

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 have initial licensure in Early Childhood, Elementary or Secondary education to be eligible for the endorsement (offered as a graduate certificate)*

In Kansas to become a special educator in high or low incidence one must first obtain an initial teaching license in: Early Childhood Unified, Elementary Education, Elementary Education Unified, or Secondary Education

Students seeking to obtain a license or certification in a state other than Kansas or a US territory after completion of your program, it is highly recommended you first seek guidance from the appropriate licensing agency BEFORE beginning the academic program to ensure you can obtain a license of certification in your home state or territory. The website <https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory> (<https://nc-sara.org/professional-licensure-directory/>) provides resources for licensure and certification boards outside of Kansas.

Master of Science in Education - Special Education Admission Information:

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with at least a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale from a regionally accredited institution or a foreign university with substantially equivalent bachelor's degree requirements.

Meeting minimum admission standards does not guarantee admission to the program. Other factors considered by the committee include: strength of the letter of application; strength of the letters of recommendation; quality of previous experience and background in special education or a closely related discipline; availability of an appropriate advisor in the applicant's identified area of emphasis; and the fit between the applicant's professional and graduate program goals and the purpose and mission of the KU.

Application checklist:

- Online Application
- Official transcript of completed bachelor's degree from accredited university
- Letter of introduction stating your area of interest and licensure status as applicable
- Name, email and position for two professional references
- Current resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Proof of English proficiency (<https://graduate.ku.edu/english-proficiency-requirements/>) (for non-native English-speaking applicants)

Applicants who are non-native speakers of English must demonstrate English proficiency in the skill areas of reading, writing, and listening. Please read the full policy and acceptable proof of proficiency options on our policy page (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/english-proficiency-international-students/>). (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/english-proficiency-international-students/>) Additional information can be found here (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>).

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/archives/2024-25/education/#graduateregulationstext>) section of the catalog.

Early Childhood Unified (birth through Kindergarten) Curriculum (campus)

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)

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.

Code	Title	Hours
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 730 or equivalent is required to be admitted to the program. If equivalency is not demonstrated, SPED 730 will be added to applicants program plan.

Code	Title	Hours
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 _____ (Low Incidence)	

Code	Title	Hours
EPSY 715	Understanding Research in Education	3
Elective course outside dept. or program area (options below):		3
SPLH 848	Language Disorders of Special Populations	2

SPLH 834	Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Literacy	2
SPED 752	Overview of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education	3
SPED 756	Special Education Leadership	3
SPED 757	History, Context, and Critique of Special Education	3
SPED 758	Appropriate Education and Least Restrictive Environment	3
SPED 759	Non-Discriminatory Evaluation, Parent Participation, and Procedural Due Process	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 860	Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities: Autism Spectrum Disorder	3
SPED 760	Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders	3

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

Master's Thesis or Project Option:

To complete a Master's degree in Special Education (M.S.E.), students must have a total of 30 credit hours. Within these 30 credit hours a majority of the hours must be taken in Special Education. In addition, students must also enroll in 3 credit hours of either Master's Project or Master's Thesis and 3 credit hours of EPSY 715.

One of the following courses to complete the Master's Thesis or Project Option:

Code	Title	Hours
SPED 898	Master's Project (**)	1-4
SPED 899	Master's Thesis (**)	1-6
Total Credit Hours		31-37

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

Written Exam Option:

Students complete 36 credit hours of graduate coursework, a majority of the hours in Special Education and a written comprehensive exam. Students must be enrolled in graduate credit hours the semester they complete the exam, typically during the final semester. This option is only available with approval from your advisor.

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/archives/2024-25/education/#graduatereregulationstext>) 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 Spectrum Disorders	3
SPED 860	Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities: Autism Spectrum Disorder	3
SPED 785	Application of Assessment Information for Exceptional Children and Youth: Autism Spectrum Disorder	3
SPED 790	Methods for Learners with Higher-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder	3
SPED 800	Teaching Language and Communication Skills to Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities	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 Needing an Autism Spectrum Curriculum	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 Disability	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 Disability	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.

Total Hours 33

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 Spectrum Disorders	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.**