Master of Science in Education in Special Education

The Department of Special Education (http://specialedu.soe.ku.edu) offers graduate online and face to face education for students interested in teaching, research, and professional service related to children, adolescents, and adults with 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 education for children and youth with disabilities, innovative field-based research, and preparation of highly effective program graduates. 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 education preparation programs in the country, the department attracts students from many states and countries.

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

- Autism spectrum disorder
- Early childhood unified (ECU, birth through kindergarten)
- High-incidence disabilities
- Low-incidence disabilities
- Secondary transition education and services

Students seeking Kansas State Department of Education teaching licensure can complete requirements for special education endorsement in the following areas:

- Early childhood unified (ECU, birth through kindergarten)
- High-incidence
- Low-incidence

With the exception of ECU, all endorsement areas require current Kansas licensure in elementary, secondary, or early childhood education.

Students seeking initial licensure or an endorsement to an existing license must review their individual state licensure requirements with the appropriate licensing or regulatory authorities prior to enrolling.

Low-Incidence Disabilities Curriculum

Low-Incidence Provisional Kansas Endorsement Requirements:

- SPED 735 Introduction to Teaching Learners with Low-Incidence Disabilities in Inclusive Settings 3
- 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: _____ 3

Low-Incidence Endorsement Requirements (In addition to the above courses):

- SPED 730 Characteristics, Methods & Assessment: Intro Struggling Learners & Studnts High-Incidence Disabilities 3
- SPED 743 Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management 3
- SPED 842 Methods in Access and Inclusion in the Core Curriculum 3
- SPED 844 Advanced Methods in Access and Inclusion in the Core Curriculum 3
- SPED 854 Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education 3

M.S.E. Degree Program

Graduates are employed as general educators, special educators, or consultants. Some hold teaching positions in clinics, hospitals, residential treatment centers, community-based centers, and early childhood programs. Many complete course work required for Kansas special education teaching endorsements. Some students work in related fields (e.g., general educators, speech therapists, social workers) and pursue this degree to expand their professional knowledge and skills by adding competence teaching children and youth with disabilities. These students may choose not to complete endorsement 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 addition of professional endorsements will lengthen a student's program to 35 to 42 credit hours, depending on the endorsement(s) chosen by the student. 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.

Further information is available from the department (http://specialedu.soe.ku.edu).

Graduate Admission to the School of Education

Graduate programs in education are open to students with acceptable baccalaureate and graduate degrees whose academic records indicate that they can do successful work at the graduate level. Regular admission requires a grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Individual departments may require additional information and may have more stringent admission and retention requirements.

Some departments may offer special provisional admission categories to students who may not qualify under traditional admission criteria. Departments that offer provisional admission require a grade-point average of at least 2.5. Applicants must provide evidence of ability to work successfully at the graduate level, including experience in and commitment to the profession. Exceptions to established policies must be sought individually by petition to the Graduate Division of the School of Education.

See Admission in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog for more information.

Each department in the School of Education sets its own application deadlines. Prospective graduate students should contact their departments for more information.
High-Incidence Requirements (in addition to the above courses):

**SPED 743**  Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management  3

**SPED 841**  Advncd Methods&Asmnt:Learn Stratg&Contnt Mastery Struggling Learners&Stdnts High- Incidence Disabilit  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 875**  Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)  3

**SPED 856**  Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood  3

---

**High-Incidence Disabilities Curriculum**

**High-Incidence Provisional Kansas Endorsement Requirements:**

**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 775**  Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)  3

---

**Additional Courses Needed to Complete the Master’s Degree:**

**EPSY 715**  Understanding Research in Education  3

Elective course outside dept. or program area  3

---

**Master’s Thesis or Project Option:**

To complete a Masters degree in Special Educaiton (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.

