

PhD in Special Education

Admission Requirements

Applicants are considered on an individual basis. Applicants must submit transcripts from the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and from all postbaccalaureate work. In addition to the Graduate College minimum requirements, applicants must meet the following program requirements:

- **Baccalaureate Field** No restrictions.
- **Grade Point Average** At least 3.00/4.00 for the final 60 semester hours (90 quarter hours) of undergraduate study and for all postbaccalaureate coursework.
- **Tests Required** None.
- **Minimum English Competency Test Score**
 - **TOEFL iBT** 80, with subscores of Reading 19, Listening 17, Speaking 20, and Writing 21 (**Note:** Total score is higher than the sum of the subscores), **OR**,
 - **IELTS Academic** 6.5, with 6.0 in each of the four subscores, **OR**,
 - **PTE-Academic** 54, with subscores of Reading 51, Listening 47, Speaking 53, and Writing 56.
- **Letters of Recommendation** Three letters from faculty members or others familiar with the applicant's previous academic training and research potential.
- **Personal Statement** This required statement must address the applicant's professional goals, scholarly accomplishments, and research interests.
- **Interview** Applicants are required to participate in an interview with faculty.^a
- **Deadlines** [Application deadlines](#) for this program are listed on the Graduate College website.

a For information about interview, contact the Special Education office at (312) 996-5650.

Degree Requirements

In addition to the Graduate College minimum requirements, students must meet the following program requirements:

- **Minimum Semester Hours Required** 96 from the baccalaureate or 64 from the master's degree.
- **Coursework**

| Code | Title | Hours |
|--|---|-------|
| College Core (12 semester hours) | | |
| ED 504 | Urban Contexts and Educational Research | |
| ED 505 | Introduction to Educational Research: Paradigms and Processes | |
| ED 506 | Introduction to Educational Research: Designs and Analyses | |
| Methodology Requirement (12 semester hours) | | |
| ED 502 | Essentials of Qualitative Inquiry in Education | |

EP5Y 503 Essentials of Quantitative Inquiry in Education

One additional course on research methodology (must be approved by the faculty advisor)

Special Education Program Core (22 semester hours)

SPED 564 Proseminar in Special Education

Three seminars (e.g., SPED 592)

Students may take their remaining course credits within the Department of Special Education, in other departments in the College of Education, or in other departments of the university (e.g., Disability Studies, Psychology, Public Policy, Sociology) in consultation with their faculty advisor.

- **Preliminary Examination** Written and oral. The written exam is based on the student's program of study. The oral portion of the examination is based on both the written examination and the student's dissertation proposal.
- **Dissertation** Required. Students must register for doctoral thesis research for at least 12 semester hours.
- **Other Requirements** Students must participate in a research project in collaboration with a faculty member or a team of faculty members and students. Students enroll in SPED 593 for a minimum of 6 semester hours across at least two semesters while completing the research project. Students must complete a training course sponsored by the Office for the Vice Chancellor for Research on the ethics of conducting research with human subjects. Students are required to submit an annual report of their academic and professional progress.

Interdepartmental Concentrations

Students earning a graduate degree in this department may complement their courses by enrolling in select concentrations after consulting with their graduate advisor. Interdepartmental concentrations available for this degree include:

- [Black Studies](#)
- [Gender and Women's Studies](#)
- [Violence Studies](#)