

# SPECIAL EDUCATION, ED.S.

Special education graduate programs are designed to help bring improvements to the educational services offered to exceptional children. Courses of study leading to the Educational Specialist (EdS) degree and Class AA professional educator certification in the education of exceptional children are listed below:

Traditional Class AA programs are available in

- collaborative education
- early childhood special education
- gifted and talented

## Admission

In addition to meeting the Graduate School's admission requirements, a student interested in the EDS program must have earned a master's degree with appropriate prerequisite Class A certification.

In addition to meeting admission requirements for the Graduate School and the College of Education, students interested in the special education programs should also be aware of the admission requirements established by the Alabama Department of Education.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

## Program Requirements

### Collaborative (K-6, 6-12), Class AA

This course listing applies to candidates having appropriate prior certification who begin this program June 1, 2017. Candidates earning graduate credit prior to this date may elect to utilize this program. Candidates must present a GPA of at least 3.50 on all courses in the program, with no grade below a C. Credits used for the previous Class A support certificate may not be used for this program.

For admission, applicants must hold valid master's level certification in a teaching field. Candidates admitted to the Class AA program without prior Class A certification in collaborative or an approved area of special education must take the following courses in addition to the coursework below: SPE 590, SPE 591 or SPE 592, SPE 594, SPE 501 (or the equivalent), and SPE 596. Up to three semester hours of the prerequisite work may be used to meet the elective requirements in this program. Passing scores on the appropriate Praxis subject assessment(s) are required if changing areas of certification.

Code and Title	Hours
<b>Curriculum and Teaching:</b>	
SPE 613 Consult Proc Spe Progs	3
<b>Foundations of Professional Studies:</b>	
(Choose ONE of these SDE approved diversity courses.)	3
BEF 503 History Of Amer Educn	
BEF 507 Sociology Of Education	
BEF 534 Multicultural Education	
BEF 575 Found Educn Through Film	
BEF 607 Readings In Soc Of Ed	
BEF 650 Critical Race Theory In Educ	
BEF 667 Multicult Soc Ed Leadershp	
BEF 681 Ethics And Education	
<b>Educational Research:</b>	
BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ	3

BER 631 Inqry As Interp: Qual I	3
BER 660 Eval I:Theory & Practice	3

<b>Teaching Field:</b>	
SPE 623 Issues in Collaborative Education	3
SPE 624 Adv. Curr. Workshop: Collab.	3
SPE 616 Adv. Professional Development	3
SPE 617 SPE Leadership	3
SPE 606 Topical Seminar In Spe	3

<b>Additional requirements/electives:</b>	
Advisor approved elective	3
SPE 500 is required if a special education survey course was not part of the undergraduate program or another graduate program.	0-3

**Total Hours** 33-36

### Early Childhood Special Education (P-3), Class AA

This course listing applies to candidates having appropriate prior certification who begin this program June 1, 2017. Candidates earning graduate credit prior to this date may elect to utilize this program. Candidates must present a GPA of at least 3.50 on all courses in the program, with no grade below a C. Credits used for the previous Class A support certificate may not be used for this program.

For admission, applicants must hold valid master's level certification in a teaching field. Candidates admitted to the Class AA program without prior Class A certification in early childhood special education must take the following courses in addition to the coursework below: SPE 576 (or its equivalent), SPE 571, SPE 578, SPE 594, and SPE 579. Up to three semester hours of the prerequisite work may be used to meet the elective requirements in this program. Passing scores on the appropriate Praxis subject assessment(s) are required if changing areas of certification.

Code and Title	Hours
<b>Required courses:</b>	
SPE 613 Consult Proc Spe Progs	3
<b>Foundations of Professional Studies:</b>	
(Choose ONE of these SDE approved diversity courses.)	3
BEF 503 History Of Amer Educn	
BEF 507 Sociology Of Education	
BEF 534 Multicultural Education	
BEF 575 Found Educn Through Film	
BEF 607 Readings In Soc Of Ed	
BEF 650 Critical Race Theory In Educ	
BEF 667 Multicult Soc Ed Leadershp	
BEF 681 Ethics And Education	

<b>Educational Research:</b>	
BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ	3
BER 631 Inqry As Interp: Qual I	3
BER 660 Eval I:Theory & Practice	3

<b>Teaching Field:</b>	
SPE 606 Topical Seminar In Spe	3
SPE 616 Adv. Professional Development	3
SPE 617 SPE Leadership	3
SPE 621 Issues in Special Education: Early Childhood	3

SPE 622	Advanced Curriculum Workshop: Early Childhood Special Education	3
<b>Additional requirements/electives:</b>		
Advisor approved elective		3
SPE 500 is required if a special education survey course was not part of the undergraduate program or another graduate program.		0-3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>33-36</b>

### Gifted (P-12), Class AA

This course listing applies to candidates having appropriate prior certification who begin this program June 1, 2017. Candidates earning graduate credit prior to this date may elect to utilize this program. Candidates must present a GPA of at least 3.50 on all courses in the program, with no grade below a C. Credits used for the previous Class A support certificate may not be used for this program.

