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 ample opportunities to 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/phi-spced/) for more information about requirements and to view the Department of Special Education Doctoral Student Manual (https://education.illinois.edu/sped/programs-degrees/phi-spced/current-students/doctoral-student-manual/).

Admission
Applicants must submit a complete application for admission, including transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work; a goal statement indicating interests, experiences, and goals for pursuing graduate study in special education; and a writing sample. The applicant also must arrange to have three letters of reference submitted. A 3.0 grade point average (A = 4.0) for the last two years of the undergraduate program and for any previous graduate work is a minimum requirement for admission. 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). The minimum speaking score is 24 (79th percentile).

Faculty Research Interests
The Department of Special Education faculty have a variety of research interests. There are multiple opportunities for graduate students to engage in research activities with faculty. For information about specific faculty research interests, current grants, and publications, please visit the Faculty Finder (https://education.illinois.edu/faculty-finder/sped/).

Facilities and Resources
The College of Education also has many resources to assist graduate students through their academic career. The Bureau of Educational Research works with students to secure research funding. The Council on Teacher Education (http://cote.illinois.edu/) provides entitlement of educator candidates to those seeking a Professional Educator License and provides accreditation of professional education programs. Each student completing a degree program is assigned a graduate advisor, who is available to assist the student with planning the program of study and determining degree requirements, courses and timelines for degree completion.

Information on University resources can be found at the Illinois Graduate College website (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/current-students/).

Financial Aid
Students engaged in graduate study and research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign find an environment where collaboration among faculty members and students is nurtured and rewarded and where the students’ contributions are recognized and valued. In many cases, this recognition comes in the form of financial awards that enable students to devote concentrated attention to their studies. Virtually all doctoral candidates 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 exempt from payment of 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/grad/funding-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/). Please note: Graduate students employed as Staff by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are not eligible for a College of Education Award or Scholarship.

Admission to PhD

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

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

Other Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum GPA</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>Masters Degree Required for Admission to PhD</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Research Requirement</td>
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<td>Qualifying Exams</td>
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<td>Human Subjects Approval</td>
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<td>Preliminary Exam</td>
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Information listed in this catalog is current as of 06/2023
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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Graduate Degree Programs in Special Education

- Special Education, EdM ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/special-education-edm/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/special-education-edm/)) (on campus & off-campus)
- optional concentrations:
  - Bilingual-Bicultural Education ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/bilingual-bicultural-education/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/bilingual-bicultural-education/))
  - Digital Learning ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/digital-learning/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/digital-learning/))
- Special Education, MS ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/special-education-ms/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/special-education-ms/))
- optional concentrations:
  - Bilingual-Bicultural Education ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/bilingual-bicultural-education/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/bilingual-bicultural-education/))
  - Digital Learning ([http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/digital-learning/](http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/education/concentration/digital-learning/))
- Special Education, PhD (p. 1)

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Special Education Department
Interim Department Head: Michelle Perry
Director of Graduate Studies: Kary Zarate
Graduate admissions information: Linda Stimson
Special Education Department website ([http://education.illinois.edu/sped/](http://education.illinois.edu/sped/))
Special Education faculty ([https://education.illinois.edu/faculty-finder/sped/](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/](http://education.illinois.edu/))
College of Education programs ([https://education.illinois.edu/faceted-search/programs/](https://education.illinois.edu/faceted-search/programs/))

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

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