

AUTISM STUDIES CERTIFICATE

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

<https://www.towson.edu/chp/departments/health-sciences/grad/autism-certificate/>

Program Director: Dr. Connie Anderson

Phone: 410-704-4640

Email: connieanderson@towson.edu

The Autism Studies Post-Baccalaureate Certificate (PBC) provides students with the knowledge and skills to support both children and adults on the autism spectrum.

More than 2% of the U.S. population is on the autism spectrum which means we are all living, learning and working beside people with autism. Professionals who understand autism are needed in schools, clinics, hospitals, universities, workplaces, public agencies and beyond. This PBC provides a stamp of autism expertise that validates your commitment to working in the field and prepares you to broaden your role as an educator, early childhood professional, mental health professional, occupational therapist, speech-language pathologist, agency staff, disability specialist, researcher, advocate or policymaker.

Topics covered include typical traits of individuals on the spectrum, their gifts and challenges, co-occurring conditions, epidemiology, evidence-based interventions, classroom and workplace strategies, family impact, research and key policy issues.

The 16-unit "live" online program—including five 3-unit courses and one 1-unit course—generally takes 1-2 years to complete. Many courses are offered in the evening to accommodate working professionals.

In some cases, it is possible to combine this PBC with a Master's or doctoral degree program to enhance your professional credentials. This option may be of particular interest to students in advanced degree programs such as Occupational Therapy, Child Life, Health Science and Early Childhood Education.

Admission Requirements

- A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.**
- An undergraduate GPA minimum of 3.00 (2.75 for conditional admission) in either the cumulative units of the degree or the last 60 units of the degree. An admission exception policy is in place for eligible candidates with undergraduate degrees obtained at least 5 years ago.
- Completion of the following courses with a grade of "C" or better:
 - Human development across the life span (one lower-division course)
 - Human Biological Science (one lower-division course)
 - Social or Behavioral Science (one lower-division course)
- Documentation of completion of 30 hours of human service activity as part of field experience, volunteer or paid work in the last five years (e.g., experience with a human service agency or community program, educational or health program, advocacy group, Special Olympics)

For those whose primary employment involves "human service" (e.g. educators, therapists), a resume may serve as evidence of completion of the required service hours.

Students may request a *competency in lieu of course work review* by the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program Committee for the required courses for admission. Students must submit documentation of didactic preparation (e.g., workshops, professional development or related courses) and professional practice that verifies course content mastery.

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, and contact the International Student and Scholars Office with questions.

Admission Procedures: See additional information regarding Graduate Admission policies and International Graduate Application online.

See **Exceptions to Policy in Graduate Admissions.

Certificate Requirements

The Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Autism Studies consists of a total of 16 units: 10 units of required courses and 6 units of electives.

Code	Title	Units
Required Courses		
IDHP 621	CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM	3
IDHP 623	CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FOR ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM	3
SPED 605 or FMST 610	WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ¹ FAMILY-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION	3
IDHP 681	SEMINAR IN AUTISM SPECTRUM ISSUES	1
Electives ²		
500-700 level courses in arts; education; family studies; health science; interdisciplinary health professions; kinesiology; nursing; occupational therapy and occupational science; psychology; or speech-language pathology, audiology and deaf studies that directly apply to people on the autism spectrum		6
IDHP Elective Courses ³		
IDHP 770	SPECIAL TOPICS IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM	
IDHP 791	DIRECTED READINGS IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM	
IDHP 792	INDEPENDENT STUDY IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM	
Total Units		16

¹ Courses may be taken as part of required or elective courses in student's graduate program.

² Courses must have prior written consent and approval from the director of the autism certificate program for learning activities to satisfy requirements of the autism certificate.

³ Courses may be taken in lieu of required electives.

- a. Students will demonstrate acquisition of knowledge related to the field of autism that addresses epidemiology, etiology, and diagnosis as well as strengths and challenges of individuals with autism, issues faced by their families, and the roles and effectiveness of relevant systems (e.g. public schools, adult service agencies).
- b. Students will critically evaluate autism research to identify evidence-based interventions, policies, and practices that contribute to optimal outcomes and enhance quality of life for people on the autism spectrum and their families.
- c. Students will effectively communicate autism information, sensitive to whether their audience consists of professionals or laypeople, using technology as appropriate.