Autism Spectrum Disorders

Degree Offered

- Master of Arts with a major in Autism Spectrum Disorders (THIS PROGRAM IS CURRENTLY CLOSED TO ADMISSIONS)

The Master of Arts program in Autism Spectrum Disorders is designed to prepare professional educators to work with children and adults with autism spectrum disorders and pervasive developmental disabilities. This graduate level program prepares special education teachers and other disability services professionals to engage in current research-based practices to provide high quality educational programs and services in elementary and secondary schools or in community service agencies. WVU is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), while the program is approved as a teacher education program leading to teaching certification by the West Virginia Department of Education, accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and nationally recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children.

The program offers these options:

1. Master's degree in Special Education with certification in Autism Grades K-6 or 5-Adult (or the equivalent in other states)
2. Master's degree only in Special Education with emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders

PROGRAM DELIVERY FORMAT

This program is offered entirely ONLINE throughout the United States and in approved international locations.

RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

To maintain ACTIVE student status, students must enroll in at least one (1) course during the effective term of admission and also at least two (2) courses every year. Students who fail to sustain enrollment will be converted to inactive status and will be required to reapply to the university and program and meet any additional new requirements in effect at that time. Students are expected to comply with all academic and conduct policies as outlined in the WVU Graduate Catalog, in the WVU Student Handbook, and on the Department of Special Education website.

Retention in the program and/or graduation is based on SATISFACTORY PROGRESS or maintaining a GPA of 3.0 with a grade of A or B in ALL required courses. A grade of Incomplete will only be approved for emergency situations; all requirements must be completed BEFORE the end of the next academic semester. Students who DO NOT clear the grade of Incomplete by the deadline will be assigned a grade of FAIL by the instructor immediately after the due date.

Students who do NOT earn a grade of A or B in a required course will be required to RE-TAKE THE COURSE to be eligible for the culminating practicum or culminating project.

Students who do NOT maintain a GPA of 3.0 (includes courses with grade of Incomplete) in a given semester MAY be placed on PROBATION and permitted one (1) additional semester to increase the GPA to 3.0.

Students whose GPA is too low to be raised by a probationary period OR who do NOT obtain a GPA of 3.0 after the probationary period will be subject to DISMISSAL from the program.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty will be assigned 0 points for the assignment or exam for the first offense, an F for the course for the second offense, and dismissed from the program for the third offense. Students dismissed from a program will NOT be permitted to re-apply to ANY special education program.

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 (part-time study – recommended for students who are working full time and/or have extensive family responsibilities)

-ONE AND ONE HALF (1.5) calendar years at the rate of NINE (9) 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.

REGULAR ADMISSION

REGULAR admission is granted ONLY WHEN ALL these criteria are met:

Requirements for ALL graduate programs:

--Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution with minimum GPA* of 3.00 out of 4.0;
Autism Spectrum Disorders

--passing scores on a nationally standardized test of academic ability (Praxis Core or GRE or MAT) - contact program for current minimum scores and waiver conditions
--Permission for Field/Clinical Experiences (see Program Application Form) completed by a school administrator.

NOTE: SCHOOL SYSTEMS MAY REQUIRE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND FORMAL BOARD APPROVAL PRIOR TO PLACEMENT.

ADDITIONAL special requirements for certification plus degree programs only:
--PRAXIS Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core) passing scores; scores may be waived in some circumstances - contact program personnel for current minimum scores

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
The individual who is not a native speaker of English must also meet these requirements:

   • Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score - contact program personnel for current guidelines
   • Personal interview and writing sample to document fluency needed for success in courses and field experiences

NOTE: U.S. VISA CAN NOT BE ISSUED FOR ONLINE PROGRAMS BUT STUDENTS CAN ENROLL AS RESIDENTS IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES.
INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE LEGAL RESIDENT ALIENS MAY PARTICIPATE IN ONLINE PROGRAMS IF THEY VERIFY THEIR RESIDENT STATUS.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION
PROVISIONAL admission** MAY be considered under SOME circumstances IF ALL other criteria are met:
--Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution with minimum GPA* of 2.75+ out of 4.0
--Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution with minimum GPA* of 2.50+ out of 4.0 ONLY IF:
   a. undergraduate degree transcript documents minimum GPA of 3.0 in final 30 credits; OR
   b. graduate transcript documents at least 18 credits leading to teaching certification with minimum GPA 3.25; OR
   c. prior Master’s degree in education or closely related area with minimum GPA 3.25

NOTE: UNDERGRADUATE COURSES ONLY ARE COUNTED IN CALCULATING THE GPA. APPLICANTS WITH LOW GPA’S MAY BE ABLE TO RAISE THEIR UNDERGRADUATE GPA BY TAKING ADDITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE COURSES BEFORE APPLYING.