For admission, applicants must hold valid master's level certification in a teaching field. Candidates admitted to the Class AA program without prior certification in gifted must take the following courses in addition to the coursework below: SPE 581, SPE 582, SPE 583, SPE 501 (or its equivalent), and SPE 589 (S.E.W.). Up to three semester hours of the prerequisite work may be used to meet the elective requirements in this program. Passing scores on the appropriate Praxis subject assessment(s) are required if changing areas of certification.

Code and Title	Hours
<b>Required courses:</b>	
SPE 613 Consult Proc Spe Progs	3
SPE 617 SPE Leadership	3
<b>Foundations of Professional Studies:</b>	
(Choose ONE of these SDE approved diversity courses.)	
BEF 503 History Of Amer Educn	
BEF 507 Sociology Of Education	
BEF 534 Multicultural Education	
BEF 575 Found Educn Through Film	
BEF 607 Readings In Soc Of Ed	
BEF 650 Critical Race Theory In Educ	
BEF 667 Multicult Soc Ed Leadershp	
BEF 681 Ethics And Education	
<b>Educational Research:</b>	
BER 540 Statistical Methods In Educ	3
BER 631 Inqry As Interp: Qual I	3
<b>Teaching Field:</b>	
SPE 681 Issues In Gifted Educ	3
SPE 612 Readg Research In Spe	6
SPE 682 Adv Curr Workshp Gift Educatio	6
<b>Additional requirements/electives:</b>	
Advisor approved elective (SPE 606 Bibliotherapy is recommended.)	
SPE 500 is required if a special education survey course was not part of the undergraduate program or another graduate program.	
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>33-36</b>

### Certification

The Alabama State Board of Education grants Class AA professional educator certification in special education (collaborative, early childhood special education, or gifted). To be eligible, students must hold

appropriate Class A certification and must complete all requirements for the EDS degree in the chosen program as described in this catalog, including a comprehensive exam and the *Praxis* subject assessment(s) (if applicable).

## Educational Specialist Degrees

The Educational Specialist degree (EdS) is offered in some departments of the College of Education that offer doctoral degrees. Students interested in the EdS degree should contact the department involved regarding availability of the degree.

The EdS degree normally is granted at the end of the sixth year of collegiate study and falls in time between the master's degree and the doctorate, although it is not viewed as intermediate between the master's and doctoral degrees. In the College of Education, some EdS degrees lead to a teaching certification for P-12 education fields. In some teaching fields, the purpose of the degree is to prepare undergraduate-college teachers, especially those who will be employed in junior colleges, small private and state colleges, and the group of colleges labeled as "developing" institutions. The primary goals of the EdS degree are teaching and acquiring professional proficiency.

Because the purposes of the EdS degree may differ from those of either the EdD or PhD, credit earned in an EdS program is not automatically transferable to a doctoral program. Instead, if a holder of an EdS degree enters a doctoral program at a later date, the doctoral advisory committee will decide how much of the credit earned in the EdS program will be counted toward the doctorate.

### Program Requirements

The EdS degree requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of study beyond the master's degree. (Students completing an EdS program and also expecting to receive an Alabama Class AA certificate for service in the public schools must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours and achieve a minimum 3.5 GPA on all work attempted.) Generally, the following requirements will hold for the degree:

- If a student enters a program with a master's degree in the same field, a minimum of 12 additional semester hours in the teaching field must be taken as part of the 30-hour total. Some departments may require more than these minimums.
- Since one of the goals of the EdS degree is to prepare undergraduate-college teachers, certain courses in higher education may be necessary, if required by the major department. A faculty advisor in the program in higher education administration will advise students on the appropriate courses to complete this requirement.
- Candidates for the EdS degree will be required to complete all coursework at the 500 and 600 levels.

### Graduate Credit

A student must be admitted to the Graduate School and must register as a graduate student in order to receive graduate credit. Approval for graduate registration must be obtained from program advisors prior to registration.

