



## Program Description

# Bachelor of Science in Special Education

**Goal:** Recommendation for Utah Basic Teaching License in Special Education in any of the following areas: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Severe Disabilities, Preschool Special Education, Visual Impairments, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**Special Education** The Undergraduate Special Education Teacher Education Program provides professional training for educating young children and students with disabilities.

**Degree Requirements** Students complete approximately **122 semester hours** of credit in order to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Special Education through the Department of Special Education.

**Licensure** The Utah Board of Education grants teaching licenses. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are recommended for licensure.

**Advising** Students interested in special education teaching as a career should contact the Department Academic Advisor in the Special Education Department.

**Application** An application for admission to the major can be obtained from the Department of Special Education (SAEC 2280, 801-581-8121) or by mail at the University of Utah, Department of Special Education, 1721 Campus Center Drive, SAEC 2280, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

### APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Special Education major is a sequenced program that includes a **PROFESSIONAL CORE** of courses to introduce important principles followed by **SPECIALIZATION** courses in a specific area of disability. The specialization sequence of the program includes extensive field experiences followed by a full semester of student teaching. Students must apply for admission to the program. Enrollment is limited and admission is competitive. The Department admits students three times a year. The Admissions Committee, composed of faculty from the Department of Special Education, meets during the Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters. (See Admission Application Deadlines for Undergraduate Students.)

Admission requires completion of 24 semester credit hours of university course work (including EDU 1010, Introduction to Teaching, or its equivalent); three letters of recommendation; a written (two-page) professional statement; official college and university transcripts, proof of a USBE-cleared fingerprint background check, and current **Praxis Core Academic Skills Test for Educators** scores. **WHEN YOU ACCESS/RECEIVE YOUR PRAXIS TEST SCORES, PLEASE MAKE A COMPLETE COPY OF THEM AND SUBMIT TO THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.** A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above (from all colleges and universities attended) is required.

Admission to the program is based on a holistic rating system that takes each application component into consideration. The Committee also considers the difficulty of prior course work, trends in performance, workplace and interpersonal skills, and the ability to work with children, families, and professionals in various settings. Additional factors to be considered may be gender and/or minority status, to the extent consistent with applicable law, and any violation of the University and College of Education student codes. Committee members use their professional judgment to assess a candidate's potential to succeed in the program, as well as in the classroom.



Complete files submitted by the application deadline will be forwarded to the Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee will not review incomplete files. Approximately two to three weeks after the application deadline, applicants will be notified by mail of denial or acceptance into the program. Admission files become the property of the Department of Special Education and will not be returned to the applicant. **An incomplete file will be kept for one (1) year from the date of application, after which it will be destroyed.**

Supplementary information may be requested from the applicant, such as additional written material and/or an interview with one or more Committee members. Department faculty will receive a list of applicants prior to each Admissions meeting and will have an opportunity to provide written information to the Committee, such as information on performance in special education classes taken prior to admission. Such information will be considered by the Committee.

**WHEN THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS EXCEEDS THE NUMBER OF AVAILABLE PLACES IN A SPECIALTY AREA, AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, THE COMMITTEE WILL USE A RANKING SYSTEM BASED ON MULTI-FACTORED CRITERIA. EACH COMMITTEE MEMBER WILL DO AN INDEPENDENT RANKING OF THE APPLICANTS IN THE SPECIALTY AREA PRIOR TO COMMITTEE DISCUSSION.**

### **DENIALS**

Questions or concerns about the basis for denial should be directed to the Chair of the Admissions Committee. Students who are denied admission may reapply to the program during a subsequent admissions period if they believe that new or updated materials will form the basis for admission to the program. Students are encouraged to work with the Department Academic Advisor as they prepare their materials to make sure their file is both complete and current.

### **APPEALS**

If a student wishes to appeal a decision denying admission to the program, the student should write a letter to the Department Chair describing the basis for believing that the decision violated the Admissions Committee's written standards and procedures. The Department Chair will review the decision for compliance with Committee standards and procedures. Based on the findings, the Chair will make a determination to uphold or reverse the decision.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT**

The University of Utah does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, status as a disabled individual, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, genetic information or protected veteran's status, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Additionally, the University endeavors to provide reasonable accommodations and to ensure equal access to qualified persons with disabilities. Inquiries concerning perceived discrimination or requests for disability accommodations may be referred to the University's Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 201 South Presidents Circle, Rm.135, Salt Lake City, UT, 84112, 801-581-8365 (voice/tdd), 801-585-5747 (fax), or online at: [www.oeo.utah.edu](http://www.oeo.utah.edu).

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Admissions files are handled confidentially in accordance with University Regulations and applicable law.



## APPLICATION PROCEDURES CHECKLIST

**Application Timelines** See Admission Application Deadlines for Undergraduate Students. Students should plan to apply for admission to the program during or after the semester in which they will complete 24 hours of university course work, including EDU 1010. For most students, this occurs during the spring semester of their freshman year.

