

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Programs of the Department

The Department of Special Education is responsible for courses leading to certification in Maryland as a special education teacher. The department offers a major in Special Education, a major in Integrated Elementary Education - Special Education (ESEE), and a major in Integrated Early Childhood - Special Education (ECSE). Special education is a screened major; applicants must achieve qualifying scores on Praxis CORE or SAT/ACT as established by MSDE, and a minimum GPA of 2.75 (with a grade equivalent of 2.00 or higher on all prerequisite course work required for the major). A writing sample is also required.

The education course listings include core education courses that provide knowledge and skills for general application in teaching and learning. The instructional technology and special education offerings also have PreK-12 applications. Reflecting the Professional Education Mission and Vision statements, **students are assigned** by their department and/or the Center for Professional Practice to field and clinical experience placements that are diverse and inclusive. Placements are made that enable the Teacher Education Unit to meet state and national accreditation mandates. All professional year placements will be in identified Professional Development Schools (PDS), or approved satellite schools, based on ongoing and systematic PDS partnership agreements with school systems. These mandates and the size and scope of our education program do not permit personal preference or geographic convenience in placements.

Special Education majors must meet with their advisers every term to ensure that their planned programs of study meet Towson University, the major and Maryland State Department of Education certification requirements. Students must consult with their advisers prior to taking courses on a Pass grading option. Courses in the major and courses required for Maryland State Department of Education certification may not be taken with this option. All tracks of the Special Education program begin in the fall term with the exception of the ECSE program.

Exceptions, changes, waivers and/or substitutions from the program pattern for Special Education majors in content or sequence are permitted only with the written consent of the chair of the Special Education Department.

Graduate programs include the Master of Arts in Teaching and the Master of Education.

The Professional Year

Special Education majors follow the school system calendar for the Professional Development School to which they are assigned as interns. The professional year starts in August, when the teachers begin the school year, and follows the school system spring break schedule.

Graduate Programs in Special Education

Director: Andrea Parrish

Psychology Building 305, 410-704-3835

This Master of Education program prepares currently certified teachers for careers as special educators. The Certification Track meets the requirements for MSDE special education certification at infant/primary, elementary/middle or secondary levels. The Teacher as Leader in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) M.Ed. program is designed to provide specialized instruction in ASD to educators currently certified in special education, related services or related fields. The Master of Arts in teaching offers certification in special education for individuals who hold an undergraduate degree outside of education. See the *Graduate Catalog* for details.

Pre-Admission Requirements for all Candidates

Students interested in majoring in Special Education, ECSE, or ESEE must first gain admission to Towson University. Admission to TU does not guarantee admission to the Special Education, Integrated ECSE or ESEE majors. Students must complete a Declaration of Intended Major Form available online at <http://www.towson.edu/registrar/registration/major.html> at which time they will be assigned a Special Education adviser. All students applying for admission to a Teacher Education program at Towson University are required to complete a Criminal History Disclosure Form. This form is to be notarized and sent to the Department of Special Education to be kept on file.

Screening

Special Education is a screened major. All candidates for the Special Education, ECSE or ESEE majors will be ranked according to cumulative GPA in all college or university courses (transfer GPA and/or TU GPA).

To receive approval for admission, students are required to:

1. have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher (which includes grades transferred to and grades earned at TU)
2. have completed ENGL 102 with a grade of C or higher
3. have completed 60 or more units (with a grade equivalent of 2.00 or higher)
4. have passing scores on the Praxis CORE, ACT or SAT at or above the level of standards established by the Maryland State Department of Education (Information on the Praxis CORE tests is available at <https://eisportal.msde.maryland.gov/public/Pages/Basic-Skills.aspx>)
5. submit a writing sample

Screening occurs again for admission into internship. Students are required to have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher and a GPA of 3.00 or higher in the major and must have completed a minimum of 90 units. All preservice students in Teacher Education programs at Towson University whose program of study require an intensive and extensive internship experience in a public or private school setting (pre-K through 12), are required to undergo a criminal background check before beginning this experience. The criminal background check must be filed with the Department of Special Education.

Transfer Students

Special Education Department personnel are responsive to the transfer student and will accept those credits which are compatible with the Core Curriculum requirements, Special Education, ECSE and ESEE majors and state certification requirements. Please note: although credits might

qualify toward graduation, only an evaluation conducted by the Special Education adviser will determine which credits will also apply toward the major. Students must earn a minimal grade equivalent of 2.0 in all transfer courses. Students must first have their transcripts evaluated by the Office of Admissions before requesting a special education transcript evaluation.

Majors in Special Education

- Special Education - Elementary/Middle Track (<http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/education/special-education/special-education-elementary-middle>)
- Special Education - Secondary/Adult tracks (<http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/education/special-education/special-education-secondary-adult>)
- Integrated Early Childhood - Special Education Major (<http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/education/special-education/integrated-early-childhood-special-education>) (ECSE)
- Integrated Elementary Education - Special Education Major (<http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/education/special-education/integrated-elementary-education-special-education>) (EESE)