



Department of Special Education

1212 Buzzard Hall

600 Lincoln Avenue

Charleston IL 61920-3099

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To: Dean Laretta Henderson, College of Education  
Dean Ryan Hendrickson, Graduate School

Re: Special Education Master's Program Changes

From: Kathryn Havercroft, Chair

Date: October 19, 2020

The department of Special Education requests changes to the Master Degree in Special Education Program beginning Fall 2021. The requested changes are as follows:

Change in Mission Statement to reflect current endorsement options in Illinois.

Changes to Admission Requirements are being proposed to streamline the admissions process and to match requirements in PRM System as well as to reduce confusion for anyone who would consider applying but who does not hold required initial licensure.

Replace 3 of the current 6 Special Education Electives with the following 3 courses which would be required of all candidates: SPE 5770 Practicum in Special Education, 5670 Assessment in Special Education, and 5970 Curriculum and Methods for K12 Special Education.

Rationale:

The Master's in Education with a major in Special Education is a practitioner program and the department curriculum committee believes a clinical experience is imperative. Furthermore, as the program moves towards accreditation, it has been determined that the content included in these three courses aligns with the standards of our professional organization. Thus, these courses are essential for all candidates seeking an advanced degree in the field as well as for the purpose of accreditation. No additional hours will be added to the degree; this change is simply to specify that three of the current six electives be replaced with specific coursework (SPE 5670, 5770, 5970).

Approved:	Special Education Curriculum Committee	9/16/20
	College Curriculum	9/28/20
	COTE	10/13/20

## Current Catalogue Copy:

**Program Mission:** The mission of the graduate program in Special Education is to prepare graduates for advanced professional practice with individuals with exceptional learning needs. Individuals may pursue additional Special Education endorsements which may include ~~earning a supervisory endorsement~~, earning an LBS II for “Curriculum Adaptation Specialist” or “Behavior Intervention Specialist,” or preparing to be a “Director” of Special Education.

**Admission Requirements:** To be eligible for degree candidacy, applicants must meet all of the requirements for admission to the Graduate School (see [“Admission to Graduate Degree and Certificate Programs”](#)). In addition, the student must provide the following documents:

- Official transcripts to the department and university documenting all prior course work and evidence of having earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution approved by Eastern Illinois University with a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or a 2.75 GPA for the last 60 hours of graded academic coursework as defined by the Graduate School. If these standards are not met, the student may complete nine semester hours of graduate level courses in the department with a grade point average of 3.3 or higher.
- ~~Two letters of recommendation which must address the student’s potential to engage successfully in graduate study. One letter should document experience with children or adults with exceptionalities such as teaching, student teaching volunteer work, private or public agency experience.~~
- ~~A written statement of future professional goals minimally one paragraph in length.~~
- ~~Dispositional check sheet representing candidate dispositions for advanced practice.~~

These documents will be considered as the advisor and student formulate a study plan that will include the student’s professional goals, extent of experience with individuals with exceptionalities, and the students’ professional writing competencies.

**Degree Audit:** The graduate plan of study is the EIU Degree Audit, which is generated automatically in the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) at the time of degree or certificate candidacy. Modifications of the standard EIU Degree Audit are submitted by the graduate coordinator to the certification officer in the Graduate School at the time modifications are approved. The Degree Audit serves as an unofficial summary of requirements for the program. Degree and certificate candidates are advised to review the comprehensive summary of the

Degree Audit process specified on the “[Requirements for All Degree and Certificate Candidates](#)” section of the Graduate Catalog. Individual programs may require candidates to submit plans of study in addition to the Degree Audit, candidates should consult with the program coordinator.

## Degree Requirements

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Degree requirements include those outlined for the master of science in education degree by the Graduate School (see “[Requirements for the Master of Science in Education Degree](#)”). The program offers a thesis and non-thesis option.

### Curriculum for the Master of Science in Education in Special Education Non-Thesis Option

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**Total. Credits: 36**

Students in the non-thesis option must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of study for the degree. A minimum of 17 semester hours of all graduate work must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

- Basic Education Courses. Credits: 8 to 9 (selected from the list below)
- Special Education and Elective Courses (minimum). Credits: ~~21 to 22~~

Core Courses in Special Education:

- [SPE 5120 - Current Issues in Special Education](#). Credits: 3
- [SPE 5900 - Research in Special Education](#). Credits: 3

### Curriculum for the Master of Science in Education in Special Education Thesis Option

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**Total. Credits: 33 to 36**

Students in the thesis option must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of study in addition to thesis hours for the degree. A minimum of 15 semester hours of all graduate work must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

- Basic Education Courses. Credits: 8 to 9
- Special Education and Elective Courses (minimum). Credits: ~~15 to 16~~
- Thesis. Credits: 3 to 6

