

SPECIAL EDUCATION, PH.D.

The Ph.D. program in the Department of Special Education and Multiple Abilities (SPEMA) is designed around the interests of the student and the expertise of the faculty, and aims to produce a top researcher seeking an appointment in a university or research setting. Before acceptance into the program, the department evaluates whether a student's interest area matches with an area of faculty expertise. Once accepted, students work with the Plan of Study committee (POS) to shape their course of study. The POS is made up of faculty, including the student's advisor. Many interests related to special education field can be accommodated, including subfields related to autism spectrum disorders, behavior disorders and prevention, early childhood special education, early intervention, gifted and talented, non-categorical special education, severe disabilities, and transitions.

Admissions

The Special Education, Ph.D. program requires admission to the Graduate School. Applicants must submit a recent (within the last five years) GRE score of 300 or higher. Additionally, applicants must have an earned MA degree in special education (or a related area) with an accomplished scholarly record at the master's level, three years of appropriate experience (defined as three years of work in agencies serving children and youth, one year of which must have been spent in direct, full-time interaction with exceptional children), a demonstrated commitment to a scholarly career in special education, a successful presentation to the department, and a successful interview process with faculty members. Graduate faculty members individually evaluate and collectively discuss admission applications.

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

Program and Course Requirements

A minimum of 72 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree is required for completion of the Ph.D. program, but highly recommended additional research courses would extend the hours to 78. These 72 hours consist of the following courses: 24 hours of special education courses; 12 hours of educational foundations courses; 12 hours of research courses; and 24 dissertation hours.

Code and Title		Hours
Educational Foundations courses		12
Educational Research courses		12
Special Education courses (24 hours)		
SPE 600	Doctoral Seminar Spe (usually taken in the first semester)	3
SPE 601	Sem Col Teachg In Spe	3
The remaining Special Education coursework may come from the following SPE courses or other courses on campus closely linked to special education.		18
SPE 606	Topical Seminar In Spe (Behavior Management)	
SPE 606	Topical Seminar In Spe (Special Topics)	
SPE 609	Practicum In Spe (teaching a course, with faculty guidance, or other field experience; can be taken more than once)	
SPE 611	Ind Study In Spe (may be taken up to four times)	
SPE 612	Readg Research In Spe (Pre-Dissertation Study; e.g., pilot study; practice data collection; IRB submission)	

SPE 616	Adv. Professional Development (deliver PD, with faculty guidance, such as training early intervention or special education personnel in practices and models)	
SPE 617	SPE Leadership	
SPE 621, SPE 623, or SPE 681: Issues in Exceptionality for ECSE, collaborative/non-categorical, gifted		
SPE 622, SPE 624, or SPE 682: Advanced Curriculum Workshop for ECSE, collaborative/non-categorical, gifted		
Dissertation Research		24
Total Hours		72

Most of the doctoral seminars are taught every 2 years, to ensure sufficient enrollment.

A comprehensive exam designed to assess the breadth and depth of a student's knowledge and skills is administered twice each academic year.