

# Master of Science in Education in Special Education

The Department of Special Education offers graduate online and campus based education for students interested in teaching, research, and professional service related to infants, toddlers, children, adolescents, and adults with low and high incidence disabilities and their families. Since the 1970s, the department has received national and international recognition. The faculty is known for its leadership to the field, commitment to high-quality inclusive learning and development opportunities for children and youth with low and high incidence disabilities, innovative field-based research, and preparation of highly effective educators. The annual U.S. News and World Report graduate program survey consistently ranks KU's Department of Special Education at the top when compared to more than 200 graduate programs in this field. As one of the most comprehensive special educator preparation programs in the country, the department attracts students from many states and countries.

## Programs Offered:

Students may pursue a master's degree in one of 5 areas:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (online)
- Early Childhood Unified (ECU, birth through kindergarten) (campus-Lawrence and Edwards)
- High-incidence Disabilities (online)
- Low-incidence Disabilities (campus-Lawrence)
- Secondary Transition Education and Services (online)

### To obtain initial Kansas teaching License:

Early Childhood Unified MSE (birth through kindergarten) (campus-Lawrence and Edwards) (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/special-education/mse/#requirementstext>)

OR

Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Unified (birth through kindergarten) (campus-Lawrence and Edwards) (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/special-education/licensure-endorsement-early-childhood-gradcert/>)

### \*Kansas endorsement add on to license for Special Education:

Graduate Certificate in High Incidence Disabilities (online) (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/special-education/high-incidence-disabilities-endorsement-gradcert/>)

Graduate Certificate in Low-incidence Disabilities (campus-Lawrence) (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/special-education/low-incidence-disabilities-endorsement-gradcert/>)

\*You must hold an initial or professional teaching license to be eligible for the endorsement.

**In Kansas, to add an endorsement in high or low incidence disability, one must first obtain an initial teaching license.**

Students seeking to obtain a license or certification in a state other than Kansas or a US territory after completion of your program should refer to our Licensure Disclosures page - <https://soehs.ku.edu/current-students/disclosures/>

licensure/disclosures (<https://soehs.ku.edu/current-students/licensure/disclosures/>).

## Graduate Admissions Requirements

**Applicants must meet both the University and departmental admission requirements to be considered for the program.**

### University of Kansas Graduate Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

### Masters of Science in Education in Special Education Application Requirements

- A completed graduate application (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/>).
- Application fee.
- Official transcripts of all degree-granting post-secondary institutions you have attended and an official transcript for each degree earned.
- Two letters of recommendation.
- Personal statement stating your area of interest and licensure status.
- Current resume or CV.

Our online masters programs (autism, high incidence and transition) are comprised of rigorous eight week courses. A majority of the work is completed asynchronously, meaning that it does not happen "live." Courses are generally eight weeks long (2 courses per a typical semester) and typically contain multiple milestones throughout the course. Students are expected to follow the course modules in order, submit assignments on time, and participate in online discussions with classmates. Potential students must ensure that they are prepared to be successful. Online coursework will require approximately 15- 20 hours of undivided attention per week (including readings, online discussions, individual projects, etc.).

Consistent access to high speed internet services (basic broadband-1Mbps) and a personal computer that features Office 2016 or equivalent will be necessary. A tablet or mobile device (i.e., smartphone) will not be sufficient as a primary computer or primary means of accessing the Internet for the online coursework.

## Master of Science in Education (M.S.E.) Program

Graduates are employed as general educators, special educators, or consultants in a wide range of settings. Many complete course work required for the Kansas educational license or endorsements. Some students from related fields (e.g., speech therapists, occupational therapist, social workers) pursue this degree to expand their professional knowledge and skills for working in educational settings with children and youth with disabilities. These students may choose to complete a master's and not complete Kansas endorsement/licensure requirements.

The M.S.E. program ranges from 30 to 36 credit hours, depending on whether one pursues a thesis/project (30-hour) or nonthesis (36-hour) program option. The degree requires courses in the area of study (plus any endorsement-related courses); a research class; and completion of a project, thesis, or written examination.

For degree and certificate-seeking students, maintaining a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher is required. A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher is required to remain in good academic standing and in order to graduate.

Further information can be found in the Graduate Regulations (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/#graduateregulationstext>) section of the catalog.

### **Early Childhood Unified Concentration (birth through Kindergarten) Curriculum (campus based)**

Courses in this program may be taken at either the Edwards or Lawrence campuses.

Program completers who pass the Kansas state-required licensure exam and performance assessment are eligible for a Kansas initial license or added endorsement in Early Childhood Unified, Birth-Kindergarten.

We highly recommend that students seeking to obtain a license or certification in a state other than Kansas or a US territory first seek guidance from their appropriate licensing agency BEFORE beginning the academic program. The website <https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/> (<https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/>) provides resources for licensure and certificate boards outside of Kansas.

