

Special Education, M.A.

Degree Offered

- Master of Arts

Nature of the Program

The graduate program in Special Education at WVU is designed to prepare professional educators to work with children and adolescents with mild/moderate disabilities including learning disabilities, emotional/behavior disorders, autism, and intellectual disabilities. This graduate level program prepares special education teachers and other professionals to engage in current research-based practices to provide high quality educational programs and services to promote academic achievement and post-school outcomes in inclusive elementary or secondary schools.

The program offers these options:

Master's degree in Special Education with emphasis in Multicategorical Special Education and Autism

- For individuals holding a WV Professional Teaching Certificate:
 - Adding an Endorsement on the Professional Teaching Certificate with Passing Praxis Scores (Based on Content Proficiency) in Grades K-6 or 5-Adult
 - Adding an Autism Endorsement on the Professional Teaching Certificate
- For individuals not holding a WV Professional Teaching Certificate:
 - To apply for a Professional Teaching Certificate under the pathway WVDE Alternative Certification
- For those out of state check with your State Department of Education to determine how this program meets state standards for certification

PROGRAM DELIVERY FORMAT

This program is offered entirely online.

GRADUATION AND COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum time to complete most certification or degree programs in special education is:

- Two (2) calendar years at the rate of six (6) credits per semester including summer (part-time study – recommended for students who are working full time and/or have extensive family responsibilities).
- One and one half (1.5) (Three semesters including summer) calendar years at the rate of twelve (12) credits per semester (full-time study-recommended for students who are not employed and/or have minimal family responsibilities).

The maximum time to complete a graduate degree program at WVU (including all transferred courses) is eight (8) years

Admissions for 2026-2027

REGULAR ADMISSION

Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with minimum GPA of 2.5.

Major Code: 5543

Master of Arts

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required.		
A grade of B- or higher is required in all graduate coursework		
SPED 500	Legal/Educational Foundations: Special Education	3
SPED 501	Academic Interventions for Special Needs	3
SPED 609	Technology Applications for Special Needs	3
SPED 650	Learning Characteristics:Autism	3
SPED 652	Educational Interventions: Autism	3
SPED 665	Mathematics for Special Needs	3
SPED 666	Reading for Special Needs	3
LE 622	Disciplinary Literacy	3
C&I 602	Curriculum and Teaching Principles	3

C&I 688	Classroom Organization and Management	3
Total Hours		30

Suggested Plan of Study (Full-time Study)

This plan is designed for full-time students who have no other major responsibilities or other students who wish to complete the program more quickly and believe they can manage the workload.

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
SPED 500		3 LE 622		3 C&I 602	3
SPED 609		3 SPED 501		3 C&I 688	3
SPED 650		3 SPED 652		3 SPED 666	3
		SPED 665		3	
		9		12	9

Total credit hours: 30

NOTE: Courses may be completed in any order and students may start the program in any semester.

Suggested Plan of Study (Part-time Study)

This plan is designed for part-time students who are working full time and have other family responsibilities.

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
SPED 500		3 SPED 501		3 LE 622	3
C&I 602		3 C&I 688		3 SPED 666	3
		6		6	6

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
SPED 650		3 SPED 652	3
SPED 609		3 SPED 665	3
		6	6

Total credit hours: 30

NOTE: Courses may be completed in any order and students may start the program in any semester.

Major Learning Outcomes

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education Program believes that students with mild/moderate disabilities including autism have a right to equitable, appropriate, and high quality education programs and services designed to meet their unique needs in inclusive schools and community settings; special educators play a critical role in the education of children with mild/moderate disabilities including autism as co-instructors in inclusive general education classrooms, primary instructors in resource rooms or special classes, or as consultants to the classroom teacher; and these individuals and families should be empowered to make decisions about services and supports required to succeed academically, socially, and as a part of the citizenry.

This program has been designed so that program graduates can accomplish the following learning outcomes:

1. provide high quality educational services to children and adolescents with mild/moderate disabilities including autism in inclusive classrooms and resource rooms in elementary and secondary schools;
2. demonstrate knowledge and application of current evidence-practices as exemplified by reputable research and professional standards to deliver individualized instruction to develop academic and social skills;
3. collaborate with other professionals and agencies in delivery of services and engage in individual and systems advocacy for individuals and their families, and empower individuals and families to participate in program planning and decision making; and
4. reflect in and on practice and respond responsibly to the legal, ethical, social, and cultural issues encountered when working with individuals with mild/moderate disabilities including autism and their families in today's world.