

SPECIAL EDUCATION

UNDERGRADUATE FACT SHEET

The primary mission of the teacher education programs at West Chester University is the preparation and continuing development of educational professionals in order to meet the needs of diverse student populations.

The special education curriculum prepares you, as a student, to teach and work with diverse populations by providing you with the knowledge, skills, and values essential for effective teaching of individuals with various cognitive and physical disabilities.

In this program you will gain experience with children and young adults with low- and high-incidence disabilities. Successful University candidates possess many of the following personal characteristics: flexibility, sensitivity, open-mindedness, intellectual ability, physical stamina, and expectations that are professional and realistic.

Career Opportunities

Graduates completing certification requirements are employed in public school programs where they work with individuals in need of cognitive, emotional, and physical support 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 such as supervisory personnel in group homes as well as individually supported living and employment arrangements. In addition, positions are available in recreational facilities and day-care settings and with advocacy groups. Graduates of this program are fortunate to have numerous opportunities that satisfy their primary goal: to support the needs of individuals with disabilities. Graduates often extend career opportunities by taking advanced work in special education or other related fields, such as reading, recreation, physical therapy, and psychology.

The Pennsylvania teaching certificate is widely respected and reciprocally accepted by many states.

Undergraduate Degree

Bachelor of Science in Education – Special Education. The goal of this program is to provide relevant and comprehensive preparation if you are seeking certification to teach students with learning, intellectual, emotional, and/or physical disabilities.

In order to provide the broadest opportunities for employment success and quality of teaching skills across ages and populations, students choosing to major in special education will also major in another certification area, which then yields eligibility for certifications in two distinct yet complementary fields.

Therefore, dual certification programs are available in special education and early grades preparation, special education and middle grades preparation, and special education and secondary education in a content area, including biology, chemistry, earth and space science, English, general science, mathematics, and physics. Current trends, enforced by recent litigation, have increased the need for a general understanding of the individuals with disabilities in our schools. The dual certification programs prepare you to teach in both special education or regular education settings.

Typical Courses

Assessment and Special Education
Behavior Management
Communication Development and Assistive Technologies
Curriculum and Instruction
Field Experience
Foundations of Special Education
Life Transitions for Individuals With Disabilities

Special Study Opportunities

The special education program is influenced by the resources and experiences available to University students in the surrounding area, which has a rich history of private and public service to individuals with disabilities.

Learn More

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As a dual major with special education, you will participate in multiple, credit-bearing field experiences prior to student teaching. These field experiences place you in a variety of educational opportunities in public schools and private settings that support learners identified as individuals with disabilities. You will do your student teaching in a public school district or an intermediate unit classroom.

Advanced Degrees

Master of Education in Special Education

Certification in Special Education

Faculty

You can obtain a complete listing of faculty and their academic qualifications for this program from the contact person listed below or by visiting http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/coed/departments/specialeducation/.

For More Information

Dr. Donna Wandry, Chairperson

Department of Special Education

304 Recitation Hall

West Chester University

West Chester, PA 19383

610-436-2579

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

Undergraduate Catalog: http://www.wcupa.edu/_information/official.documents/undergrad.catalog/

About West Chester University

A comprehensive, public institution, West Chester University offers high-quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs in more than 100 subject areas, as well as certification

and certificate programs. As one of the largest members of the Pennsylvania 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, along with 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 between New York City and Washington, D.C., West Chester is just 25 miles west of Philadelphia and 17 miles north of Wilmington.

Information on Admission

Office of Admissions

Emil H. Messikomer Hall, 100 West Rosedale Ave.

West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383

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