---

**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.

---

**One of the following courses to complete the Master’s Degree:**

**SPED 898**  Master’s Project  3

**SPED 899**  Master’s Thesis  3

**SPED 897**  Independent Study (Written Comprehensive Exam)  1-3

---

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

**Licensure/Masters Requirements:**

**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

**EPSY 715**  Understanding Research in Education  3

**SPED 898**  Master’s Project (OR)  3

**SPED 899**  Master’s Thesis  3

TOTAL CREDIT HOURS  33

---

**Masters Requirements:**

Completion of 30 graduate level credits with a grade of C or better. In most cases, this means the 27 credits licensure requirements, with the addition of EPSY 715 and a Master Project or Masters Thesis.
Masters of Science in Education - On-line programs

The Special Education 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. Graduate of this program work as specialists, teachers, consultants and resource teachers who help classroom teachers adapt content and conditions to better meet the educational needs of students with special needs.

The teaching tracks of these programs are designed to prepare graduates to teach special education. To teach that subject matter in certain states, qualified special educators may need an INITIAL, general education teaching license, to which they add an endorsement in special education. This program, which meets Kansas endorsement standards, may qualify graduates to petition for initial teaching licensure. This depends on the particular requirements of the state.

No program can guarantee licensure. It is each student’s responsibility to determine the licensure requirements in his or her state and to apply for the licenses or endorsements necessary to his or her career goals. Our department staff and Licensure Officer can provide individual support during the application process to help you understand your state’s requirements.

High-Incidence Curriculum

There are three tracks offered online for the High-Incidence program:

1. Master’s Teacher Track includes practica for classroom educators who intend to acquire an endorsement or license to teach special education in a cross-categorical, multi-categorical, mild/moderate or adaptive classroom. This program is best for educators looking to transition or start a career in special education.

It is intended for those seeking Master's-level knowledge and skills to apply in a classroom setting. There are two practica designed to be completed within the student's existing school environment.

2. Master’s Non-Teacher Track substitutes coursework for practicum requirements with the expectation that participants want to gain knowledge about high-incidence special education, but are not pursuing a teacher license. It is best for consultants, advocates and administrative or government positions within the field of special education.

It is intended for those seeking Master’s-level knowledge and skills to apply outside of a classroom setting. It substitutes two courses in place of the practicum requirement: C&T 709 - Foundations of Curriculum & Instruction and C&T 807 - Multicultural Education

The teaching track of this program is designed to prepare graduates to teach special education. To teach that subject matter in certain states, qualified special educators may need an INITIAL, general education teaching license, to which they add an endorsement in special education. This program, which meets Kansas endorsement standards, may qualify graduates to obtain a special education endorsement in other states as well. In addition, in states that accept a special education credential as a basis to issue an INITIAL teaching license, this program may qualify graduates to petition for initial teaching licensure. This depends on the particular requirements of the state.

No program can guarantee licensure. It is each student’s responsibility to determine the licensure requirements in his or her state and to apply for the licenses or endorsements necessary to his or her career goals. Our department staff and Licensure Officer can provide individual support during the application process to help you understand your state’s requirements.

3. Endorsement-Only Track includes the coursework for licensed educations who intend to add a subject-matter endorsement to their credentials, but does not include the graduate course requirements of a Master's degree. This program would be best for currently licensed teachers in states where additional endorsement in Special Education is required.

It is intended for those seeking Master's level knowledge and skills, but who already have, or do not require a Master’s degree. This program removes 2 courses, EPSY 715 and the Master's Project (SPED 898) in the master's program.

Courses required for the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 730</td>
<td>Characteristics, Methods &amp; Assessment: Intro Struggling Learners &amp; Studnts High-Incidence Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 741</td>
<td>Methods &amp; Assessment: Literacy Interventions Struggling Learners &amp; Students High-Incidence Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 743</td>
<td>Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 775</td>
<td>Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 841</td>
<td>Advanced Methods &amp; Assessment: Strategies for Students with Significant Behavior, Social &amp; Emotional Need</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 843</td>
<td>Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 854</td>
<td>Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 875</td>
<td>Practicum with Children and Youth with Disabilities: _____ (High-Incidence)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPSY 715</td>
<td>Understanding Research in Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED 898</td>
<td>Master's Project</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credit Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Non-Teacher Track, practica are replaced with two courses: C&T 709 - Foundations of Curriculum & Instruction and C&T 807 - Multicultural Education

For Endorsement Only Track, EPSY 715 and SPED 898 are not required.