### Transfer of Credit

Courses of full graduate-level credit earned in a regionally accredited institution where a student was enrolled in the graduate school may be submitted for review for inclusion in a degree program. Evaluation of credit for transfer will not be made until after the student has enrolled in the Graduate School of The University of Alabama. Acceptance of credit requires the approval of the student's advisory committee and the dean of the Graduate School. Credit will not be accepted for transfer from any

institution at which the student failed to achieve a "B" average on all graduate work attempted. Only courses in which a student earned a "B" grade or better may be transferred.

In some cases, foreign educational credentials may not meet the Graduate School's criteria for transfer of credit. It may be necessary for students in this situation to secure an evaluation of their credentials from World Education Services Inc. (WES), an external foreign credential evaluation service. Additional information on their services can be found at their website.

A student initiates at the Graduate School's website a Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit earned at another institution. It is also the student's responsibility to assure that the Graduate School receives an official transcript of the credit concerned, well in advance of the final semester and typically before or at the time of advancement to candidacy.

The greater of 12 semester hours or 25 percent of appropriate post-master's-degree credit, earned through a regionally accredited institution approved to offer graduate programs beyond the master's level in the field of study where the credits were earned, may be transferred to apply toward an EdS degree. To be considered for transfer, credit must have been completed during the six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded.

Previous and appropriate post-master's-degree credit earned at The University of Alabama before a student applies for admission to the EdS program can be applied toward the EdS degree, provided it meets the program requirements of the particular department and the time limitation stated above.

Please note that some departments allow fewer than 9 hours of graduate transfer credit. Be sure to check with your department's graduate coordinator regarding your department's transfer policy.

### **Graduate Credit for Noncredit Experiences**

All course credit used toward a UA graduate degree must be taught at the graduate level. No graduate credit may be earned by correspondence study or for experiential learning not conducted under the direct supervision of graduate faculty of The University of Alabama. UA does not offer graduate credit for noncredit workshops, seminars, continuing education experiences, professional development, internships, work/life experience and so forth.

A student in his or her last semester of work toward the master's degree who does not need a full course load to complete the course requirements of his or her master's program may register for work toward the EdS degree, in the amount needed to complete full registration loads.

### **Residency Requirement**

A student's program at the EdS level must provide sufficient association with the resident faculty to permit individual evaluation of the student's capabilities and achievements.

### **Time Limit**

All requirements for the EdS degree must be completed during the six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded. There is no provision at the EdS level for a time limit extension beyond 6 years.

### **Plan of Study**

A standard form for an EdS plan of study is available in each department. Because each department or program participating in the EdS degree has established a framework of requirements for the degree that indicates

the general structure of its program. At or before initial registration, each student develops a formal plan of study for the degree, designating all courses he or she plans to take in the program. In reaching decisions, the student should consult with the program director. The student will file a completed plan of study with the program director who, upon approving the plan, will distribute a copy to the student and retain one copy for departmental files.

A plan of study may be amended at any time using appropriate forms and following the procedure described above. Until formal approval of an amended plan of study is made, the original or current modification of the plan will be in effect.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

As noted above, the EdS Plan of Study is available in the College of Education and must be approved by the Graduate School before the student can be admitted to candidacy for the EdS degree. Thus, it is best to complete the plan of study by the end of the first or second semester of coursework.

The department advisor will submit the Admission to Candidacy for the EdS degree through the UA DocuSign system in myBama with the approved Plan of Study attached for Graduate School approval.

### **Examinations**

In addition to the regular course examinations, a final comprehensive examination is required. The examination may be written or oral or both, at the discretion of the major department. No candidate is eligible for the final examination until approved by the appropriate program director. A student may take the final oral or written examination only twice. Failing the examination twice results in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School.

The examination will be prepared and conducted by a committee of at least three members of the UA graduate faculty, including the program director in the major area of study and a designee (or two or more people from the major area of study, designated by the program director) and the program director (or a designee) from the minor field of study, if one has been included in a program. Committees will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate School on request of the major program director. Each candidate must be judged by the major department to have completed the examination(s) satisfactorily.

If a candidate receives failing marks in both the minor area of study and the professional education field, the candidate will be judged to have failed the examination. If a candidate fails either the minor examination or the professional education examination, the committee as a whole will reach a decision about the satisfactory or unsatisfactory nature of the candidate's performance on the examination. If a candidate does not have a minor field, the committee members will meet to reach a decision in the event the student fails the professional education examination.

