Master Degree Programs

Department of Special Education

College of Education
Experience Utah’s natural beauty

Working directly with children is a key element of all degree programs.
MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

PROGRAMS

Master of Education Degree
Master of Education Degree without Licensure
Master of Education Degree without Teacher Licensure BCBA Emphasis
Master of Education Degree in Special Education with an Elementary Licensure
Master of Science Degree
Master of Science Degree without Licensure
Master of Science Degree without Teacher Licensure BCBA Emphasis

LICENSURE PROGRAMS

Mild/Moderate Disabilities
Severe Disabilities
Early Childhood Special Education (birth - 5)
Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Visual Impairments
Deafblind Education

Department of Special Education
Susan Johnston, Chair
THE DEPARTMENT
The Department of Special Education, located within the College of Education, provides statewide and national leadership in research, instruction, and service for children and young adults with disabilities. Through its licensure and degree programs, the Department promotes a philosophy of life-long learning aimed at preparing professionals to effectively study the field and teach learners with various disabilities.

The faculty is committed to preparing educators to be dynamic and contributing team members within diverse educational communities and settings. To that end, the Department actively plans, conducts, and supports applied educational research and model development. The Department uses its programs and services as resources for graduate students, attempting to continuously challenge and expand their skills as teachers and future education leaders.

THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY
Set in the foothills of the majestic Wasatch Mountains, the University of Utah combines academic excellence and a commitment to research in an atmosphere conducive to graduate study. As the flagship of Utah’s higher education system, the University plays a leading role in fostering the development and preservation of the state’s resources—both human and natural. Approximately 32,000 students represent the United States and the global community. A teaching faculty of approximately 2,900 (including clinical, adjunct, research, and visiting faculty) provides the stimulus for learning and achievement.
Ten minutes away is downtown Salt Lake City, core to a metropolitan community of over one million people and home to outstanding symphony, dance, and opera companies, well-established theaters, visual arts communities, and professional sports teams. Ready access to the mountains and a four-season climate invite participation in outdoor sports ranging from hiking and camping to unparalleled powder skiing. Five national parks in Utah provide some of the most spectacular and varied scenery in the United States.

PROGRAMS

Master of Science Degree (M.S.)

The Master of Science program offers a research-oriented, academic degree that prepares students with the knowledge and conceptual base needed to undertake the study of special education as a scientific endeavor. Applicants may have a variety of personal and professional goals in mind, reflecting both the range of services for learners with exceptionalities, and the leadership and scholarly aspirations of the candidate. Common to each student, however, should be a commitment to excellence, as demonstrated through ability to effectively implement and communicate “best practices.”

Each program of study blends the student’s interests with advanced courses in special education and research. With the approval of the student’s supervisory committee, the M.S. program may emphasize one of the Department’s licensure areas, or be tailored around a specific subject area or need. All students in this degree program are expected to successfully complete a written qualifying examination, and a research-based thesis.
Master of Education Degree (M.Ed.)

The Master of Education program provides advanced professional preparation for careers in the public schools. The degree may be earned in conjunction with a teaching license (see Licensure Programs), or may simply be structured to provide the student with more in-depth professional training in a given instructional area.

Students seeking a teaching credential complete a licensure sequence. Students not seeking a teaching credential select a professional practice emphasis and begin their studies with completion of a core of Department courses that have been proposed and approved by the student’s committee.

Typically, professional emphasis is in the area of Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Severe Disabilities, Early Childhood Special Education (birth - 5), BCBA, Visual Impairments, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind Education. All students proceed through advanced graduate studies in special education and related fields. All students seeking to earn a M.Ed. close their studies with the successful completion of a written comprehensive examination.

Licensure Programs

The Department of Special Education offers five programs that lead to state licensure:

- Mild/Moderate Disabilities
- Severe Disabilities
- Early Childhood Special Education (birth - 5)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Visual Impairments
- Deafblind Education

The total credit hours to fulfill licensing requirements vary for each area. Each program requires completion of the teacher education core in special education and a sequence of specialization courses in the particular field of study. The teacher education core has been designed to provide the student with skills in essential areas of assessment, instructional design and management, behavior management, collaboration, curriculum, and legal issues in special education.
Specialization courses expand upon the skills and methods that have been introduced through the teacher education core. The courses introduce specific educational strategies that are effective for particular student populations. Each program has been structured to develop the required skills through hands-on, practical learning opportunities; therefore, the different programs provide multiple field-based experiences. Such experiences within each program area give graduate students the opportunity to observe, question, test, and modify different instructional techniques under the guidance of a trained cooperating teacher and Department faculty.

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, students are recommended for licensure to the Utah State Board of Education.

FACULTY
The Department is committed to prepare qualified professionals who are ready to meet the educational needs of children with exceptionalities. A total of 16 tenure-track and clinical/support faculty serve the Department. Faculty are involved in the graduate and licensure programs through teaching, practicum supervision, research, and student advising. In addition to research specializations in particular areas of disabilities, faculty members have research interests that include:
• Supported inclusion
• Transition
• Professional ethics
• Educational reform
• Disability law and policy
• Reading/literacy
• School-wide behavior support
• Assessment of special learning needs
• Augmentative/alternative communication
• Early intervention

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
A variety of scholarship and tuition support opportunities exist for students admitted to the Department. All require formal application and typically have preset deadlines. Interested individuals should contact the academic advisor for options and details.

Two departmental scholarships—the Harker-Ferguson Scholarship and the Michael Foundation Scholarship—are available to students based upon merit. They require admission to the Severe Disability Program or Mild/Moderate Disability Program, respectively. The Molly Lawson Research Fellowship is available for students from Arizona and who are admitted to the Severe Disability Program. In the event that there are no qualified Arizona students in the program, other applicants will be considered. In addition, the Steffensen Cannon Scholarships are open to all students within the College of Education. This award provides students with an annual stipend while also covering all tuition costs.
Several other options may be available for students. Annual awards are also available through the Terrel H. Bell Teaching Incentive Loan Program. Students are encouraged to contact the Department’s academic advisor, the College of Education website with financial aid and scholarship information at http://education.utah.edu/scholarships/index.php, and/or the University Financial Aid and Scholarships Office for more information and new scholarship opportunities.

GENERAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
The application process for admission begins by contacting the Department’s academic advisor for information on timelines, criteria, and the forms needed for entry into the University of Utah Graduate School. Depending on the licensure or degree program desired, applicants must take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). All applicants must provide proof of a Utah State Board of Education-cleared fingerprint background check.

Application for admission to the Graduate School is on the University website at https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=utahgrad
Students must fill out the following items:

- Application
- Names and email addresses of three authors writing letters of recommendation
- Written professional statement
- Resume
- Writing sample

Students must upload the following:

- Test scores
- Transcripts

Admission to the Graduate School is required for all prospective students in special education. The process for entry, however, begins with a departmental committee review that leads to a recommendation for admission to the Graduate School as a matriculated student. A GPA of at least 3.00 is required. The Department of Special Education Admissions Committee reviews candidate files for admission three times a year. Individuals seeking admission in the summer or fall semesters must have their files completed and submitted to the departmental academic advisor by March 1. The Department offers an additional admission for fall semester. The deadline to have materials submitted for this admission is May 16. The deadline for submitting materials for the spring semester is November 1. No application will be considered without official GRE test scores.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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