SPECIAL EDUCATION, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The emphasis throughout the Special Education program is upon a broad clinical teaching model. Course work and practicum experiences focus upon the identification and management of a wide range and degree of educational and behavioral problems of students with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21. A core of Special Education courses aimed at general skill development in the areas of diagnosis, identification, development of materials and teaching strategies, implementation, and evaluation is required of all students. This major focuses on teaching principles and methodologies, classroom and behavioral management, and the development of teaching materials for children and youths with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. This program helps prepare special education teachers to meet the needs of students enrolled in early intervention, elementary and secondary public school special education programs.

What is Special Education?

Our goal is an educational system in which teachers, families, and communities share responsibility and commitment for preparing students to live independent, productive, and personally satisfying lives to the fullest extent possible. This goal includes: Having a positive influence on the inclusion of persons who are culturally, physically or intellectually diverse in the mainstream of American life; Providing national leadership in the development of new knowledge in special education; Preparing teachers to use effective practices in special education. Students in the Special Education Program have an opportunity to enroll in an integrated undergraduate – graduate program with the Reading Specialist Program in which students earn a bachelor’s degree and certification in both areas.

You Might Like This Program If...

• You want to make a difference in the lives of children, families, adolescents, and adults.
• You like working with individuals with disabilities in the home, schools, or community.
• You like a challenge.
• You want to teach, to be an agent of change, and to be an advocate.
• You seek out solutions.
• You want to know more!

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION (https://ed.psu.edu/special-education-bachelor-science/)

Entrance to Major

Eligibility for entry to the Special Education program is based on the following set criteria:

1. Cumulative grade-point average of 3.00 is required (all PA teacher preparation programs require a 3.0 at entry and exit of program)
2. Applicants must complete a number of prerequisite courses and other requirements. The following courses must be passed with a grade of "C" or better: CI 280, EDPSY 10 or EDPSY 11, EDPSY 14, EDPSY 101, EDTHP 115, MATH 200, PSYCH 100, PSYCH 212.
3. Documentation of at least 80 hours of volunteer or paid education work experience with learners of the age group the candidate plans to teach. Candidates for Special Education must document two separate 40-hour experiences in two different settings, with learners who have special needs. One experience should include learners with a different level of severity or functioning (e.g., mild/severe, young/adult) from those learners in the other experience. One experience should also include learners with cultural, social, or ethnic backgrounds different from the candidate’s own.
4. Completion of at least 48 semester credit hours, including ENGL 15 or ENGL 30H.
5. Approval from the professional education adviser or the head of the pertinent certification program.

Students may be admitted to the program by declaring Special Education as a major, transferring from a previously declared major, or transferring from another institution of higher education.

Students cannot be formally admitted to Special Education before their fifth semester.

Students are assigned to one selection pool. For example, Freshmen admitted in the summer or fall of 2014 are automatically assigned to the spring 2016 selection pool. Students who wish to transfer into Special Education from another major or university will be assigned to a selection pool based on the total number of credits they have earned and their completion of College of Education prerequisite courses.

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education, a minimum of 122 credits is required (See also Teacher Education Programs (https://ed.psu.edu/academics/teacher-testing-certification/)):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GQ courses; 6 credits of GS courses; 6 credits of GH courses.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better per course is required for all Special Education prerequisites and teacher certification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CI 280</td>
<td>Introduction to Teaching English Language</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSY 14</td>
<td>Learning and Instruction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSY 101</td>
<td>Analysis and Interpretation of Statistical Data in Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDTHP 115</td>
<td>Education in American Society</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 200</td>
<td>Problem Solving in Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100</td>
<td>Introductory Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PSYCH 212  Introduction to Developmental Psychology  3
SPLED 395W **SPECIAL TOPICS**  3
SPLED 401  Motivating Exceptional Learners  4
SPLED 404  Working with Families and Professionals in Special Education  3
SPLED 409A  Fundamental Literacy Skills for Students with Special Needs  3
SPLED 409B  Writing and Content Literacy for Students with Special Needs  3
SPLED 409C  Mathematics Instruction for Students with Special Needs  3
SPLED 410  Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Special Education  3
SPLED 411  Intervention for Students with Severe Disabilities  3
SPLED 412  Instruction for Students with Mild Disabilities  3
SPLED 415  Early Special Education  3
SPLED 418  Technologies for Persons with Disabilities  3
SPLED 425  Foundations of Special Education, Etiologies, Law, and Implications for Practice  3
SPLED 454  Assessment for Instruction  3
SPLED 495D  Professional Development for Special Education Teacher Candidates  3
SPLED 495E  Experience with Exceptional Children  3
SPLED 495F  Practicum in Special Education  12
SPLED 495G  Experience with an Integrated Inclusion Classroom  4