#### **Early Childhood Masters Requirements:**

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 752	Overview of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	3
SPED 750	Curriculum and Methods in Early Childhood	3
SPED 755	Inclusive Strategies and Interventions for Preschoolers: _____	3
SPED 731	Supporting Children with Significant Learning and Behavioral Concerns	3
SPED 854	Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education	3
SPED 734	Inclusive Strategies and Intervention for Infants and Toddlers: _____	3
SPED 753	Assessment in Early Education	3
SPED 739	Special Education Early Childhood Unified Practicum (Inclusive Kindergarten/Preschool)	3
SPED 739	Special Education Early Childhood Unified Practicum (Inclusive Infant/Toddler)	3
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education (**)	3
SPED 898	Master's Project	3
OR		
SPED 899	Master's Thesis	3
Total Credit Hours		33

**Master's Project or Thesis to be completed in your last semester of the program.**

### **Low-Incidence Disabilities Concentration (campus-based)**

#### **Low-Incidence Master's Requirements**

Program completers who pass the state-required licensure exam are eligible to add a low-incidence special education endorsement to their existing Kansas license.

We highly recommend that students seeking to obtain a license or certification in a state other than Kansas or a US territory first seek guidance from their appropriate licensing agency BEFORE beginning the academic program. The website <https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/> (<https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/>) provides resources for licensure and certificate boards outside of Kansas.

Along with the required coursework, students successfully complete a thesis, or project which requires a program total of 33 credit hours, or a comprehensive examination which requires a program total of 36 credit hours in the last semester of their program in order to graduate. The comprehensive exam option is only available with approval from the student's faculty advisor. Students must be enrolled the final semester that they complete the thesis, project or examination.

Students not seeking low-incidence special education endorsement, will not enroll in SPED 775 or SPED 875 and instead take 2 elective courses (6 credit hours).

#### **Degree requirements:**

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Course requirements (licensure): <sup>1</sup></b>		
SPED 742	Assessment and Methods of Teaching Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities in Inclusive Settings	3
SPED 775	Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: 1-3	
SPED 735	Introduction to Teaching Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities in Inclusive Settings	3
SPED 842	Methods in Access and Inclusion in the Core Curriculum	3
SPED 723	Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports for Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 844	Advanced Methods in Access and Inclusion in the Core Curriculum	3
SPED 856	Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood	3
SPED 746	Assessment and Supports for Students with Complex Communication Needs	3
SPED 875	Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: 1-3	
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
<b>Electives (if only seeking masters and not endorsement students enroll in 2 electives - 6 hrs): <sup>2</sup></b>		
SPLH 848	Language Disorders of Special Populations	
SPLH 834	Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Literacy	
SPED 752	Overview of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	
SPED 756	Special Education Leadership	
SPED 757	History, Context, and Critique of Special Education	

SPED 758	Appropriate Education and Least Restrictive Environment	
SPED 759	Non-Discriminatory Evaluation, Parent Participation, and Procedural Due Process	
SPED 857	Career Development for Youth	
SPED 858	Assessment for Transition Planning	
SPED 859	Interagency Services for Transition to Adulthood	
SPED 860	Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities: Autism	
SPED 760	Introduction to Autism	
SPED 898	Master's Project	3
OR		
SPED 899	Master's Thesis	3
Total Hours:		33-36

<sup>1</sup> SPED 730 or equivalent is required to be admitted to the program. If equivalency is not demonstrated, SPED 730 will be added to the student's program plan.

<sup>2</sup> Non-licensure students will work with their faculty advisor to select 2 elective courses in place of SPED 775 and SPED 875.

## Master of Science in Education (M.S.E) - Online

The Special Education online graduate programs, with Master's and endorsement-only options, equips students to meet the challenges of being a special educator by building skills to assist both at-risk students and those with identified disabilities.

Graduates are employed as general educators, special educators, or consultants in a wide range of settings. Many complete course work required for the Kansas educational license or endorsements. Some students from related fields (e.g., speech therapists, occupational therapist, social workers) pursue this degree to expand their professional knowledge and skills for working in educational settings with children and youth with disabilities. These students may choose to complete a master's and not complete Kansas endorsement/licensure requirements.

The degree requires courses in the area of study (plus any endorsement-related courses); a research class; and completion of a project,

For degree seeking students, maintaining a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher is required. A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher is required to remain in good academic standing and in order to graduate.

Further information can be found in the Graduate Regulations (<https://catalog.ku.edu/education/#graduate/regulationstext>) section of the catalog.

The Department of Special Education (SPED) online (Autism, Transition and High Incidence) MSE programs are comprised of rigorous eight week courses. A majority of the work is completed asynchronously, meaning that it does not happen "live." Courses are generally eight weeks long (2 courses per a typical semester) and typically contain multiple milestones throughout the course. Students are expected to follow the course modules in order, submit assignments on time, and participate in online discussions with classmates. Potential students must ensure that they are prepared to be successful. Online coursework will require approximately 15- 20 hours of undivided attention per week (including readings, online discussions, individual projects, etc.). Consistent access to high speed internet services (basic broadband- 1Mbps) and a personal computer that

features Office 2016 or equivalent will be necessary. A tablet or mobile device (i.e., smartphone) will not be sufficient as a primary computer or primary means of accessing the Internet for the online coursework.