Core Courses in Special Education:

- [SPE 5120 - Current Issues in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5900 - Research in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3

**The 8 semester hours of basic education courses may be selected from the list that follows:**

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- [EDF 5500 - Theory Into Practice: Curriculum Development.](#) Credits: 3
  - [EDF 5510 - Theory Into Practice: Social Foundations for Educational Practice.](#) Credits: 3
  - [EDF 5530 - Theory Into Practice: Philosophy for Educational Practice.](#) Credits: 2
  - [EDF 5535 - Philosophy of Education: Clinical.](#) Credits: 2
  - [EDF 5540 - Theory Into Practice: History for Educational Practice.](#) Credits: 2
  - [EDF 5550 - Comparative and International Education.](#) Credits: 3
  - [EDP 5300 - Psychological Foundations for Educational Practice](#) Credits: 3

**The Following Regulations Apply to Both Degree Options**

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- A minimum of 21 semester hours must be in courses in the field of special education. Students may select courses or electives from other departments with advisor approval.
  - A maximum of 10 semester hours of courses numbered 4750 to 4999 may be applied to the degree.
  - A maximum of six semester hours of appropriate transfer courses (graded courses earning a grade of B or better) from an accredited institution may be applied to a degree.

## Graduate Assistantships

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Information on graduate assistantships may be obtained by contacting the Coordinator of Graduate Studies or Chair, Department of Special Education, Buzzard Hall 1212, EIU.

## **Proposed Catalogue Copy:**

**Program Mission:** The mission of the graduate program in Special Education is to prepare graduates for advanced professional practice with individuals with exceptional learning needs. Individuals may pursue additional Special Education endorsements/entitlements which may include earning an LBS II for “Curriculum Adaptation Specialist” or “Behavior Intervention Specialist,” or preparing to be a “Director” of Special Education.

**Admission Requirements:** To be eligible for degree candidacy, applicants must meet all of the requirements for admission to the Graduate School (see [“Admission to Graduate Degree and Certificate Programs”](#)). In addition, the student must provide the following documents:

- Official transcripts to the department and university documenting all prior course work and evidence of having earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution approved by Eastern Illinois University with a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or a 2.75 GPA for the last 60 hours of graded academic coursework as defined by the Graduate School. If these standards are not met, the student may complete nine semester hours of graduate level courses in the department with a grade point average of 3.3 or higher.
- Resume or vita
- Statement of Professional Goals
- Names and Contact Information for Two References
- Proof of Initial License in Special Education (LBSI or equivalent)

These documents will be considered as the advisor and student formulate a study plan that will include the student’s professional goals, extent of experience with individuals with exceptionalities, and the students’ professional writing competencies.

**Degree Audit:** The graduate plan of study is the EIU Degree Audit, which is generated automatically in the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) at the time of degree or certificate candidacy. Modifications of the standard EIU Degree Audit are submitted by the graduate coordinator to the certification officer in the Graduate School at the time modifications are approved. The Degree Audit serves as an unofficial summary of requirements for the program. Degree and certificate candidates are advised to review the comprehensive summary of the Degree Audit process specified on the [“Requirements for All Degree and Certificate Candidates”](#) section of the Graduate Catalog. Individual programs may require candidates to submit plans of study in addition to the Degree Audit, candidates should consult with the program coordinator.

# Degree Requirements

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## Curriculum for the Master of Science in Education in Special Education Non-Thesis Option

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**Total. Credits: 36**

Students in the non-thesis option must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours of study for the degree. A minimum of 17 semester hours of all graduate work must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

- Basic Education Courses. Credits: 8 to 9 (selected from the list below)
- Special Education Core and Elective Courses (minimum). Credits: 27-28

Core Courses in Special Education:

- [SPE 5120 - Current Issues in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5900 - Research in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5670 - Assessment in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5770 - Practicum in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5970 – Curriculum and Methods for K12 Special Education.](#) Credits: 3

## Curriculum for the Master of Science in Education in Special Education Thesis Option

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**Total. Credits: 33 to 36**

Students in the thesis option must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of study in addition to thesis hours for the degree. A minimum of 15 semester hours of all graduate work must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

- Basic Education Courses. Credits: 8 to 9
- Special Education and Elective Courses (minimum). Credits: 21-22

- Thesis. Credits: 3 to 6

Core Courses in Special Education:

- [SPE 5120 - Current Issues in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5900 - Research in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5670 - Assessment in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5770 - Practicum in Special Education.](#) Credits: 3
- [SPE 5970 – Curriculum and Methods for K12 Special Education.](#) Credits: 3

**The 8 semester hours of basic education courses may be selected from the list that follows:**

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