Secondary Special Education and Transition Curriculum

Graduates of the program work in many settings including special education teachers and advisors at the secondary level, as personnel in government or NGO's working in transition services-related capacity, and as vocational evaluators at vocational services organizations.

The Secondary Special Education Transition program does not lead to a teacher license or state endorsement in the state of Kansas. It is each
student's responsibility to determine the licensure requirements in his or her state.

Courses required for the program:

- SPED 856 Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood 3
- SPED 858 Assessment for Transition Planning 3
- EPSY 715 Understanding Research in Education 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
- Elective Course (Choose from available courses that term). 3
- SPED 898 Master's Project 3

Total Credit Hours: 33

Autism Spectrum Disorders Curriculum

In the M.S.E. in Special Education with an emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) program, students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively educate children with ASD.

Courses required for the program:

- SPED 760 Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders 3
- SPED 785 Application of Assessment Information for Exceptional Children and Youth 3
- SPED 800 Teaching Language and Communication Skills to Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities 3
- SPED 860 Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities: ________________ 3
- SPED 854 Family and Interprofessional Collaboration in Special Education 3
- EPSY 715 Understanding Research in Education 3
- Elective course determined by track 3
- Elective course determined by track 3
- Elective course determined by track 3
- SPED 871 Advanced Practicum with Exceptional Children Needing an Autism Spectrum Curriculum 3
- SPED 898 Master's Project (A) 1
- SPED 898 Master's Project (B) 2

Total Credit Hours: 36

Program Tracks:

Students will complete three (3) elective courses from a single elective track for their program of study. There are three tracks to choose from: the Behavior track, the Leadership track and the Secondary/Transition track.

The Behavior track is appropriate for graduate students who are interested in developing an in-depth understanding of behavior, applied behavior analysis, positive behavior support and how to support appropriate behavior in learners with autism spectrum disorders. The Behavior track includes several course options:

- SPED 743 Methods: Functional Behavioral Assessment, Positive Behavior Support and Classroom Management 3
- SPED 843 Advanced Methods & Assessment: Strategies for Students with Significant Behavior, Social & Emotional Need 3
- Elective to be determined in consultation with the Academic Advisor 3

The Leadership track is appropriate for graduate students who are currently serving or aspiring toward a leadership position in a school or district (e.g., special education coordinator, director of special education, principal, superintendent, etc.). This track provides students with an understanding of and the skills to address the complex issues surrounding educating students with learning, social, and emotional needs, including those identified with disabilities. Students in the Leadership track will select the following three courses:

- SPED 756 Special Education Leadership 3
- SPED 758 Appropriate Education and Least Restrictive Environment 3

The Secondary/Transition track helps educators prepare secondary special education students and young adults with disabilities who are making the transition to adult life. The transition courses will provide you with instructional teaching strategies and the latest applied research to ensure success for students in secondary education transitioning to life outside of school. Students in this track will elect the following three courses:

- SPED 856 Transition Education and Services from Childhood through Adulthood 3
- SPED 858 Assessment for Transition Planning 3
- SPED 861 Blending Academics and Transition 3

Important Dates

DEC

30

Application Deadline

December 30th

JAN

09

Next Start

January 9th

Request Information
Learn More

By clicking "Learn More," I agree to provide the contact information listed above for the purpose of receiving communications regarding educational programs and opportunities.

Recent Articles

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Infographic (https://educationonline.ku.edu/community/idea-infographic)

Timeline of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (https://educationonline.ku.edu/community/idea-timeline)

The 21st Century Principal: For Teachers and Administrators (https://educationonline.ku.edu/community/the-21st-century-principal)

See more articles... (https://educationonline.ku.edu/community)

KU School of Education News

December 7, 2016

2017 Best Education Program Rankings (http://soe.ku.edu/2017-best-education-program-rankings)

December 1, 2016

Yong Zhao: How Did the U.S. Do on the Latest International Tests? (http://soe.ku.edu/yong-zhao-how-did-us-do-latest-international-tests)

December 1, 2016

East Asians topped U.S. students again on international tests. But are their schools really better? (http://soe.ku.edu/east-asians-topped-us-students-again-international-tests-are-their-schools-really-better)

Read more » (http://soe.ku.edu/news)

Stay Connected