SPECIAL EDUCATION M.ED.

Degree: Master of Education
https://www.towson.edu/coe/departments/specialed/grad/special-education/

Special Education Concentration:
Program Director: Michelle Pasko
Phone: 410-704-3613
Email: mpasko@towson.edu

Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorder Concentration:
Program Director: Katherine Holman
Phone: 410-704-3613
Email: kholman@towson.edu

The Master of Education degree in Special Education is an applied professional program designed to meet the critical need for special educators. Two concentrations support this offering: Special Education Certification and Special Education Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Please note that only one degree in Special Education can be awarded; students who complete more than one concentration in Special Education will not receive two different degrees.

Special Education Concentration

The degree program is for professionally certified teachers seeking a graduate degree in the area of special education. The Special Education Certification program is an initial certification/endorsement in the area of special education. It provides the skill development and knowledge base established by the Council for Exceptional Children's Standards for Beginning Special Educators and will meet the requirements for the Maryland State Department of Education's Special Education Generic Certification at the infant/primary (birth-grade 3), elementary/ middle (grades 1-8) or secondary/adult (grades 6-12) levels. The degree program emphasizes the following themes: collaboration and consultation, translation of effective, research-based instructional and management strategies into practice, and cross-categorical, rather than disability-specific, approaches. A majority of the graduate students in the Special Education program are full-time working professionals, taking classes in the afternoon or evenings.

Admission Requirements

- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university**
- An overall minimum GPA of 3.00 for full admission to the program and a 2.75 GPA for conditional admission, based on the last 60 units of total undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study
- Current professional teaching certificate

NOTE: A valid professional teaching certificate is a prerequisite for admission to the M.Ed. program. Prior to enrolling in any course work, applicants who do not hold a current teaching certificate should contact the MAT program office at 410-704-5388 to obtain information about earning a professional teaching certificate. A special education track is available in the MAT program.

International students must have passing TOEFL scores and have completed the Praxis Core.

Non-immigrant International Students

Program Enrollment: F-1 and J-1 students are required to be enrolled full-time. The majority of their classes must be in-person and on campus. See the list of programs that satisfy these requirements [https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/international/programs-complyingj1-f1-regulations.html](https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/international/programs-complyingj1-f1-regulations.html), and contact the International Student and Scholars Office [https://www.towson.edu/academics/international/isoft](https://www.towson.edu/academics/international/isoft) with questions.

Admission Procedures: See additional information regarding Graduate Admission policies [https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/policies.html](https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/policies.html) and International Graduate Application [https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/international](https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/international) online.

**See Exceptions to Policy in Graduate Admissions [https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/policies.html](https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/policies.html).

Degree Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 637</td>
<td>INCLUSION FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 525</td>
<td>FORMAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (PREK-12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 527</td>
<td>CURRICULUM/METHODS OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PREK12 (EC/EL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>or SPED 601</td>
<td>SPECIAL EDUCATION: CURRICULUM &amp; METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR SECONDARY TRANSITION</td>
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<td>SPED 604</td>
<td>ACTION RESEARCH IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 605</td>
<td>WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 607</td>
<td>CURRICULUM/METHODS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 631</td>
<td>CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 632</td>
<td>ASSESSMENT ISSUES FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 641</td>
<td>EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD): METHODS OF INSTRUCTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 646</td>
<td>USING TECHNOLOGY TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
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<td>At least two courses must be selected from the following, or by obtaining approval from the Program Director.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECED 607</td>
<td>LEARNER DIVERSITY, CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS, AND INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECED 609</td>
<td>GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN</td>
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ILPD 740 EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING FOR CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION 3
ILPD 742 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 3
ILPD 743 LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE 3
ISTC 541 FOUNDATIONS IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY 3
ISTC 731 THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR INTEGRATING DIGITAL RESOURCES INTO LEARNING AND TEACHING 3
REED 609 READING ASSESSMENT 3
REED 621 READING DISABILITIES 3
REED 714 ADOLESCENT LITERACY 3

Passing Praxis II: Special Education Specialty 0354 or 5354 is a graduation requirement. A copy of scores must be submitted to the Special Education graduate director prior to graduation.

