

## Master of Education in Special Education

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction offers courses of study leading to the Master of Education (MEd) in special education [adaptive (mild and moderate disabilities), early childhood unified (blended early childhood and early childhood special education), functional (severe and multiple disabilities), and gifted].

The program emphasizes in *special education-adaptive* and *special education-functional* prepare individuals for pre-K through secondary teaching and also prepare graduates to provide community-based services or consultation to children and youth. The program emphasis in special education-adaptive addresses the needs of students with mild and moderate levels of disabilities (e.g., mental retardation, behavioral/emotional disorders, learning disabilities). The program emphasis in special education-functional addresses the needs of students with severe and multiple disabilities.

The *early childhood unified* program emphasis provides personnel preparation for educators working with young children birth through grade 3, whether with or without disabilities, in a variety of educational, community/home-based, or hospital/clinic settings. Licensure in this area is based upon completion of an elementary education (K – 6) program.

The program emphasis in *gifted education* prepares graduates to educate elementary through secondary age children and youth who demonstrate intellectual giftedness.

### Why WSU's Special Education Program?

Wichita State's special education program includes classroom lecture/activities, as well as theory and research in special education combined with practical knowledge of the classroom gained through field experiences (practica and internships). The vast majority of students in the special education program earn their degrees while employed full-time (that is, field requirements often may be completed "on the job" while classes are scheduled conveniently in the evenings and during summer months).

WSU's College of Education is accredited by appropriate agencies, including the Kansas State Board of Education, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, and the National Association of School Psychologists.

Master's-level graduates in special education are in great demand at all educational levels, from infant-toddler through high school. Graduates often are good candidates for employment by various community, hospital, or home-based agencies or programs that work with individuals who have exceptionalities. Preparation in special education also provides an excellent background for advanced study in a number of educational and social science disciplines.

### Admission Requirements

The special education degree with an emphasis in adaptive, functional, and gifted is available for people certified at

the elementary and/or secondary level (K-9, 7-12, or K-12) or licensed to teach children (early childhood through late childhood, late childhood through early adolescence, or early adolescence through late adolescence and adulthood). The special education degree with emphasis in early childhood unified is also available for individuals who are certified to teach young children (birth to age 8).

Admission requirements include:

1) GPA of 3.000 or higher in the last 60 hours; or GPA of at least 2.750 and GRE scores (Verbal and Quantitative) that yields an index of at least 5.4 computed by the following formula:

$$\text{GPA} + \frac{\text{GRE Verbal} + \text{GRE Quantitative}}{400}$$

New GRE scores as of December 2011 will be accepted and considered for admission, however no scale values are currently available.

2) Current teaching license/certificate (or eligible for a certificate/license)

Applications are evaluated upon receipt. Only a limited number of students are accepted in this program each year.

## **Degree Requirements**

The MEd in special education may be earned under a thesis option, a research portfolio option, or evidence-based inquiry portfolio option. Each option requires 34-36 graduate hours (gifted – 34 hours, early childhood unified, adaptive, and functional – 36 hours) of coursework, practical experience, a written comprehensive examination, and the culminating experience (i.e., thesis, research portfolio, or evidence-based inquiry portfolio).

Candidates may elect to complete only an endorsement in an emphasis area of the special education program (adaptive and functional – 29 graduate hours, early childhood unified – 24 graduate hours, gifted – 27 graduate hours).

## **For More Information**

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