

SPECIAL EDUCATION, PHD

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree is a research-focused degree and is tailored to the individual. Doctoral students work closely with their advisors to develop an integrated course of study reflecting their goals in the area of special education. All doctoral students must be involved in research, and typically have opportunities to also engage in university teaching and service to the field of special education. Doctoral students typically complete the program in four to five years of full-time resident study. Please see the Department of Special Education website (<https://education.illinois.edu/sped/programs-degrees/phd-sped/>) for more information about requirements and to view the Department of Special Education Doctoral Student Manual (<https://education.illinois.edu/sped/programs-degrees/phd-sped/current-students/doctoral-student-manual/>).

Admission

To be considered for admission to the program, applicants must submit a complete application including:

- transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work;
- a goal statement indicating interests, experiences, and goals for pursuing a doctoral degree in special education;
- a writing sample;
- three letters of reference (which must be submitted by the letter writers).

Applicants must have also maintained a 3.0 grade point average (A = 4.0) for the last two years of their undergraduate program and for any previous graduate work.

In addition to the above items, international students must submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score (taken within two years of the start of the semester for which the student is requesting admission). International students must have a total iBT score greater than 102 (72nd-79th percentile) and a speaking score greater than 23 (79th percentile).

Faculty Research Interests

Faculty in the Department of Special Education have a variety of research interests. Typically, there are multiple opportunities for doctoral students to engage in research activities with various faculty members. To learn more about individual faculty members, please visit the Faculty Finder (<https://education.illinois.edu/faculty-finder/sped/>).

Facilities and Resources

Each doctoral student is assigned an advisor, who is available to assist the student with planning their program of study and determining degree requirements, courses and timelines for degree completion. The College of Education also has many resources to assist graduate students through their academic career. Information on University resources can be found at the Illinois Graduate College website (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current-students/>).

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available to students admitted to the PhD program. Many doctoral students receive assistantships and/or traineeships throughout their doctoral training. Traineeships are grant funded and are available for full-time students. Other financial aid opportunities (e.g., fellowships and assistantships) are available on a competitive basis. Students who are awarded traineeships, assistantships, or fellowships are not required to pay tuition and some fees.

Financial aid in the form of assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, and tuition waivers can be found throughout the college (<https://education.illinois.edu/current-students/graduate/financial-aid/>) and campus. Campus opportunities can be found at the Graduate College (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/funding-jobs/>) and the Office of Student Financial Aid (<http://www.osfa.illinois.edu/>).

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A list of additional requirements can be found on the program's website, (<https://education.illinois.edu/faceted-search/programs/?degree=edd&department=sped>) the College of Education Graduate Programs Handbook (<https://education.illinois.edu/current-students/graduate/coe-graduate-handbook/>), and the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/>).

Special Education, PhD

Code	Title	Hours
Completion of at least 64 hours beyond the master's degree including:		
Major Subject Coursework (minimum)		32
SPED 599	Thesis Research (min/max applied toward degree)	4-20
Independent Study (min/max applied toward degree)		0-12
Research Coursework (All students will take a minimum of 16-20 credit hours, depending on area of methodology focus, in approved research methods courses.)		16-20
Total Hours		64

Other Requirements

Requirement	Description
Minimum GPA	3.0
Masters Degree Required for Admission to PhD	
Residency: Maintain continuous full time (12 hours) enrollment until the student takes the preliminary examination and during the graduating semester. Zero hours are required for all other semesters.	
Early Research Requirement	
Qualifying Exams	
Human Subjects Approval	
Preliminary Exam	
Final Exam/Dissertation Defense	
Dissertation Deposit	

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1. Graduates of the Department of Special Education doctoral program will be knowledgeable about the major topics and pressing issues in the special education scholarly literature (e.g., assessment, special education law and policies, universal design for curriculum, etc.) with a focus on their particular research area of interest.
 2. Graduates of the Department of Special Education doctoral program will conduct and critically assess research both independently and in collaboration with others in the field of special education.
 3. Graduates of the Department of Special Education doctoral program will access resources (e.g., write grants, participate in professional organizations, design policy initiatives, etc.) to enable them to engage in research, teaching, and service that positively impacts the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.
 4. Graduates of the Department of Special Education doctoral program will demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to teach, supervise and mentor future special education practitioners.
 5. Graduates of the Department of Special Education doctoral program will demonstrate a, ability to share their expertise through scholarly writing, conference presentations, and service activities.

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Special Education Department

Department Head: Matthew Lambert (matt5@illinois.edu)
Director of Graduate Studies: Kary Zarate (kzarat2@illinois.edu)
Graduate admissions information: Linda Stimson (ls9@illinois.edu)
Special Education Department website (<http://education.illinois.edu/sped/>)
Special Education faculty (<https://education.illinois.edu/faculty-finder/sped/>)
142 Education Building, 1310 South Sixth Street, Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 244-3542
Graduate Student Services Office email
(gradservices@education.illinois.edu)

College of Education

College of Education website (<http://education.illinois.edu/>)
College of Education programs (<https://education.illinois.edu/faceted-search/programs/>)

Admissions

Graduate College Admissions & Requirements (<https://grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply/>)
College of Education Admissions Requirements (<https://education.illinois.edu/programs/grad/how-to-apply/?url=/programs/grad>)