Additional Courses
Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better for all Special Education prerequisites and teacher certification

EDPSY 10  Individual Differences and Education  3
or EDPSY 11  Educational Implications of Individual Differences in Childhood  3

Select 3 credits from the following:  3
CSD 218  American Sign Language I  
RHS 402  Children and Families in Rehabilitation Settings and Human Services  
RHS 403  Medical Aspects of Disability  
RHS 404  Rehabilitation Services for Transition Age Youth with Disabilities: Theory and Practice  
RHS/LHR 410  Employment Strategies for People with Disabilities  
RHS 433  Trauma-informed care for school & human service professionals  
SPLED 461  Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders: Issues and Concerns  
SPLED 462  Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis  

General Education
Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)
• Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
• Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)
• Arts (GA): 3 credits
• Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
• Humanities (GH): 3 credits
• Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 3 credits
• Natural Sciences (GN): 3 credits

Integrative Studies
• Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain): 6 credits

Exploration
• GN, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
• GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses. This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements
First Year Engagement
All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements
• United States Cultures: 3 credits
• International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.
Quality of Work
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition
The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Integrated B.S. in Special Education and M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction
Requirements for the Integrated B.S. in Special Education and M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/curriculum-instruction/#integratedundergradgradprogramstext).

Academic Advising
The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/)

University Park
Kathleen McKinnon
Coordinator of Undergraduate Program
203 CEDAR Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-2236
kmm25@psu.edu

Suggested Academic Plan
The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

Special Education, B.S. at University Park Campus and Commonwealth Campuses
The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30H</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EDPSY 101</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSYCH 101</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>EDTHP 115</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Credits | 15 |

Second Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDPSY 14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CAS 100A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Selection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Science Selection</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Selection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Art Selection</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Activity</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Health and Physical Activity</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities Selection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Minor/Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Third Year | 13.5 |

Third Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 395W</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 404</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 401</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SPLED 411</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 408</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 412</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 425</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SPLED 454</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSY 421</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495E</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Fourth Year | 17 |

Fourth Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 409A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 409B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 409C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 495G</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLED 418</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 202A or 202B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SPLED 495F</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Credits | 123 |

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:
US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and replace both ENGL 30H and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits.


2 No additional coursework permitted during student teaching.

Career Paths

Career opportunities for graduates with teaching certification include:

- An M.Ed. graduate degree (https://ed.psu.edu/special-education-master-education/) and eligibility for PA certification in special education.
- Special Education Supervisory program for PDE certification
- Focused program for working with all learners with Autism (https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-educating-individuals-with-autism-postbaccalaureate-certificate/)
- Professionals may also be interested in the focus the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program certificate (https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-applied-behavior-analysis-graduate-certificate/) to prepare BCBA
- Online programs for teachers to support all learners in Academic and Behavioral Supports program (https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-special-education-masters-degree/)

Professional Resources

- Council for Exceptional Children (https://exceptionalchildren.org)

Accreditation

The College of Education educator preparation programs are fully accredited at the Initial and Advanced levels by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The next CAEP program review will be Fall 2026. CAEP advances excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning.