

# DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Psychology Building 307  
Phone: 410-704-4984  
Fax: 410-704-4985

## Vision Statement

Towson University will be recognized for preparing innovative and socially just professionals who advocate on behalf of children, families, and the profession. We will empower educators with strong knowledge of research-based pedagogies, a technology-rich skillset, a deep understanding of how children, youth, and adults learn, and caring dispositions to lead and succeed in inclusive and equitable settings.

## Mission Statement

The mission of Educator Preparation Programs at Towson University is to:

- Prepare the next generation of diverse educators and leaders committed to meet the individual needs of all learners.
- Advance scholarship around significant priorities in the profession.
- Collaborate with and advocate for children, families, and communities.
- Develop and implement innovative solutions to education challenges.

## 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 Elementary Education & Special Education (EASE), and a major in Early Childhood & Special Education (ECSE). Special Education is a screened major.

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 partner 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: Michelle Pasko*  
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 endorsement 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.

## Admission Requirements for Teacher Education

The Teacher Education Executive Board, representing all initial teacher education programs at Towson University, utilizes the following **minimum** requirements as conditions for admission into teacher education programs, maintaining candidate status and formal entry into the capstone internship. Programs may include additional requirements for admission into the program and/or the capstone internship.

The College of Education admits students either as freshmen or as undergraduate transfer students from accredited, post-secondary institutions. During the freshman and sophomore years, students are generally engaged in pre-professional courses or courses that fulfill Core Curriculum requirements, as well as all identified prerequisites (e.g., specific and sequential courses in Core Curriculum) for admission to COE screened majors and programs.

All College of Education undergraduate programs are screened majors. As an integral part of the teaching/learning experience, students work with advisers in a strategic planning process across all years at TU. Accordingly, to support student success, all COE students are required to confer prior to registration each term with their assigned advisers.

### I. PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO ALL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Complete a self-disclosure criminal background form to be submitted to the major department with the application.
- Submit an application for formal admission to the program. Students seeking admission to teacher education programs must contact their department chairperson or program coordinator by 45 credit hours for program-specific procedures and requirements for admission to professional education programs.

c. A cumulative/overall GPA of 3.00 or higher is required for admission to an initial licensure teacher education program.

- i. Applicants with a GPA between 2.50 - 2.99 may be admitted conditionally if they provide evidence of passing scores on a Basic Skills Assessment\* as identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (i.e. SAT, ACT, GRE, Praxis Core) and receive approval from the department chairperson/program coordinator.

*\*Candidates may apply for a test waiver directly to the department. Such waivers should only be granted if it is predicted, based on the individual candidate's transcript data, that the candidate's final cumulative/overall GPA will be above a 3.00.*

## II. ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Special Education is a screened major. Students are admitted as program admission requirements are met. All applicants must submit an online application, via the Tk20 system, to the Special Education department including a writing sample.

The Special Education department is responsive to the transfer student and will accept those credits which are compatible with the Core Curriculum requirements, Special Education, ECSE and EESE 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 2.00 in all transfer courses. Students must first have their transcripts evaluated by University Admissions before requesting a special education transcript evaluation.

- Special Education Major - Elementary/Middle Track
- Special Education Major - Secondary/Adult Tracks
- Early Childhood and Special Education Major (ECSE)
- Elementary Education and Special Education Major (EESE)

## Faculty

*Professors:* Patricia Doran (Chairperson), Deborah Gartland

*Associate Professors:* Darlene Fewster, Katherine Holman (Graduate Program Director), Amy Noggle

*Assistant Professors:* Rachel Billman, Briella Chen, Kandace Hoppin, Gregory Knollman

*Lecturers:* Michele Conneely, Ashley Cudmore, Kara Hodgson, Tiffany Jirsa, Meryl Klein, Eric Kuhn (Graduate Program Director), Gina Laupert, Kirsten Merashoff, Michelle Miller, Jessica Moore, Katherine Naimon, Elizabeth Plumb, Erin Richmond, Jennifer Schnur, Deborah Tessier, Natalie Thomas, Gina Williams, Elizabeth Wynkoop

*Clinical Professor:* Elizabeth Neville

*Clinical Instructors:* Toni Guidi, Michelle Pasko (Graduate Program Director)

## Courses

### SPED 301 INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION (3)

Historical, philosophical, legal foundations of special education as related to current issues and practices in educational settings.

