

SPECIAL EDUCATION, PH.D.

Tracks

1. University Teaching and Research
2. Special Education Leadership

Program Description

The Ph.D. program in special education focuses on preparing special education professionals with emphasis on either teacher education and research or administration and leadership. The Ph.D. program prepares its graduates to become successful and productive special education faculty members or administrators through an intensive course of advanced study. Courses include both seminars and experiential learning.

Learning Outcomes

- **Cultural Competence.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate a high level of competence in understanding and responding to diversity of culture, language, and ethnicity
- **Knowledge and Application of Ethical Principles.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate in-depth knowledge and thoughtful application of the Code of Ethical Conduct and other guidelines relevant to their professional role.
- **Communication Skills.** Advanced program candidates possess a high level of oral, written, and technological communication skills, with specialization for the specific professional role(s) emphasized in the program. For programs for the advanced preparation of teachers, candidates meet ISTE standards. For doctoral programs, candidates are prepared to publish and present at conferences.
- **Mastery of Relevant Theory and Research.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate in-depth, critical knowledge of the theory and research relevant to the professional role(s) and focus area(s) emphasized in the program.
- **Skills in Identifying and Using Professional Resources.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate a high level of skill in identifying and using the human, material, and technological resources needed to perform their professional roles and to keep abreast of the field's changing knowledge base.
- **Inquiry Skills and Knowledge of Research Methods.** Using systematic and professionally accepted approaches, advanced program candidates demonstrate inquiry skills, showing their ability to investigate questions relevant to their practice and professional goals.
- **Skills in Collaborating, Teaching, and/or Mentoring.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate the flexible, varied skills needed to work collaboratively and effectively with other adults in professional roles.
- **Advocacy Skills.** Advanced program candidates demonstrate competence in articulating and advocating for sound professional practices and public policies for the positive development and learning of all students.
- **Leadership Skills.** Advanced program candidates reflect on and use their abilities and opportunities to think strategically, build consensus, create change, and influence better outcomes for students, families, and the profession.

Specialized Competencies

- Demonstrate the ability to identify and discuss major theories and philosophies related to learning and the education of individuals with disabilities
- Demonstrate the ability to identify governmental and legal structures, requirements, and parameters relating to the education and life issues of individuals with disabilities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical support for analysis of policies, procedures, and strategies that govern and direct educational programs (leadership).
- Demonstrate knowledge of theories in educational leadership and the application of these theories in practical settings (leadership).
- Demonstrate knowledge of pedagogical styles and the application of these styles in practical settings (higher ed).
- Demonstrate a personal philosophy of teacher-education and pedagogical preferences, and the application of this knowledge in practical settings (higher ed).