Maryland State Department of Education teacher recertification requirements are the student’s responsibility and are not a requirement of this program.

The development and presentation of a portfolio that demonstrates and aligns with the professional association accreditation standards of the Council for Exceptional Children will take the place of the master’s thesis.

### Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorder Concentration

The Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorder is an applied professional program designed to meet the increasing and specific needs related to educating students with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The degree program is designed for professionals who currently hold certification in special education or a related field (psychology, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work) and are seeking specialized knowledge and opportunities to apply this knowledge to better meet the educational needs of students with ASD. The degree program emphasizes the following themes related to ASD: specific knowledge about core areas of impairment, application of research-based instructional and classroom management strategies, effective collaboration and consultation, action research, and leadership. Each course includes an “application project” to allow the student hands-on experience with implementation and reflection of teaching and leadership practices as related to ASD.

### General Admission Requirements

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university
- An overall minimum GPA of 3.00 for full admission to the program and a 2.75 GPA for conditional admission, based on the last 60 units of total undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study
- Letter of Recommendation
- Admission essay

Note: Successful completion of this program will yield a master’s degree, but no additional certification from MSDE. Certification in special education or a related field is highly recommended, but not required.

### Degree Requirements

#### Special Education: Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorder (36 units)

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 664</td>
<td>ACTION RESEARCH IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</td>
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<td>SPED 605</td>
<td>WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 620</td>
<td>EDUCATING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 621</td>
<td>FORMAL AND INFORMAL ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 622</td>
<td>SOCIAL THINKING AND CONNECTEDNESS FOR STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 623</td>
<td>BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 624</td>
<td>EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 644</td>
<td>UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION</td>
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<td>Curriculum/Methods Courses</td>
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<td>SPED 625</td>
<td>CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<td>SPED 626</td>
<td>CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 627</td>
<td>CO-TEACHING AND INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 628</td>
<td>INTEGRATING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH ASD</td>
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Total Units: 36

#### Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorders

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 1 Assessment**

1.0 Special education specialists use valid and reliable assessment practices to minimize bias.

1.1 Special education specialists minimize bias in assessment.

1.2 Special education specialists design and implement assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 2 Curricular Content Knowledge**

2.0 Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.

2.1 Special education specialists align educational standards to provide access to challenging curriculum to meet the needs individuals with exceptionalities.

2.2 Special educators continuously broaden and deepen professional knowledge, and expand expertise with instructional technologies,
curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to and learning of challenging content.

2.3 Special education specialists use understanding of diversity and individual learning differences to inform the selection, development, and implementation of comprehensive curricula for individuals with exceptionalities.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 3 Programs, Services, and Outcomes**

3.0 Special education specialists facilitate the continuous improvement of general and special education programs, supports, and services at the classroom, school, and system levels for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.1 Special education specialists design and implement evaluation activities to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.2 Special education specialists use understanding of cultural, social, and economic diversity and individual learner differences to inform the development and improvement of programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.3 Special education specialists apply knowledge of theories, evidence-based practices, and relevant laws to advocate for programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.4 Special education specialists use instructional and assistive technologies to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.5 Special education specialists evaluate progress toward achieving the vision, mission, and goals of programs, services, and supports for individuals with exceptionalities.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 4 Research & Inquiry**

4.0 Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.

4.1 Special education specialists evaluate research and inquiry to identify effective practices.

4.2 Special education specialists use knowledge of the professional literature to improve practices with individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

4.3 Special education specialists foster an environment that is supportive of continuous instructional improvement and engage in the design and implementation of research and inquiry.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 5 Leadership and Policy**

5.0 Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices and create positive and productive work environments.

5.1 Special education specialists model respect for and ethical practice for all individuals and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.2 Special education specialists support and use linguistically and culturally responsive practices.