### SPED 302 HONORS INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION (3)

Provides instruction in the historical, philosophical, and legal foundations of special education as related to current issues and practices in educational settings. Honors College course. Students who have successfully completed the non-honors version of this course will not receive additional credit for this course.

### SPED 401 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF INCLUSION (3)

Designing and implementing inclusive programs. Prerequisite: SPED 301.

### SPED 413 UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING: ADDRESSING LEARNER VARIABILITY (3)

Practical application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), using instructional and assistive technologies to support learner variability and enhance student achievement. Highlights strategies for increasing the access of students with disabilities to the general education curriculum. Lab/Class fee will be assessed.

### SPED 415 ASSESSMENT OF INFANT/PRIMARY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)

Comprehensive assessment of young children, linking evaluative information to inclusive programming.

### SPED 417 COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FOR INFANT/PRIMARY PROGRAMS (3)

Methods and models of interdisciplinary collaborative planning for young children with disabilities. Prerequisite: SPED 301.

### SPED 425 FORMAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (PREK-12) (3)

Assessment techniques; philosophical rationale; current research; intervention strategies. Prerequisites: 6 units PSYC; 9 units SPED or consent of instructor.

### SPED 427 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PREK-12 (3)

Curriculum theory, research, instructional techniques for students with disabilities. Prerequisites: 6 units SPED or consent of instructor.

### SPED 428 WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)

Communication skills, human relations; parent counseling and conferencing. Prerequisites: SPED 301 and consent of SPED instructor.

### SPED 429 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)

Theoretical foundations, development or practical interventions. Prerequisites: SPED 301 and consent of SPED instructor.

### SPED 430 INFORMAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (PREK-12) (3)

Assessment, diagnosis, prescriptive techniques; procedures, administration, interpretation, programming. Prerequisites: SPED 301 and consent of SPED instructor.

### SPED 431 CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF READING FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)

Reading practices, context, procedures, materials and assessment for primary students with disabilities. Prerequisite: SPED 301.

### **SPED 441 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (PREK-12) (3)**

Characteristics affecting learning, designing educational programs. Observations in appropriate settings and guest lecturers in specialty area. Prerequisites: 6 units in PSYC and 6 units in education.

### **SPED 451 PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL) (3)**

Assessment and interventions for cognitive, educational, emotional, and social behaviors of students with disabilities. Special permit required. Prerequisites: SPED 301, SPED 425, SPED 430.

### **SPED 453 CURRICULUM/METHODS OF SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION:PREVOCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTION (3)**

Issues and trends including transition-related instruction, postsecondary programs and adaptability in secondary classrooms. Prerequisites: SPED 301 or consent of the instructor.

### **SPED 455 ASSESSMENT OF MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3)**

Diagnosis and prescriptive techniques used by secondary level special education professionals. Prerequisite: SPED 301.

### **SPED 469 COLLABORATIVE TEACHING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (3)**

Provides general education and special education teacher candidates with the knowledge and dispositions necessary for successful collaborative teaching. Prerequisite: 9 units in SPED.

### **SPED 470 SPECIAL TOPICS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (1-3)**

In-depth study of a selected topic in Elementary Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time a topic is scheduled. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 units provided a different topic is covered.

### **SPED 491 INTERNSHIP: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE GRADES (3)**

Supervised clinical field experience with elementary/middle school students with disabilities. Prerequisites: 12 units SPED and consent of the program director. Internship/Practicum fee will be assessed.

### **SPED 493 SEMINAR IN INTERNSHIP (3)**

Readings, action research and discussion on school environments, instructional delivery, diagnosis/evaluation, classroom management policies. Corequisite: SPED 498.

### **SPED 496 INTERNSHIP: STUDENTS WITH DIABILITIES (SECONDARY/ADULT PROGRAMS) (3)**

Supervised clinical field experience with students with disabilities at the middle and high school level prior to internship. Prerequisites: 12 units of SPED and consent of coordinator of secondary special education. Internship/Practicum fee will be assessed.

### **SPED 497 INTERNSHIP: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN INFANT/PRIMARY PROGRAMS (3)**

Supervised clinical field experience with young children with disabilities. Prerequisites: 12 units SPED and consent of the program director.

### **SPED 498 INTERNSHIP: SPECIAL EDUCATION (12)**

Placement in special education classroom either public or private at the age/grade appropriate for students' programs. Prerequisites: 18 units SPED and consent of the program director. Internship/Practicum fee will be assessed.