



GRADUATE STUDIES FACT SHEET

M.ED. SPECIAL EDUCATION TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

PROGRAM GOALS

In keeping with the purpose of teacher education at West Chester University, the prime mission of the master of education in special education is to prepare advanced-level teachers who can synthesize and apply self-awareness and general knowledge of

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

This integrative process encourages reflection on the science 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.

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

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.

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.

Teachers of students with and without disabilities will find that the program prepares them to work in inclusive settings providing support to students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Special education teachers will find an opportunity to do elective work in all graduate areas available at West Chester University.

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.

THE CURRICULUM

Area I: Professional Education
(6 semester hours)

Students, under advisement of the graduate coordinator, will select either EDF 500 Methods and Materials of Research in Education *or* EDF 501 Research Methods for Teachers *and* one other three-semester-hour course from the following:

EDF 510 Educational Foundations

EDP 550 Advanced Educational Psychology

EDT 500 Orientation to Instructional Media

The second area is the special education core which offers advanced work in educational diagnosis and prescription.

Area II: Special Education (15 semester hours)

EDA 503 Family Systems in Special Education

EDA 506 Legal Issues in Special Education

EDA 544 Classroom Management

EDA 580 Contemporary Issues and Trends

EDA 591 Final Project

The final area involves a concentration that one selects from a wide listing of possible concentrations. The concentration allows the unique opportunity to tailor a program to one's specific needs.

Area III: Concentration (12 semester hours)

Students will select one area of concentration from the list below. Students

will complete four courses (12 semester hours) in this area of concentration.

Autism*
 Education Technology
 Literacy
 Math
 Sciences
 Special Education
 Teaching English as a Second Language*
 Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology (online)*

*This area of concentration has an optional certificate program. Certificate programs may require special admission and additional course work for certificate completion. Contact the host department for details.

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. 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/official.documents/graduate.catalog/.

ABOUT GRADUATE STUDIES

West Chester University offers high-quality graduate degrees in more than 70 disciplines or areas of study, as well as certificate and certification programs. The graduate studies program has grown remarkably since its introduction in 1960. West Chester University's program is the largest within the 14 institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education enrolling more than 2,100 graduate students.

Programs can be taken on a part-time basis, and most of the graduate classes are scheduled during late afternoons and evenings for the benefit of in-service teachers and other employed persons.

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.