All written examinations will be kept on file by the program directors for five years following the date of the last term of enrollment, and students will have the right to confer with their program directors regarding the strengths and weaknesses shown on the examinations. The committee chair must submit the EdS Comprehensive Exam form through the UA DocuSign system in myBama following exam completion.

### **Virtual Participation**

Scope and Goals

All members of a student's graduate committee are expected to attend and participate, usually in person, in any oral examination as part of the student's graduate (Master's or Doctoral) degree program. Traditionally, oral examinations are conducted with the student meeting

their committee while gathered in one physical location on campus. However, the need occasionally arises for virtual participation in the oral examination. In these cases, graduate programs must ensure adherence to the following if any graduate-level oral examination involving the student's entire thesis/dissertation committee includes virtual participation.

- The student's consent must be sought and obtained in advance of conducting the oral examination with virtual participants.
- Virtual participation by committee members *must* include both audio and visual capability so that:
  - each committee member can hear the student and view the student, any presentation slides, and any demonstrations;
  - the student can hear and view each committee member.
- All committee members must participate interactively and in real-time for the *entire* examination, including any preparatory discussion leading up to it, the presentation itself, its discussion and evaluation.

The following sections provide detail on the technical and attendance requirements for an oral examination with virtual participation. Departments and programs may enforce stricter guidelines than those outlined, including an on-campus/only policy if deemed necessary and appropriate.

#### Technical Requirements

Real-time and fully interactive audio and video communications must be maintained throughout the examination and any related discussion. The audio/video communications facilities must allow the student and all committee members to see and hear each other during the entire examination. There must be adequate provision for the transmission of text, graphics, or writings referenced or generated during the examination (e.g., slides, whiteboard). The use of audio-only communications is not permitted.

In case of technical difficulties or technology failure, the committee will decide whether to continue the examination once the difficulty is resolved, or to cancel the examination and reschedule it for a later date, without prejudice to the student.

If the student or any committee member(s) have a disability that will be impacted by virtual participation, reasonable accommodations should be provided.

#### Attendance Requirements: campus-based programs

Programs should ensure that students are advised about virtual participation guidelines related to an oral examination, including reference to these guidelines as well as any other program-specific requirements.

It is generally expected that members of a graduate student's committee be physically present with the student for each oral committee examination. However, an oral examination may have virtually participating committee members according to the following rules:

- **Any one member** of the graduate student's committee (excluding the chair / advisor) can participate at a distance without seeking further authorization.
- The **committee chair** will be allowed to participate at a distance only if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when they are on campus would cause hardship to the student. In this case, the committee chair should submit a petition to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining the reasons leading to the request.
- Similarly, a petition from the committee chair to the Dean of the Graduate School is also required if **more than one committee member**

is to participate at a distance. Such petitions will only be considered if rescheduling the oral examination to a time when only one member of the committee would be participating at a distance would cause significant hardship to the student, as outlined in the petition.

All committee members participating virtually must be able to **fully interact** in the oral examination via audio and video capability; participation by viewing a recording of the oral examination is specifically prohibited. All members of the committee, on- or off-site, must participate in the evaluation of the examination; provisions must be made to record their vote and collect their signatures as necessary.

**Student participation at a distance** in graduate oral examinations involving their committee is generally not allowed for campus-based graduate programs. However, the committee chair and/or the graduate program director, in agreement with the student, may draft a petition to seek permission from the Dean of the Graduate School to conduct such an oral examination. This arrangement will only be considered if the committee chair agrees to it, and if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when the student is on campus would cause great hardship to the student; the petition should clearly outline the extenuating circumstances leading to this need.

#### Attendance Requirements: online or hybrid programs

An online graduate program is defined as a program in which no aspect of the degree program occurs on-campus, including oral examinations. A hybrid program is defined as a program which has both online and on-campus elements.

For online and hybrid programs that handle oral examinations in an online setting, all committee members as well as the student may participate virtually in the oral examination. However, these programs must fully adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Technical Requirements section above for any oral examination involving the entire committee.

Hybrid programs that require oral examinations to take place on campus must adhere to the guidelines set forth for campus-based programs.

### Application for Graduation

Each candidate for an educational specialist degree must submit an Application for Degree via myBama no later than the last day to register or add a course for the semester (or first term of the summer semester) in which requirements for the degree are to be completed. That specific date is published each semester at the Graduate School's website under Current Students/Deadlines for Graduate Students.