NOTE: Provisional admission is contingent upon maintaining GPA of 3.0 and grades of A or B (and/or making up any identified deficiencies) within the first 9 credits or within 2 semesters, whichever comes first.

Applications submitted before the due date with all supporting documentation are eligible for EARLY ADMISSION. Applications that are incomplete will be rejected. Applicants who meet all regular admission criteria will be admitted automatically to the program. Applicants who meet criteria for provisional admission are ONLY considered IF additional openings remain at that point. Under NO circumstances will ANY admission requirement be waived. Dual enrollment is only permitted in exceptional circumstances.

The WVU Application for Graduate Admission is available at https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/fl_ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=wvugrad.
The Department of Special Education Program Application Form can be obtained at sped@mail.wvu.edu.
For assistance in completing applications, please contact sped@mail.wvu.edu or 304-293-3450

Application Submission Process
Applications for admission beginning FALL semester: DUE AUGUST 1
Applications for admission beginning SPRING semester: DUE JANUARY 1
Applications for admission beginning SUMMER semester: DUE MAY 1

Rolling admissions processing policy means that applications for admissions are processed and a decision is made as soon as all application materials are available, and applicants are notified immediately after the application review has been completed.

Master of Arts

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS
A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required
A grade of B or higher is required in all graduate coursework

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 500</td>
<td>Legal/Educational Foundations: Special Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 603</td>
<td>Classroom/Behavior Management for Special Needs</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 609</td>
<td>Technology Applications for Special Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 650</td>
<td>Learning Characteristics:Autism</td>
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SPED 652  
Educational Interventions: Autism  
3

SPED 659  
Culminating Practicum: Autism Spectrum Disorders  
or  
SPED 680  
Culminating Project  
6

SPED 663  
Collaborative-Consultative Inclusion Strategies  
3

SPED 666  
Reading for Special Needs  
3

RDNG 622  
Content Area Literacy Instruction  
3

Select one of the following:  
3

SPED 667  
Elementary Content Methods  
3

SPED 668  
Secondary Content Methods  
3

Electives  
3

SPED 601  
Academic Interventions for Special Needs  
3

SPED 611  
Early Learning Curriculum: Early Intervention  
3

SPED 612  
Responsive Intervention: Early Intervention  
3

SPED 616  
Behavior Guidance/Support: Early Intervention  
3

SPED 630  
Intro Low Vision/Blindness  
3

SPED 635  
Teaching Students With Low Vision/Blindness  
3

SPED 636  
Teaching Students With Vision/Multiple Impairments  
3

SPED 665  
Mathematics for Special Needs  
3

SPED 670  
Gifted Learners: Identification and Development  
3

SPED 674  
Support for Special Populations in Gifted Education  
3

Total Hours  
36

* Required for students pursuing certification

NOTE: Students seeking certification for grades 5-Adult must also complete fifteen credit hours of course work in at least one academic content area (biology, English, general science, mathematics, or social studies).

**Suggested Plan of Study**

**First Year**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Hours Spring</th>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 670</td>
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**Second Year**

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<td>SPED 679</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 680</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
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Total credit hours: 36

**Major Learning Outcomes**

**AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS**

The Department of Special Education believes that children, adolescents, and adults with an autism spectrum disorder have a right to appropriate and adequate services to meet their needs in the home, inclusive preschool, inclusive school, and community settings; they and their families should be empowered to make decisions about services and supports without undue interference from service providers; and they deserve programs that develop skills enabling them to participate fully in family, preschool, school, and community life and enjoy civil rights and personal freedoms as responsible citizens in a free society.

The M.A. degree program has been designed so that graduates can accomplish the following learning outcomes:
• promote academic achievement and self-determination by individuals with autism through design of individualized interventions and provision of appropriate supports
• demonstrate knowledge and application of current evidence-practices as exemplified by reputable research and professional standards to deliver instruction in inclusive environments in public schools and other community agencies
• 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
• reflect in and on practice and respond responsibly to the legal, ethical, social, and cultural issues encountered when working with young children, children, adolescents and adults with an autism spectrum disorder in today’s world