5.3 Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

5.4 Special education specialists advocate for policies and practices that improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.5 Special education specialists advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources for the preparation and professional development of all personnel who serve individuals with exceptionalities.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 6 Professional and Ethical Practice**

6.0 Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

6.1 A comprehensive understanding of the history of special education, legal policies, ethical standards, and emerging issues informs special education specialist leadership.

6.2 Special education specialists model high professional expectations and ethical practice, and create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights and improve outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

6.3 Special education specialists model and promote respect for all individuals and facilitate ethical professional practice.

6.4 Special education specialists actively participate in professional development and learning communities to increase professional knowledge and expertise.

6.5 Special education specialists plan, present, and evaluate professional development focusing on effective and ethical practice at all organizational levels.

6.6 Special education specialists actively facilitate and participate in the preparation and induction of prospective special educators.

6.7 Special education specialists actively promote the advancement of the profession.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 7 Collaboration**

7.0 Special education specialists collaborate with stakeholders to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

7.1 Special education specialists use culturally responsive practices to enhance collaboration.

7.2 Special education specialists use collaborative skills to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

7.3 Special education specialists collaborate to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus for improving program, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

**Certification**

1. Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences - Beginning special education professionals understand how exceptionalities may interact with development and learning and use this knowledge...
to provide meaningful and challenging learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities.

2. Learning Environments - Beginning special education professionals create safe, inclusive, culturally responsive learning environments so that individuals with exceptionalities become active and effective learners and develop emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and self-determination.

3. Curricular Content Knowledge - Beginning special education professionals use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.


5. Instructional Planning and Strategies - Beginning special education professionals select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

6. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice - Beginning special education professionals use foundational knowledge of the field and their professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, to engage in lifelong learning, and to advance the profession.

7. Collaboration - Beginning special education professionals collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across a range of learning experiences.

Courses

**SPED 525 FORMAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (PREK-12) (3)**
Overview of trends and issues related to assessment in special education with review of specific assessment techniques. Emphasis on observation skills, administration procedures, interpretation of results, and how to use these to improve programming. Prerequisites: 6 units PSYC; 9 units SPED or consent of instructor.

**SPED 527 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PREK-12 (3)**
Social and emotional development of children across the lifespan with curricula and techniques to support social emotional needs of students with disabilities. Prerequisite: 6 units SPED or consent of instructor.

**SPED 601 SPECIAL EDUCATION: CURRICULUM & METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR SECONDARY TRANSITION (3)**
Methodologies for transition for students with disabilities from school to employment and adult life. Prerequisite: SPED 301 or consent of instructor.

**SPED 603 INFORMAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PREK-12 (3)**
Theory and strategies for informal and classroom-based assessment with an emphasis on response to intervention. Prerequisite: SPED 301 and consent of department.

**SPED 604 ACTION RESEARCH IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3)**
Structured reflection of an action research project completed within a classroom, school, or district with a review of fundamental concepts and practices in special education research.

**SPED 605 WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)**
The role of the family system and the impact of having a child with a disability on that system. Practice in strategies for effective communication and family support. Prerequisites: SPED 301 and consent of department.

**SPED 607 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)**
Research and best practices for interventions and management strategies that support positive behaviors of students with disabilities. Prerequisites: SPED 301 and consent of instructor.

**SPED 620 EDUCATING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (3)**
Provides an in-depth introduction into the characteristics, assessment methods, and instructional issues related to educating a student with an autism spectrum disorder in the classroom. Prerequisites: None.

**SPED 621 FORMAL AND INFORMAL ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD (3)**
Information related to both formal and informal assessment for students with autism spectrum disorders. Participants will improve observation skills, learn administration procedures, learn how to interpret assessment results, and use this information to improve programming. Prerequisite: None.

**SPED 622 SOCIAL THINKING AND CONNECTEDNESS FOR STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM (3)**
Theories and research on social development, social communication, social connectedness and instructional techniques for individuals on the autism spectrum. Prerequisites: None.

