduate Student Project (with presentation) and pass Comprehensive exams before program completion.

**General Special Education Studies**

With the approval of their faculty adviser, students may apply credits earned in two graduate certificate programs toward the Master of Science in Special Education degree with a concentration in General Special Education Studies. Students must apply for admission into the master’s program and the graduate certificates concurrently. All programs requirements must be completed within five years. Current eligible graduate certificate program offerings include:

- Advanced Methods for Differentiated Instruction and Inclusive Education
- Early Intervention/Preschool Special Education Specialist
- Education of Students with Autism and Other Pervasive Developmental Disorders
- Gifted Education

1. The School of Education is not currently accepting applications or admitting new students into this certificate program.

The following two courses are required for several of the certificates:

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<td>Legal Aspects, Service Systems, and Current Issues in Special Education (online course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED.874.830</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Course number for graduate project may differ, depending on area of specialization.

**Severe Disabilities with an Emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders Option**

**Program Plan**

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<td>ED.892.562</td>
<td>Access to General Education Curriculum with Technology Accommodations (online course)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. May be taken elsewhere.

2. The above reading courses are required for state licensure in Maryland.

**Non-Certification Master’s Programs**

**Internship Requirements**

Students will be required to complete an internship as part of their master’s program. Prior to the internship, students will undergo a criminal background check. Students wishing to enroll in an internship course must let the special education program coordinator know at least one semester prior to the one in which they plan to complete the internship.
Learning Outcomes

Master's Programs Leading to Teacher Certification

Program Goals

The goals of the School of Education's Master of Science in Special Education certification programs are to:

- Secure recognition from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and approval by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).
- Graduate highly qualified special educators, as measured by the successful completion of coursework, comprehensive exams, graduate projects and presentations, and required state Praxis exams.
- Graduate highly qualified special educators who possess the requisite competencies to effectively educate students with exceptionalities from a diverse range of backgrounds and needs in a variety of educational settings.

Program Objectives

The learning objectives of the School of Education's MS in Special Education certification programs are to:

- To prepare qualified and credentialed special education professionals who are able to apply evidenced-based strategies across settings in which students with disabilities are served.
- To provide multiple opportunities to bridge research and theory with reflective practice.
- To prepare qualified and credentialed special education professionals who possess and exhibit collaborative and ethical behaviors with students and colleagues.
- To prepare qualified and credentialed special education professionals who have acquired the knowledge to access necessary resources and the professional networks that will further their professional development and support their advocacy for children with disabilities and their families.
- To provide cutting edge research and excellent instruction, as evidenced by faculty scholarship and teaching evaluations.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for graduates of the School of Education’s MS in Special Education certification programs are measured across seven content standard areas, as outlined by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 2012).

Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences

- 1.0 Beginning special education professionals understand how exceptionalities may interact with development and learning and use this knowledge to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 1.1 Beginning special education professionals understand how language, culture, and family background influence the learning of individuals with exceptionalities.
- 1.2 Beginning special education professionals use understanding of development and individual differences to respond to the needs of individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 2: Learning Environments

- 2.0 Beginning special education professionals create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments so that individuals with exceptionalities become active and effective learners and develop emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and self-determination.
- 2.1 Beginning special education professionals through collaboration with general educators and other colleagues create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments to engage individuals with exceptionalities in meaningful learning activities and social interactions.
- 2.2 Beginning special education professionals use motivational and instructional interventions to teach individuals with exceptionalities how to adapt to different environments.
- 2.3 Beginning special education professionals know how to intervene safely and appropriately with individuals with exceptionalities in crisis.

Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge

- 3.0 Beginning special education professionals use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 3.1 Beginning special education professionals understand the central concepts, structures of the discipline, and tools of inquiry of the content areas they teach, and can organize this knowledge, integrate cross-disciplinary skills, and develop meaningful learning progressions for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 3.2 Beginning special education professionals understand and use general and specialized content knowledge for teaching across curricular content areas to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 3.3 Beginning special education professionals modify general and specialized curricula to make them accessible to individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 4: Assessment

- 4.0 Beginning special education professionals use multiple methods of assessment and data sources in making educational decisions.
- 4.1 Beginning special education professionals select and use technically sound formal and informal assessments that minimize bias.
- 4.2 Beginning special education professionals use knowledge of measurement principles and practices to interpret assessment
results and guide educational decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.

• 4.3 Beginning special education professionals in collaboration with colleagues and families use multiple types of assessment information in making decisions about individuals with exceptionalities.

• 4.4 Beginning special education professionals engage individuals with exceptionalities to work toward quality learning and performance and provide feedback to guide them.

Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies

• 5.0 Beginning special education professionals select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

• 5.1 Beginning special education professionals consider an individual's abilities, interests, learning environments, and cultural and linguistic factors in the selection, development, and adaptation of learning experiences for individual with exceptionalities.

• 5.2 Beginning special education professionals use technologies to support instructional assessment, planning, and delivery for individuals with exceptionalities.

• 5.3 Beginning special education professionals are familiar with augmentative and alternative communication systems and a variety of assistive technologies to support the communication and learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

• 5.4 Beginning special education professionals use strategies to enhance language development and communication skills of individuals with exceptionalities.

• 5.5 Beginning special education professionals develop and implement a variety of education and transition plans for individuals with exceptionalities across a wide range of settings and different learning experiences in collaboration with individuals, families, and teams.

• 5.6 Beginning special education professionals teach to mastery and promote generalization of learning.

• 5.7 Beginning special education professionals teach cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills such as critical thinking and problem solving to individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 6: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

• 6.0 Beginning special education professionals use foundational knowledge of the field and their professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, to engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession.

• 6.1 Beginning special education professionals use professional Ethical Principles and Professional Practice Standards to guide their practice.

• 6.2 Beginning special education professionals understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice.

• 6.3 Beginning special education professionals understand that diversity is a part of families, cultures, and schools, and that complex human issues can interact with the delivery of special education services.

• 6.4 Beginning special education professionals understand the significance of lifelong learning and participate in professional activities and learning communities.

• 6.5 Beginning special education professionals advance the profession by engaging in activities such as advocacy and mentoring.

• 6.6 Beginning special education professionals provide guidance and direction to paraeducators, tutors, and volunteers.

Standard 7: Collaboration

• 7.0 Beginning special education professionals collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across a range of learning experiences.

• 7.1 Beginning special education professionals use the theory and elements of effective collaboration.

• 7.2 Beginning special education professionals serve as a collaborative resource to colleagues.

• 7.3 Beginning special education professionals use collaboration to promote the well-being of individuals with exceptionalities across a wide range of settings and collaborators.