
MASTER OF SCIENCE **EDUCATION**

Special Education

Special Education Visual Impairments Specialization



NORTHERN

GRADUATE STUDIES

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northern.edu/graduate

Note: The information contained in this handbook is subject to change; students are responsible for communicating with their Graduate Committee Chair/Graduate Office to remain current in the program policies and procedures.

NSU Policy 2.6.3.6 Updated 8/16/2021

SPECIAL EDUCATION HANDBOOK

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MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This program enables candidates to specialize their educator preparation to support all individuals with diverse learning abilities and behavioral needs. This program is designed for a) educators who have a teaching certificate, b) special educators looking to broaden and deepen their knowledge in visual impairments. Educators who already have a teaching certificate, can select either a) the master's degree in special education program or b) the master's degree in special education with specialization in Visual Impairments to expand their ability to better serve more students with disabilities. The Visual Impairment Specialization provides the preparation to become a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI). Candidates will complete courses to enhance their learner development, as well as focusing on pedagogy, specialized curriculum, special education law, and instruction methodologies for exceptional learners. Candidates will demonstrate proficiency through multiple assessment measures embedded within the program. This program requires candidates to demonstrate competency in content, pedagogy, and professional knowledge and skills related to the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards and the Special Education High Leverage Practices.

II. APPLICATION

Admission requirements include the following:

- Undergraduate GPA of 2.75
- Completed Graduate Application

- Two letters of recommendation
- \$35 application fee
- An official transcript
- Candidates must have a teaching certificate or be eligible for a certificate in Early Childhood, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Career Technical Education, K-12 Education, Early Childhood Special Education and/or K-12 Special Education.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Course Number and Name	Credits
M.S. Ed. in Special Education	
SPED 704 Inclusive Education	3 credits
EDAD 720 Special Education Law for School Administrators	3 credits
SPED 731 Educating Students with Learning Disabilities	3 credits
SPED 741 Education Students with Behavior Disorders	3 credits
SPED 510 Behavior Management for Exceptional Children	3 credits
SPED 517 Vocational-Transitional Programming	2 credits
SPED 520 K-12 Curriculum and Instructional Strategies	3 credits
SPED 531 Identification and Assessment in Special Education	2 credits
SPED 560 Family Systems and Professional Collaboration	2 credits
SPED 795 Practicum	6 credits
Total	30 credits

M.S. Ed. in Special Education with Visual Impairment Specialization	
SPED 704 Inclusive Education	3 credits
SPED 718 Assessment and Planning for Diverse Learners with Visual Impairments	3 credits
EDAD 720 Special Education Law for School Administrators	3 credits
SPED 731 Educating Students with Learning Disabilities	3 credits
Or	
SPED 741 Education Students with Behavior Disorders	
SPED 521 Principles of Orientation and Mobility for the Classroom Teacher	3 credits
SPED 523 Foundations of Teaching Students who have Visual Impairments	2 credits
SPED 524 Educational Methods, Materials, and Access Technology for Students who Visual Impairments	2 credits
SPED 525 Educational Implications of the Anatomy and Function of the Eye	3 credits
SPED 534 Introduction to the Literary UEB Braille Code	2 credits
SPED 536 Introduction to the Nemeth Braille Code/Teaching Reading to the Blind and Visually Impaired	2 credits
SPED 795 Practicum	4 credits
Total	30 credits

IV. GRADUATE COMMITTEE

Each candidate is assigned a committee chair and second committee member upon admission to the graduate program in Special Education. The committee chair is a full time faculty member and is familiar with the area in which the student is interested. The candidate's committee chair is responsible for providing direction and advisement during the program, and will work with the candidate to schedule the final examinations. The second committee member is an additional candidate support in courses and practicum experiences.

V. FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examinations are completed during the candidate's final semester of enrollment. Candidates are responsible for registering for these examinations with the Graduate Coordinator. The final examination consists of a written portion and a culminating presentation.

Written Portion: Candidates will write a paper on the application of Special Education High Leverage Practices and CEC Standards in the field of special education. As part of this paper, candidates will submit a final portfolio of all of the High Leverage Practices application documents that have been created throughout the graduate program. In addition, the paper must be crafted in APA format and infused with research, articulated with in-text citations. Sources must be credible using at least ten peer reviewed articles. All sources must be correctly cited on a "References" page. Candidates will complete and submit the written portion electronically.

Culminating Presentation: Candidates will prepare an oral presentation on the knowledge and skills gained throughout the master's degree program. The Special Education High Leverage Practices and CEC Standards will be an important component of this presentation. Candidates are required to successfully complete this assessment prior to program completion. The comprehensive examination is evaluated by the graduate committee chair and the second committee member. The Graduate Office will communicate the results to the candidate. If the student does not pass the exam, a second exam must be scheduled.

IV. APPENDIX A: COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (CEC) STANDARDS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION HIGH LEVERAGE PRACTICES

MASTER'S DEGREE: ADVANCED COMMON SPECIALTY ITEMS

1. Assessment
2. Curricular Content Knowledge
3. Programs, Services, and Outcomes
4. Research and Inquiry
5. Leadership and Policy
6. Professional and Ethical Practice
7. Collaboration

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT SPECIALIZATION: INITIAL SPECIALTY SET: BLIND AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

1. Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences
2. Learning Environments
3. Curricular Content Knowledge
4. Assessment
5. Instructional Planning and Strategies
6. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice
7. Collaboration

SPECIAL EDUCATION HIGH LEVERAGE PRACTICES

<https://highleveragepractices.org/>

1. Collaborating with Colleagues to Increase Student Success
2. Leading Effective Meetings with Professionals and Families
3. Collaborate with Families to Support Student Learning and Secure Needed Services
4. Using Multiple Sources of Information to Develop a Comprehensive Understanding of Student's Strengths and Needs
5. Interpreting and Communicating Assessment Information with Stakeholders to Collaboratively Design and Implement Educational Programs

6. Using Student Assessment Data, Analyzing Instructional Practices, and Making Necessary Adjustments That Improve Student Outcomes
7. Consistent, Organized, Respectful Learning Environment
8. Using Feedback to Improve Student Outcomes
9. Teaching Social Skills
10. Conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment to Develop Individualized Behavior Support Plans
11. Identify and Prioritize Long- and Short-Term Learning Goals
12. Systematically Design Instruction Toward a Specific Learning Goal
13. Adapt Curriculum Tasks and Materials for Specific Learning Goals
14. Teaching Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies to Support Learning
15. Provide Scaffolded Supports
16. Use Explicit Instruction
17. Using Flexible Grouping
18. Use Strategies to Promote Active Student Engagement
19. Use Assistive and Instructional Technologies
20. Provide Intensive Instruction
21. Teach Students to Maintain and Generalize New Learning Across Time and Settings
22. Providing Positive and Corrective Feedback

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

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