



GRADUATE STUDIES FACT SHEET

M.ED. IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLINE PROGRAM

Online and Blended M.Ed. in Special Education with an Emphasis in Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology

PROGRAMS OF STUDY OVERVIEW

The Department of Special Education at West Chester University is continually growing its capacity to provide both post-baccalaureate certification and master of education programs by offering the same quality education across increasing venues. To that end, students have a choice in both programs between traditional (face-to-face) courses on the West Chester University campus, fully online courses, and blended (combination of face-to-face and online) courses at the new Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) Philadelphia Multi-University Center in Center City. This M.Ed. program is offered in online and blended formats.

The master of education in special education is designed to appeal to all teachers who wish to extend their competency in working with students with disabilities. The program is, in the traditional sense, an opportunity if one is already certified in a particular area of interest to extend one's knowledge in a new and professionally rewarding direction. The special education program is enriched by the practical experiences available in a variety of teaching situations.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates with certification are employed in school programs where they work with students with disabilities in traditional special education classrooms as well as inclusive settings.

Special education graduates find that the demand for certified teachers is high. Many graduates are seeking careers in related positions outside the traditional classroom setting. Pennsylvania, along with most other states, has moved away from

the institutionalization of individuals with disabilities. This trend has opened positions for supervisory personnel in group homes as well as individually supported employment.

In addition, positions are available in recreational facilities, day-care settings, and with advocacy groups. Some graduates find working with a geriatric population to be a positive experience. Graduates in this program are fortunate to have numerous alternatives to the classroom that satisfy their primary goal of supporting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Graduates often expand career opportunities by taking advanced work in special education or other related fields, such as reading, recreation, physical therapy, and psychology.

M.ED. IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLINE PROGRAM (33 CREDITS)

The Department of Special Education offers a fully online program leading to the master of education in special education. The program is open to anyone with a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year, degree-granting institution and has a final GPA of 3.0 or higher. In keeping with the purpose of teacher education at West Chester University, the prime mission of this degree program is to prepare advanced-level teachers who can synthesize and apply self-awareness and general knowledge of

- foundations of the study of disability,
- the learner with disabilities,
- appropriate content for the learner with disabilities, and
- effective classroom pedagogy.

The department believes this synthesis encourages reflection on the art of teaching

and results in a professional who is able to make sound, ethical educational decisions regarding curriculum and instructional strategies for students with disabilities. In addition, high standards of scholarship and the application of research, as well as professionalism, collaboration, and knowledge of current trends in the field, are essential for all teachers of special education.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ West Chester University's long-standing quality and expertise in the field of special education
- ◆ An interdisciplinary program that includes special education, secondary and professional education, and communicative disorders
- ◆ National accreditation
- ◆ Courses that may be applied to Pennsylvania teaching certification
- ◆ A cohort model designed to increase student-to-student collaboration and provide social support for online learners
- ◆ Action research allowing students to apply what they have learned to a current research problem in the field

THE CURRICULUM

- Professional Education Courses (6 semester hours)
 - EDT 500 Integrating Educational Technologies for Effective Instruction
 - EDF 501 Research Methods for Teachers
- Special Education Core (15 semester hours)
 - EDA 503 Family Systems in Special Education
 - EDA 506 Legal Issues in Special Education

- EDA 544 Behavior Management
- EDA 580 Contemporary Issues and Trends
- EDA 591 Final Project

III. Area of Concentration in Universal Design and Assistive Technology (12 semester hours)

- EDA 521 Assistive Technologies for Communication and Participation
- EDA 522 Integrating Assistive Technology
- EDA/EDT 517 Technology and Universal Design for Learning
- EDA/EDT 519 Introduction to Assistive Technology

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should submit the following materials to the Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education:

- Completed graduate application, including professional goals statement (apply online at www.wcupa.edu/grad)
- Official academic transcript(s) from all colleges and universities attended, demonstrating a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- If GPA is below required University GPA of 3.0, scores from either the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) general test or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT), with a score at the 50th percentile
- Evidence of Instructional I certificate (two copies). Applicants to the M.Ed. in special education who show evidence of Pennsylvania State Teaching Licensure issued prior to 2013 or other state teaching licensure may be required to show evidence of 49.13 course work and may be required to complete 49.13 course work prior to admission to the M.Ed. in special education.

- Two letters of recommendation. An applicant to a graduate program must ask two recommenders to support the application with an electronic letter of recommendation. A link to the electronic recommendation form will be sent to the recommenders after the applicant has entered their names and e-mail addresses into the applicant's online application form. Students with questions about this process should contact the Office of Graduate Studies at gradstudies@wcupa.edu or at 610-436-2943.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Write: Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education
McKelvie Hall
102 West Rosedale Avenue
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Call: 610-436-2943

Fax: 610-436-2763

E-mail: gradstudy@wcupa.edu

Web: www.wcupa.edu/grad

Visit: www.facebook.com/wcupgrad

Or contact the department:

Write: Dr. Vicki McGinley, Graduate Coordinator
Department of Special Education
305-B Recitation Hall
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Call: 610-436-2579

Web: www.wcupa.edu/_academics/coed/departments/specialeducation/

The Graduate Catalog is available online at www.wcupa.edu/_information/officialdocuments/graduate.catalog/.

ABOUT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

A regional, public institution, West Chester University of Pennsylvania offers high-quality undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as certification and certificate programs, in more than 100 subject areas.

As the second largest member of the State System of Higher Education, West Chester offers a full and rewarding educational experience as well as reasonable tuition.

With a rich heritage dating back to the 19th century, West Chester University was founded in 1871 as West Chester Normal School for the purpose of training teachers for the Commonwealth's newly established public schools. In 1960, West Chester State Teachers College expanded its programs to include liberal arts and graduate degrees and, as a result, dropped "Teachers" from its name. In 1983, West Chester State College became one of the 14 institutions in the State System of Higher Education. Along with its university status, the school acquired a new system of governance and the opportunity to expand its degree programs.

Today, more than 15,400 graduate and undergraduate students, as well as 1,500 faculty and staff, study and work on the 406-acre campus. Situated in the Borough of West Chester, the campus is a picturesque mix of Gothic, Victorian, and modern architecture with pleasant, tree-shaded walks.

Strategically located at the center of the mid-Atlantic corridor, West Chester University is just 25 miles west of Philadelphia and 17 miles north of Wilmington, Del. The campus is convenient to major cultural institutions, recreational activities, and commercial businesses, many of which provide internship opportunities for WCU's students.

