Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education


The M.Ed. major in Special Education provides students with the depth of knowledge and breadth of skill in educating students with disabilities required of a “master teacher.” Students may concentrate on one of five disability areas: early childhood special education; individuals with autism spectrum disorders; hearing loss; mild to moderate behavior and learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities, attention disorders, emotional behavior disorders, mild intellectual disabilities); or moderate, severe, and profound intellectual disabilities. The M.Ed. program is an advanced program that emphasizes research-based strategies, effective pedagogy, and data-based decision making. Students are provided advanced instruction on how to select appropriate curricula, employ effective methods of instruction, make assessment based decisions, and utilize effective classroom and student management procedures. Additionally, students are prepared to work collaboratively with other educational professionals and families, and exhibit the highest standards of professionalism while maximizing pupil learning and development. Because the M.Ed. is an advanced degree, students entering this program must already hold a teaching certificate in special education that is aligned with their chosen concentration area based on an accredited college/university program. Students who do not have an appropriate certificate must first complete the approved certification sequence through an initial certification program prior to seeking admission into the M.Ed. (see M. A. T. in Special Education).

Program Admission
Admissions criteria help to ensure that candidates are prepared for the rigorous curriculum requirements of the graduate program. Candidates must meet all admission requirements of the College of Education as stipulated by the Office of Academic Assistance and Graduate Admissions. Candidates who are considered for the M.Ed. Special Education program must meet the following criteria prior to program entry:

- undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university
- undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or higher
- official scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) from the past five years
- current T4 certificate in the concentration area to which the student is applying (or its equivalent)
- candidates must also submit two academic or professional letters of recommendation, a resume, and a goal statement.
- candidates may be required to participate in an interview.

Program Academic Regulations
Students in the M. Ed. in Special Education fulfill the college's Comprehensive Examination requirement by completing one of four capstone scholarly activities, as approved by their major
advisor: (1) a master’s research thesis, (2) a master’s action research project, (3) a master’s project, or (4) a master’s examination:

- The master’s research thesis is a basic research project conducted by the student under the supervision of the chair of his or her advisory committee. At the prospectus defense students are required to propose to their committee their detailed plans for data collection, including the timeline, the method, the people involved in data collection, and the potential use of previously collected data related to the thesis. Only after passing the prospectus defense and receiving approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board may students begin to pursue research participants.

- The master’s action research project is an applied project conducted by the student under the supervision of the chair of his or her advisory committee. At the prospectus defense students are required to propose to their committee their detailed plans for data collection, including the timeline, the method, the people involved in data collection, and the potential use of previously collected data related to the project. Only after passing the prospectus defense and receiving approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board may students begin to pursue research participants.

- The master’s project consists of a comprehensive written review of literature on a selected topic. A written prospectus describing in detail the proposed project must be submitted to and approved by all three members of the students’ advisory committee before the work is begun.

- The master’s examination consists of a 4-hour, in-house written examination on a question or questions to be determined by the program faculty. The purpose of the exam is to allow the student to demonstrate mastery of the critical content within their concentration area in the M.Ed. in Special Education.

In addition to these regulations:

- The Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders requires that students earn a grade of “B” or higher in each course in the teaching field/major. If students earn a grade below “B” in a course, they must repeat that course. Students will be allowed to repeat a course in this manner one time. Students who fail to earn a grade of “B” or higher after taking the course a second time will be scholastically excluded from this major.
• Evaluation of a student’s performance is continuous and involves consideration of the
student’s performance in all academic settings. Inappropriate or unprofessional conduct
by a student may result in the student being withdrawn from a course or the program. If
removal from a course is necessary, the student will receive the grade of “F” and may be
judged ineligible to re-enroll in the course.

Program Degree Requirements
Master of Education in Special Education

Professional Studies (9)
Select one (3):
EPSF 7100 Critical Pedagogy (3)
EPSF 7110 Multicultural Education (3)
EPSF 7120 Social and Cultural Foundations of Education (3)

Select one (3):
EPRS 7900 Methods of Research in Education (3)
EPRS 7910 Action Research (3)

Select one (3):
EPY 7080 The Psychology of Learning and Learners (3)

Teaching Field/Major and Electives (27-30)
Choose One Concentration

Autism Spectrum Disorders Concentration (27)
Major, Required (21):
EPY 8020 Principles of Applied Behavior Analysis
EPY 8850 Intro to Single-Case Methodology
EXC 7310 Strategies for Challenging Behaviors (3)
EXC 7320 Methods of Teaching Low-Functioning Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
EXC 7325 Methods of Teaching High-Functioning Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
EXC 7941 Current Issues in Special Education (3)
EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3)

Elective, Required (6), choose 2 courses:
• EXC 7170 Methods for Teaching Functional Life Skills to Students with Behavior and
Learning Disabilities (3)
• EXC 7190 Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)
• EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3): For students who
choose to complete the master’s research thesis or action research project, an additional 3
hours of EXC 7980 Research in Special Education (3) must be taken as one of the
required electives so that students can complete their capstone scholarly activity.
• Or other courses with the approval of the program advisor.