**SPED 623 BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD (3)**
Provides participants with an understanding of the process of conducting a functional analysis of behavior and developing a practical behavioral support program which promotes social, communicative, and academic behaviors for classroom and home implementation. Prerequisites: None.

**SPED 624 EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD (3)**
Provides in-depth information related to evidence-based practices for students with autism spectrum disorders. Students will gain theoretical information, hands-on experience with implementation, and critical reasoning skills related to identifying appropriate instructional strategies for individual student learning profiles.

**SPED 625 CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD I (3)**
Examination of the instructional strategies shown to be effective in promoting the academic success of students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Participants will examine methods in order to ensure access of the general education curriculum to student with ASD who exhibit mild to moderate impairments. Prerequisite: None.

**SPED 626 CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD II (3)**
Provides specific, evidence-based information regarding delivery of curricula, conducting assessments, and designing appropriate, individualized instruction for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Focus and materials are on students who need intensive supports due to the severity of their diagnosis of ASD.
**SPED 627 CO-TEACHING AND INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH ASD II (3)**
Best practices for successful inclusion of students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in the general education setting. Inclusion and the concept of least restrictive environment are viewed and discussed as a part of the civil rights movement. The depth of the inclusion process for individuals with ASD is examined in the following contexts: discussion legislation, co-teaching and collaboration, identifying factors that challenge the process, examining and practicing differentiated instruction, understanding characteristics of learners with ASD and celebrating successful experiences.

**SPED 628 INTEGRATING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH ASD (3)**
Practical application in the use of both instructional and assistive technologies to increase the access and learning of students with autism spectrum disorders in general education curriculum. Prerequisite: consent of the department.

**SPED 630 CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION PRACTICES (3)**
In-depth introduction to current research, trends, policies, and instructional practice related to educational placement and service delivery for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and/or who have exceptionalities.

**SPED 631 CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS FOR DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS (3)**
Overview of best practices for instruction and intervention for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and/or who have special education needs. Addresses equitable practice, universal design for learning, response to intervention, and strategies for including second-language learners.

**SPED 632 ASSESSMENT ISSUES FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS (3)**
Overview of educational assessment as it relates to culturally and linguistically diverse student populations, addressing the impact of variables such as language, culture, acculturation, and socioeconomic status in the assessment process. Emphasis will be placed on these and other factors impacting assessment, on informal and dynamic assessment procedures, and on the formal assessment and identification process for special education as it relates to diverse students. Prerequisite: none.

**SPED 633 SCHOOL, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS (3)**
Strategies and approaches for productively involving families, caregivers and appropriate community members in the identification and education of diverse learners, particularly those who are culturally and linguistically diverse and/or who have special education needs. Course topics include varied perceptions of disabilities and the education system, communication skills, human relations, counseling and conferencing with families and other stakeholders to support students through all stages of the educational process.

**SPED 637 INCLUSION FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER (3)**
Fundamental concepts in special education, including response to intervention, universal design for learning, legal requirements, characteristics of students with disabilities, and supports for inclusion. Prerequisite: student teaching or consent of instructor.

**SPED 641 EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD): METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (3)**
Instructional interventions within a multi-tiered system of supports with emphasis on development of individualized education programs for students with disabilities. Prerequisites: 6 units in PSYC and 6 units in education.

**SPED 644 UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (3)**
Applications of the universal design for learning framework to current instructional practices; specifically, designing flexible goals, materials, methods, assessments, and environments that enable student learning. Prerequisite: consent of department.

**SPED 646 USING TECHNOLOGY TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION (3)**
Practical application of best practices differentiating instruction, using computer software to increase the access and learning of students with disabilities in general education curriculum. Prerequisite: Student teaching or teaching experience or consent of instructor. Lab/Class fee will be assessed.

**SPED 670 SPECIAL TOPICS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (1-3)**
Studies in selected content areas tailored to student needs. Prerequisites: vary according to area of concentration; consent of department.

**SPED 741 INTERNSHIP: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (6)**
Placement in a special education facility or special education agency according to student interest and background. Prerequisites: 12 credits in special education and consent of department. S/U grading.