### Requirements for application for admission:

- Be a matriculated student at the University of Utah.
- Complete 24 semester credit hours of university course work *including* **EDU 1010, Introduction to Teaching**, before the beginning of the semester for which you are admitted. For example, if you haven't already taken EDU 1010 by the time you submit your application, then you must be enrolled in the course when you apply. If you have taken coursework at another university that you believe is equivalent to EDU 1010 you must either (1) receive permission in writing to substitute your previous coursework or (2) the course must have been designated by both universities as equivalent ("articulated") courses. **See Academic Advisor for more information.**
- GPA is considered competitively, although the Admissions Committee takes all supporting evidence into consideration. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above is required. Consult with the Registrar's Office, 250 Student Services Building, 801-581-8969, for information on your current cumulative GPA.
- Take the **Praxis Core Academic Skills Test for Educators**. You may take either the computer-based version or paper-based (for ADA accommodation) version. Undergraduate students must have a minimum score on the **Praxis Core Academic Skills Test for Educators** of 156 in Reading, 162 in Writing, and 150 in Math. (See **Minimum Admission Requirements** on the Department website) Although the testing website gives you the option to have test results sent directly to the University of Utah, this is not true. **THE TESTING WEBSITE WILL NOT SEND TEST RESULTS DIRECTLY TO THE UNIVERSITY.** When you access/receive your Praxis test scores, **PLEASE MAKE A COMPLETE COPY OF THEM AND SUBMIT TO THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.** For more information see the attached sheet.

**NOTE:** International students are also required to take the **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)**. 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. Another testing option available is the **IELTS**. Required test scores are as follows:

TOEFL-iBT (Internet-Based)	Required Score
Reading	25
Listening	25
Speaking	25
Writing	25
<b>Total Required Score</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>IELTS</b>	<b>7 or above</b>



**The following application materials are to be turned in by the admissions application deadline.**

- Submit a completed ***Application for Admission*** to the Department of Special Education Undergraduate Teacher Education Program, obtained from the Department of Special Education, 1721 Campus Center Drive, SAEC 2280, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.
- Submit a written two-page ***Professional Career Statement*** informing the Admissions Committee of the reasons you are interested in a career of working with children and youth with disabilities, as well as strengths you bring to the teaching profession. The purpose of this statement is to give candidates an opportunity: (a) to demonstrate their ability to organize and express their ideas, (b) to think carefully about educational issues, (c) to show their commitment to the teaching profession, and/or (d) to share what they can contribute to serving children and youth with disabilities, and their families. Include experiences and events that have influenced your decision. Your statement must be typewritten, double-spaced, and is limited to a maximum of 750 words. **Be sure to sign and date your statement.**
- Submit three ***Letters of Recommendation*** using the forms provided with the *Application for Admission*. Recommendations should provide information in the following three categories: **1. Experience with Children** (e.g., submitted by one of the applicant's course instructors); **2. ACADEMIC ABILITY (MUST BE SUBMITTED BY ONE OF THE APPLICANT'S COURSE INSTRUCTORS)**; and **3. Professional Competencies** (e.g., submitted by an additional course instructor, or a previous employer or work supervisor). Family and friends are not considered appropriate references because they cannot attest to the applicant's professional and academic qualifications. References from coordinators or directors of church-related programs serving children are acceptable if they attest to the candidate's professional competencies and skills in working with children. **Letters of recommendation must be sealed in an envelope by the author with his/her signature over the seal and must be included in the application packet. References must be current (dated within one year of Committee review), including one from applicant's most recent supervisor (if applicable). The Committee weighs the professional relationship of respondent to applicant and the strength of endorsement of academic and professional performance. The Committee may exercise its prerogative to follow up on letters of recommendation by contacting the respondent for additional information.**
- Submit a ***current, official transcript*** from the University of Utah. The transcript must be included in the application packet and must be in a sealed envelope from the Registrar's Office with a stamp over the seal. For more information, call the University Transcript Office, 801-581-8964.
- Submit ***official transcripts from all colleges and universities*** previously attended, no matter how long ago or how little credit was earned, including all correspondence courses and foreign credit. A "Summary of Transfer Credit" will not be accepted. **The transcripts must be in sealed envelopes with a stamp over the seal and must be included in the application packet.**
- Submit proof of a **UBOE-cleared fingerprint background check (CBI/FBI)**
- If you took the computer-based version of the **Praxis Core Academic Skills Test for Educators**, submit the complete **official report** of your scores.

