**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

http://education.illinois.edu/sped

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Director of Graduate Studies: Johnell Bentz  
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Major: Special Education  
Degrees offered: Ed.M., M.S., Ph.D.

Off-Campus Program: Special Education  
Degree Offered: Ed.M.

**Graduate Degree Programs**

www.education.illinois.edu/sped/programs/ (http://www.education.illinois.edu/sped/programs)

The Department of Special Education offers several master’s program areas of emphasis and licensure: Infancy and Early Childhood Special Education, Learning and Behavior Specialist I (LBS-I), Learning and Behavior Specialist II (LBS-II), General Master’s in Special Education, and Research Practitioner in Special Education. LBS-I is the master’s program that prepares teachers for their initial teaching licensure. The other master’s programs are available for practicing teachers and other professionals interested in graduate studies. Several of these programs can be completed on a full or part-time basis. In most cases, full-time students take two years to complete their program of studies.

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree is a research focused degree and is tailored to the individual. Each candidate works closely with an adviser to develop an integrated course of study reflecting his or her goals in the area of special education. All doctoral students have the opportunity to be involved in research, university teaching, and service to the field of special education during their doctoral studies. Doctoral students typically complete the program in four to five years of full-time resident study. Please see the Department of Special Education www.education.illinois.edu/sped/programs/DocProgram.html (http://www.education.illinois.edu/sped/programs/DocProgram.html) for more information about requirements and to view the Department of Special Education Doctoral Advisement Manual.

**Admission**

http://education.illinois.edu/programs/grad/how-to-apply

Applicants must submit a complete application for admission. The application is located on the Graduate College Web site. (http://www.grad.illinois.edu) The applicant must submit three letters of reference and transcripts of all previous undergraduate and graduate work. 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. The applicant must also submit a goal statement indicating his/her interests, experiences, and goals for pursuing graduate study in special education. 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). Master’s applicants should also submit a Master’s Degree Program Special Education Form (http://education.illinois.edu/programs/grad/how-to-apply). Doctoral program applicants are required to submit a writing sample in addition to their goal statement.

**Off-Campus Program**

The Department of Special Education offers master’s degree programs off-campus in coordination with Federal Personnel Preparation Grant awards. The focus of the off-campus program changes depending on the type of grant award. For example, past emphases have been on behavior intervention and multiple disabilities. For degree requirements, see the Master of Education chart above.

**Licensure**

The Council on Teacher Education functions as the all-University governance system for licensure. Graduate students who wish to qualify for the council’s recommendation for a teaching or administrative license must complete the appropriate graduate program. The Department of Special Education offers graduate-level licensure programs in Learning and Behavior Specialist I (LBS-I), Learning and Behavior Specialist II (LBS-II). Early Childhood Special Education master’s students who already hold a Professional Educator License who went through an Early Childhood approved program qualify for the Illinois ECSE approval. Students completing the Director of Special Education focus are eligible for the State of Illinois Director of Special Education Endorsement. For specific information about licensure requirements, call the Council on Teacher Education (217-333-7195) or go to www.cote.illinois.edu (http://www.cote.illinois.edu).

**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 Research Profiles web site education.illinois.edu/sped/Research-Teaching-and-Service (http://education.illinois.edu/sped/Research-Teaching-and-Service).

**Facilities and Resources**

The College of Education 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 entitles candidates seeking a Professional Educator License and provides accreditation of professional education programs. Each student completing a degree program is assigned a graduate adviser, 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 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/traineeships. Traineeships are grant funded and are available for full-time students pursuing initial teacher licensure and leadership preparation in specific areas. Other financial aid opportunities (e.g., fellowships and assistantships) are available to part-time and other master’s degree students on a competitive basis. Students receiving traineeships, assistantships, and fellowships are exempt from payment of tuition and some fees.

There are opportunities available through the department (http://www.ed.illinois.edu/sped/financialaid.html), the College of Education (http://education.illinois.edu), and the Bureau of Educational Research (http://www.ed.illinois.edu/ber/fundingresources.html). 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. 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).

- Master of Education in Special Education (http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/graduate-majors/ed-specialed/edm-special-education)
- Master of Science in Special Education (http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/graduate-majors/ed-specialed/ms-special-education)

Please refer to the departmental website for typical course sequences and licensure requirements (http://www.education.illinois.edu/sped/programs) for specific program emphases.

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**Other Requirements**

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum GPA</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<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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<td>Final Exam/Dissertation Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation Deposit</td>
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1 All students will take a minimum of 16-20 credit hours, depending on area of methodology focus, in approved research methods courses (http://education.illinois.edu/current-students/graduate/coe-graduate-handbook/phd/research-requirement).

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**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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Information listed in this catalog is current as of 12/2019