Students who have completed any of the above coursework may choose additional courses of intellectual and professional interest with advisor approval.

Total hours: 36 hours

Behavior/Learning Disabilities Concentration (27)
Major, Required (21):
EXC 7130 Assessment for Instructional Planning (3)
EXC 7150 Methods for Teaching Academics to Students with Behavior and Learning Disabilities (3)
EXC 7160 Strategies for Social and Emotional Behavior in Students with Behavior and Learning Disabilities (3)
EXC 7170 Methods for Teaching Functional Life Skills to Students with Behavior and Learning Disabilities (3)
EXC 7460 Mathematical Instruction in Special Education I (3)
EXC 7941 Current Issues in Special Education (3)
EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3)

Elective, Required (6):
• The student will select 6 semester hours of program-related graduate-level coursework with consent of their advisor. The purpose of the elective hours is to enable students to create a program of study to fit their individual interests as it relates to students with behavior/learning disabilities. Students will be provided with suggested areas of additional study and appropriate coursework (e.g., Language and Literacy; Mathematics; Science/STEM; Urban Education; Challenging Behaviors; Bilingual/English as a Second Language; Research Methods; Learning & Development; Learning & Technology).

• EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3): For students who choose to complete the master’s research thesis or action research project, an additional 3 hours of EXC 7980 Research in Special Education (3) must be taken as one of the required electives so that students can complete their capstone scholarly activity.

Students who have completed any of the coursework may choose additional courses of intellectual and professional interest with advisor approval.

Total hours: 36 hours
Deaf Education Concentration (30)
Required (30):
EXC 7030 Applied Behavior Analysis (3)
EXC 7190 Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7325 Methods of Teaching High-Functioning Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
EXC 7350 Psychosocial Characteristics of Deafness (3)
EXC 7360 Language Development in Students Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (3)
EXC 7390 Reading and Writing Instruction for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (3)
EXC 7410 Assess of DHH students (3)
EXC 7420 Methods of Atypical Deaf
EXC 7941 Current Issues in Special Education
EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3)

Students who have completed coursework above choose from the following:
- EDRD 7600 Theory and Pedagogy in the Study of Reading (3)
- EDRD 7650 Individual Assessment and Instruction for At-Risk Readers (3)
- CSD and Linguistics courses with advisor approval.
- EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3): For students who choose to complete the master’s research thesis or action research project, an additional 3 hours of EXC 7980 Research in Special Education (3) must be taken so that students can complete their capstone scholarly activity.
- Or other courses with the approval of the program advisor.

Students who have completed any of the coursework may choose additional courses of intellectual and professional interest with advisor approval.

Total hours: 39 hours

Early Childhood Special Education Concentration (27)

Prerequisites:
EPY 2050 Human Growth and Development or its equivalent
EXC 4020 Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities or its equivalent
EDRD 6600 or EDRD 7600 Methods of Teaching Reading
EDRD 7550 or EDRD 7650 Linking Literacy Assessment and Classroom Instruction or Individual Assessment and Instruction for At-Risk Readers
EDMT 7400 Methods of Teaching Mathematics or its equivalent
EXC 7929 Initial Practicum or its equivalent

Required (27):
EXC 7000 Collaboration with Parents and Professionals (3)
EXC 7010 Language Development and Language Disabilities (3)
EXC 7190 Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7300 Assistive Technology: Reading and Academics (3)
EXC 7320 Methods of Teaching Low-Functioning Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
EXC 7330 Physical and Health Management of Students with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7650 Characteristics of Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7660 Methods of Teaching Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7939 Practicum II: Early Childhood (3)

Total Hours: 36

**Intellectual Disabilities Concentration (27)**

Major, Required (21):
EXC 7030 Applied Behavior Analysis (3)
EXC 7280 Methods for Teaching Students with Severe Disabilities (3)
EXC 7281 Adapted/Functional Curriculum for Students with Severe Disabilities (3)
EXC 7310 Strategies for Challenging Behaviors (3)
EXC 7320 Methods for Teaching Low-Functioning Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
EXC 7941 Current Issues in Special Education
EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3)

Elective, Required (6), choose 2:
- EXC 7290 Methods for Teaching Students with Physical and Multiple Disabilities: Reading and Academics (3)
- EXC 7330 Physical and Health Management of Students with Disabilities (3)
- EXC 7980 Research in Special Education: Master’s Capstone (3): For students who choose to complete the master’s research thesis or action research project, an additional 3 hours of EXC 7980 Research in Special Education (3) must be taken as one of the required electives so that students can complete their capstone scholarly activity.
- Or other courses with the approval of the program advisor.

Students who have completed any of the above coursework may choose additional courses of intellectual and professional interest with advisor approval.

Total hours: 36 hours

**Program total: minimum of 36 semester hours (Deaf Education concentration is a minimum of 39 hours)**