

SPECIAL EDUCATION, MASTER OF EDUCATION (M.ED.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN GENERAL EDUCATION

Program goal

The Master of Education in Special Education program prepares graduates for work in one of three areas: early childhood, severe disabilities or general education. Applicants who do not already hold a teaching license must meet both licensure and degree requirements prior to the awarding of the Master of Education degree unless exempted as a professional from another discipline. Students should plan carefully with their adviser to ensure that the appropriate courses and experiences are completed. Successful completion of the degree program leads to endorsement in early childhood special education, severe disabilities or general curriculum.

The Master of Education in Special Education general education concentration, which can lead to an endorsement in the special education general curriculum, is designed to prepare graduates with the professional knowledge and skills needed to work in a variety of settings.

1. General education classrooms (where children with special needs are being collaboratively taught)
2. Resource, modified resource or collaborative resource rooms
3. Self-contained settings or classrooms in varied urban, suburban or rural areas
4. Residential programs
5. Various community environments

Special training is provided in teaching reading and language, behavior management, and the use of interactive strategies that teach positive social skills. Candidates are prepared to work with students in completing a variety of transitions, such as from special education to the general education classroom or from high school to employment and independent living.

Through course work, the general education concentration will encompass broad concepts of education, research, development, related disciplines and special education to build a foundation of professional knowledge and understanding. Specialized courses develop the intensive diagnostic, remedial, decision-making and consultative skills and understandings required of a professional in a special education-general education setting, including the ability to recognize educational and social problems, to formulate effective individualized instructional interventions using a variety of methodologies and modifications, to incorporate accommodations and transitions into program plans and to consult productively with appropriate personnel in the development of maximum educational opportunities for students with high-incidence disabilities. In addition to course work, candidates will create an electronic portfolio that will showcase their knowledge, skills and dispositions in the special education general curriculum.

The program offers candidates the opportunity to complete clinical placements in their own classroom or school with approval from VCU faculty and supervision by trained personnel. Placement opportunities for clinical experiences include a range of public and private schools and mental health programs that allow graduate students to select field

experiences that are consistent with their professional goals. Previous teaching experience is valued, but not required. Students will have the opportunity to complete a practicum in addition to the externship. When students complete the program, they are eligible for licensure by the Virginia Department of Education with an endorsement to teach students enrolled in special education, general curriculum in grades K-12. Candidates are offered the option of taking a full-time or an on-the-job externship for a semester.

Student learning outcomes

1. **Learner and learning:** Understand human development and learning theory appropriate to the age group they will teach and acquire an awareness of the diversity of the school-age population in cultural backgrounds and styles of learning
2. **Content:** Demonstrate knowledge of the subjects they will teach
3. **Instructional practice:** Demonstrate an ability to plan and implement effective teaching and measure student learning in ways that lead to sustained development and learning
4. **Professional responsibility:** Develop an understanding of purposes for education and a defensible philosophical approach toward teaching and demonstrate professional dispositions

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the academic regulations section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the **academic regulations section** for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the **academic regulations section** for additional information on graduation requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.Ed.	Fall	Mar 15	GRE
	Spring	Nov 1	
	Summer	Mar 15	

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), the following requirements represent the minimum acceptable standards for admission:

1. Bachelor's degree
2. Three letters of recommendation addressing the student's potential for graduate study in education
3. Statement of intent
4. Transcripts of all previous college work
5. Interview
6. Satisfactory scores on the GRE

Additionally, there are several tests that students must pass for admission to teacher preparation, admission to student teaching and licensure in Virginia. Students should consult the Teacher Preparation page (<https://soe.vcu.edu/admission/teacher-preparation-application/>) on the School of Education website for current testing requirements.

Applicants who do not have a provisional or professional collegiate teaching license in special education must take SEDP 630 as a prerequisite course.

Admission to clinical experiences in schools requires a background check and fingerprinting.

Please visit the School of Education website (<https://soe.vcu.edu/academics/masters-programs/med-special-education/>) for further information.

Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), students are required to complete course work in core and elective courses.

1. Credit hour requirements: Students are required to complete a minimum of 37 credit hours.
2. Grade requirements: Receipt of a grade of C or below in two courses constitutes automatic dismissal from the program. Courses with a grade below C cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.

Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
Foundations		
EDUS/PSYC 607	Advanced Educational Psychology for Elementary Teachers	3
Research		
EDUS 660	Research Methods in Education	3
Core courses		
SEDP 501	Characteristics of Individuals with Disabilities	3
SEDP 531	Educational Foundations for Collaboration and Universally Designed Learning	3
SEDP 533	Assessment of Individuals with Disabilities	3
SEDP 601	Instructional Methods and Programming for Individuals with Disabilities	3
SEDP 603	Theories, Assessment and Practices in Literacy Development for Individuals with Exceptionalities	3
SEDP 607	Math Methods and Online Education	3
SEDP 611	Secondary Education and Transition Planning	2
SEDP 631	Behavior Support of Individuals with Disabilities	3
SEDP 655	Practicum A: Special Education in an Elementary Education Environment	1
SEDP 656	Practicum B: Special Education in a Secondary Education Environment	1
SEDP 700	Externship	3
TEDU 561	Reading Foundations: Sociological/ Psychological Perspectives	3
Total Hours		37

The minimum total of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 37.

Contact

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Additional contacts

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Program website: soe.vcu.edu/academics/masters-programs/med-special-education (<https://soe.vcu.edu/academics/masters-programs/med-special-education/>)