## Autism Spectrum Disorder Concentration-online

This program WILL NOT lead to any initial teacher licensure/certification or endorsement for the state of KS. State-by-state requirements vary. It is each student's responsibility to determine the licensure and endorsement requirements in his or her state and to apply for the licenses or endorsements necessary for his or her career goals.

We highly recommend that students seeking to obtain a license or certification in a state other than Kansas or a US territory first seek guidance from their appropriate licensing agency BEFORE beginning the academic program. The website <https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory> (<https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/>) provides resources for licensure and certificate boards outside of Kansas.

### Courses required for the program:

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 760	Introduction to Autism	3
SPED 860	Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities: Autism	3
SPED 785	Application of Assessment Information for Exceptional Children and Youth: Autism	3
SPED 790	Methods for Learners Autism	3
SPED 800	Teaching Language and Communication Skills to Students with Autism	3
SPED 854	Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education	3
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
Elective course		3
Elective course		3
Elective course		3
SPED 871	Advanced Practicum with Exceptional Children: Autism	3
SPED 898	Master's Project (*)	3
Total Credit Hours		36

**\*Master's Project to be completed in your last semester of the program.**

### Elective course options: (consult with your advisor for other courses)

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 856	Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood	3
SPED 857	Career Development for Youth (*)	3
SPED 858	Assessment for Transition Planning (*)	3
SPED 859	Interagency Services for Transition to Adulthood (*)	3
SPED 861	Blending Academics and Transition (*)	3
*SPED 856 is prerequisite		
SPED 772	Participation with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____	1-3

SPED 756	Special Education Leadership	3
SPED 730	Characteristics, Methods & Assessment: Intro Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 743	Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management	3

This program is not designed to lead to licensure or endorsement in Kansas, but coursework may be used toward licensure/endorsement in another state. Please check with the state licensing board for further information.

## High-Incidence Teaching Concentration

### Courses required for the program:

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 730	Characteristics, Methods & Assessment: Intro Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 741	Methods & Assessment: Literacy Interventions Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 743	Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management	3
SPED 775	Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)	3
SPED 841	Advanced Methods & Assessment: Learning Strategies & Content Mastery Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 843	Advanced Methods & Assessment: Strategies for Students with Significant Behavior, Social & Emotional Need	3
SPED 854	Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education	3
SPED 856	Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood	3
SPED 875	Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)	3
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
SPED 898	Master's Project (*)	3
Total Credit Hours		33

\*Master's Project to be completed in your last semester of the program.

## High Incidence Disabilities Non-Teaching Concentration

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 730	Characteristics, Methods & Assessment: Intro Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 741	Methods & Assessment: Literacy Interventions Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3

SPED 743	Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management	3
SPED 841	Advanced Methods & Assessment: Learning Strategies & Content Mastery Struggling Learners & Students High-Incidence Disabilities	3
SPED 843	Advanced Methods & Assessment: Strategies for Students with Significant Behavior, Social & Emotional Need	3
SPED 854	Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education	3
SPED 856	Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood	3
SPED 898	Master's Project	3
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
Electives		6
Electives are selected in consultation with your advisor.		
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>33</b>

**The NON Teaching Track program** WILL NOT lead to any initial teacher licensure/certification or endorsement for the state of KS. State-by-state requirements vary. Completion of a program is not a guarantee of licensure or endorsement of any kind. It is each student's responsibility to determine the licensure and endorsement requirements in his or her state and to apply for the licenses or endorsements necessary for his or her career goals.

**Possible elective courses for the NON Teaching Track program include:**

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 756	Special Education Leadership	3
SPED 760	Introduction to Autism	3
SPED 857	Career Development for Youth	3
SPED 858	Assessment for Transition Planning	3
SPED 859	Interagency Services for Transition to Adulthood	3
SPED 861	Blending Academics and Transition	3

Additional elective options may be available, please consult with your advisor.

## Secondary Special Education and Transition Concentration

**Courses required for the program (does not lead to licensure/endorsement):**

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 856	Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood	3
SPED 858	Assessment for Transition Planning	3
SPED 857	Career Development for Youth	3
SPED 861	Blending Academics and Transition	3
SPED 862	Work-Based Learning	3
SPED 863	Student Engagement in School and Community	3
SPED 859	Interagency Services for Transition to Adulthood	3
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
Elective Course (selected in consultation with your advisor)		3

SPED 898	Master's Project (*)	3
Total Credit Hours		30

**\*Master's Project to be completed in your last semester of the program.**

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical-thinking and analytical skills to facilitate supportive and collegial inclusive learning communities premised on flexible and collaborative practice among general and special educators and parents of students receiving special education services.
- Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based and high-leverage practices in special education.
- Demonstrate knowledge of characteristics, strengths, and typical areas of instructional need for students receiving special education services.