PH.D. PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

OVERVIEW

The Ph.D. program in the Department of Special Education prepares doctoral candidates for faculty positions in higher education with specializations in Early Childhood Special Education, Mild to Moderate Disabilities, or Severe Disabilities. The Ph.D. program of study focuses on designing and conducting scientifically-based research in special education, effectively preparing special education teacher candidates, and providing service to the profession and community.

Our mission is to prepare doctoral candidates to develop and disseminate knowledge that will improve the education of students with disabilities through research, teaching, and service. To effectively prepare new leaders for roles in higher education, the Ph.D. program is competency and field-based; focused on diverse faculty roles and responsibilities; and transcends scientifically-based research into effective practice.

STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES

Currently, the Department does not have a stable source of funding for doctoral students entering the program. We are hoping to obtain ongoing federal funding to support students as we have been able to do so in the past. However, at the current time we do not have such funding available. We will do our best to provide students with opportunities to serve as TAs, RAs, and teaching classes in order to provide some funding support. However, it is important to note that we cannot promise any such opportunities at the current time.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

EARLY ADMISSIONS FOR ENROLLMENT BEGINNING SUMMER OR FALL SEMESTER

The Department of Special Education offers qualified applicants early admission to its Ph.D. Program for enrollment beginning summer or fall semester. Students seeking early admission may submit their completed application materials at any time during the calendar year. Contact Patty Davis, Academic Advisor, in the Department of Special Education (801-581-4764 or patty.davis@utah.edu) for more information on admission timelines.

Applicants must complete the APPLYYOURSELF application. The current application for the Graduate School is the new APPLYYOURSELF application at https://app.applyyourself.com/?id=utahgrad. The Graduate School will not process your application without the required fee and original copies of ALL transcripts).
Each applicant admissions file must include the following materials on the APPLYYOURSELF system:

- Cover letter of intent to pursue doctoral study in special education.
- Professional position statement (1000 words or less) that includes rationale for pursuing the Ph.D. in special education, discussion of primary area of interest (Early Childhood Special Education, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, or Severe Disabilities) and career goals in higher education.
- Three recommendations from outside evaluators. Each outside evaluator must complete and submit the Department of Special Education recommendation form.
- APPLY YOURSELF Graduate School Application for Admission to the Graduate School.
- Official undergraduate and graduate transcripts.
- Official copy of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores (verbal, quantitative, and analytical/writing subtests). Applicant GRE test scores must be within the past five years.

**NOTE:** International students are also required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). For the paper-based test, a score of 600 is required, and for the computer-based TOEFL, a score of 250 is required.

International students whose native language is English should check with International Admissions (801-581-3091) about requirements for taking the TOEFL-iBT. This test is internet-based and has an oral component to it.

The following minimum scores are required for the TOEFL iBT:

- Reading 22 (preferred score = 25)
- Listening 22 (preferred score = 25)
- Speaking 23 (preferred score = 25)
- Writing 23 (preferred score = 25)

Therefore, the minimum total score is 90 and the preferred total score is 100.

Students can also take the IELTS test. The score must be 7 or above.

**PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH FACULTY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- Each Ph.D. program applicant is required to participate in personal interviews with the Chair of the Department of Special Education and a faculty member with expertise in the applicant’s primary area of interest. These interviews must be scheduled prior to the Admissions Committee’s review of the candidate’s completed admissions file.
ADMISSION CRITERIA

The Ph.D. Program Admissions Committee will review the following information in evaluating a candidate’s qualifications for admission:

- Content, clarity, and organization of applicant’s letter of intent, application for admissions form, professional position statement, and professional resume.

- Graduate Record Examination scores: General Test (verbal, quantitative, and analytical/writing).

- Faculty recommendations from personal interview with applicant.

- Undergraduate GPA: 3.00 or above is required.

- Graduate GPA: 3.00 or above is required; 3.50 or above is recommended.

- Master’s degree is required for admission to the Ph.D. program.

- UPLOAD Recommendations from three outside reviewers on APPLY YOURSELF system.