**Submit all materials to: Admissions Committee, Department of Special Education, 1721 Campus Center Drive, SAEC 2280, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112. (See separate Checklist for Application Deadlines)**



## **SPECIAL EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

### **COURSE WORK**

Depending on the area of specialization, the Special Education Undergraduate Teacher Education Program Ranges from 60.5 to 70 credit hours of required course work. Some courses may be double counted toward general education requirements. Special education courses are taken in two categories: **PROFESSIONAL CORE, and AREA SPECIALIZATION.**

#### **Course Credit and Graduation Requirements**

- Independent Study/Correspondence Courses **will not** be accepted toward the listed degree requirements.
- Junior College course work **will not** be applied to upper division courses, 2000-level or above.
- All required departmental course work **must be** completed with a grade of “C” or better and must be taken for a letter grade, not under the University Credit/No Credit Option. Likewise, all field experiences and student teaching **must be** successfully completed and awarded “credit.”
- Courses listed below are not guaranteed to be offered every semester. Students are advised to meet with the Department Academic Advisor and/or specialty area program coordinator to receive the most current course offering schedules.
- Due to changes in the research on teaching and learning, classroom practices, and Utah State Office of Education Standards for teacher licensure, courses over five years old **will not** be accepted toward licensure program credit at the time of admission.
- By the end of the program, an admitted teacher candidate **must have** earned at least a 3.0 GPA in the program (special education courses and additional courses required for the major) and **must meet** professional competencies, including those in practicum settings. Otherwise, the student will not be recommended for licensure.
- The program should be completed within three years of acceptance into the major. Depending on the area of specialization and the semester in which course work in the program is begun, many students will be able to complete the Special Education Teacher Education Program in four consecutive semesters (excluding summer) following admission.



### TEACHER EDUCATION CORE

The first phase of the Special Education Undergraduate Teacher Education Program is the **PROFESSIONAL CORE** that typically comprises the first year of studies in the major.

#### TEACHER EDUCATION CORE (28-31 Credit Hours)\*

<b>Choose one:</b>		
SP ED 5011	3 CR	Inclusive Early Childhood and Elementary Classrooms
SP ED 5012	3 CR	Teaching Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Secondary Classrooms
SP ED 5021	3 CR	Principles of Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making
SP ED 5022	3 CR	Principles of Instruction and Behavior Support
SP ED 5030	3 CR	Functional Communication and Language Development
SP ED 5040	3 CR	Legal and Policy Foundations of Special Education
SP ED 5054	2 CR	Professional Writing in Education
ED PS 5315	3 CR	Reading Methods K-3
EDU 5316	1 CR	Reading Practicum K-3: Next Steps
ED PS 5321	3 CR	Reading Methods II: K-6
EDU 5321	1 CR	Reading Practicum 4-6: Higher Steps
ED PS 5005	3 CR	Writing Instruction and Assessment II
MATH 4020	4 CR	Mathematics for Elementary School Teachers II

**\*Additional hours required in the Teacher Education Core depend on program area**

#### AREA SPECIALIZATION (Variable hours, depending on area of specialization.)

The second phase of the Special Education Undergraduate Teacher Education Program is in an area of specialization that includes: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Severe Disabilities, Preschool Special Education, Visual Impairments, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The specialization phase of the teacher education program typically comprises the second year of studies in the major.

The *first phase* of specialization requires extensive field experiences prior to student teaching. Field experiences require a range of 15 to 18 clock hours per week in practicum settings. Prospective teacher candidates should refer to specialization area program descriptions for course work and sequence.

The *second phase* of specialization is student teaching, which is conceptualized as the culminating experience for teacher candidates to apply assimilated skills. As such, student teaching is considered a full-time experience for a minimum of one semester. Student teaching assignments are located in a group of specially selected schools in which teacher candidates observe and practice teaching methods. Teacher candidates demonstrate mastery of specific competencies under the supervision of a cooperating classroom teacher and a university supervisor employed by the Department of Special Education. Field supervisors and program coordinators in each specialization area arrange student teaching placements.



## **LICENSURE BY THE STATE OF UTAH**

In addition to the professional requirements for licensure, the state requires a background check.

### **Background Check for Initial Licensure**

By legislative mandate, applicants for teaching licensure in Utah are required to have a background check, including fingerprinting as part of admission requirements. (See [Minimum Admission Requirements](#) on Department website) A USBE-cleared fingerprint background check must be submitted to USBE. For further information, contact the Department of Special Education or the Utah Board of Education, 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111, 801-538-7601, Attn: Travis Rawlings, Coordinator, Licensing and Personnel Development.

### **Criminal Conviction**

Teacher Licensure by the State of Utah may be denied because of a previous criminal conviction. If you have questions about your status, you **must** contact the Associate Dean for Professional Education of the College of Education before proceeding with your program in teacher education. The Utah Professional Practices Advisory Committee, c/o Executive Secretary, Utah Board of Education, 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84111 reviews all such cases.

As stipulated by the Utah Board of Education's ruling R277-502-3(5), the University of Utah's Department of Special Education may waive the entrance requirements based on program established guidelines for more than 10 percent of an entrance cohort.