

MEd Special Education - Orientation and Mobility Specialization

Program Description

The purpose is to prepare certified orientation and mobility specialists to provide orientation and mobility services to individuals with blindness or low vision through a distance hybrid program. A Bachelor's Degree in any area is required.

Degree Areas

Master of Education in Special Education – Orientation and Mobility Specialist Program. This 36-hour hybrid program leads to an MEd in Special Education with concentration in Orientation and Mobility and prepares students to qualify for examination to receive an Orientation and Mobility National Certification. This program provides academic coursework for certification as an Orientation and Mobility specialist in the United States.

Non-Degree Professional Certification in Orientation and Mobility Specialist Program.

This 27-hour hybrid program allows persons with a bachelor's to complete academic coursework for certification as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist in the United States.

*Students must apply and be admitted to the program prior to seeking certification.

**Certification is contingent upon completion of the national certifying exam, not upon completion of the program coursework (Certifying exams are not offered by Texas Tech University).

Standards

The Orientation and Mobility Program uses standards from the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP) and from the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER).

Orientation and Mobility Course Descriptions:

- EDSP 5380: Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments: This course is an introduction to educational programs and services for students with visual impairments, including history, developmental characteristics, psychosocial aspects, and legislation.
- EDSP 5383: Anatomy and Functions of the Visual System: This course is an introduction to the structure and function of the visual system; conditions that affect visual ability; and the functional, environmental, and psychosocial implications of low vision.
- EDSP 5384: Basic Orientation and Mobility Skills: Exploration of space in the home and school environment and the wider community according to individual needs; appreciation and understanding of professional mobility instruction programs.
- EDSP 5386: Intermediate Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired: To provide graduate students in the orientation and mobility specialists program with the course content, knowledge, skills, and dispositions



required for certification and to provide high quality education to children with visual impairments and additional disabilities.

- EDSP 5387: Advanced Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired: To provide graduate students in the orientation and mobility specialists program with the course content, knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for certification and to provide high quality education to children with visual impairments and additional disabilities.
- EDSP 5389: Strategies for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairments or Deafblindness: candidates will get opportunities to: apply the foundational skills and knowledge to work with a student who has multiple disabilities in addition to vision and/or hearing (sensory) impairments. Therefore, this course prepares professionals to be able to work with students with multiple impairments through application of appropriate evaluation and instructional strategies.
- EDSP 5391: Intermediate Seminar in Orientation and Mobility: The purpose of this course is to provide graduate students in the orientation and mobility specialists program with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for certification and to provide high-quality education and rehabilitation to persons with visual impairments and blindness, including those with additional disabilities.
- EDSP 5392: Advanced Seminar in Orientation and Mobility: To provide graduate students in the orientation and mobility specialists program with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for certification and to provide high-quality education and rehabilitation to persons with visual impairments and blindness, including those with additional disabilities.
- EDSP 5093: Internship: The purpose of this course is to provide practical experiences working with students with visual impairments in the classroom and community.

Program of Studies for Orientation and Mobility Master's Degree with Certification

Course Type in Program	Course Prefix & Number	Course Title
Core Courses 3 credit hours	EPSY 5379	Introduction to Educational Research
	EPSY 5310	Philosophy of Education
EPSY Elective Core Pick one (1) of the following: 3 credit hours	EPSY 5314	History of Education
	EPSY 5323	Cultural Foundations of Education
	EPSY 5331	Human Development in Education
	EPSY 5332	Educational Psychology



Course Type in Program	Course Prefix & Number	Course Title
Special Education Core 3 semester hours	EDSP 5307	Collaborative Problem Solving in Special Education
O&M Specialization Courses 27 semester hours	EDSP 5384*	Basic Orientation & Mobility Skills (Weekend in Lubbock)
	EDSP 5386*	Intermediate Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired (Summer only-F2F on Lubbock TTU campus)
	EDSP 5387*	Advanced Orientation & Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired (Summer only-F2F on Lubbock TTU campus)
	EDSP 5391*	Intermediate Seminar in Orientation & Mobility (Fall only)
	EDSP 5392*	Advanced Seminar in Orientation & Mobility (Spring only)
	EDSP 5093*	Internship in Orientation & Mobility
	EDSP 5380*	Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments
	EDSP 5383*	Anatomy and Functions of the Visual System (Weekend in Lubbock)
	EDSP 5389*	Strategies for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairments or Deafblindness
Total of 36 semester hours	*Required for student to be eligible for Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) Orientation & Mobility Specialist Certification.	

**This degree plan with 36 semester hours leads to a MEd in Special Education.

*** Adjustments to course requirements can be made with advisor approval on an individual basis.

Students can transfer in up to 6 credit hours at the graduate level for the Master's program.

Important: You must file an Intent to Graduate with the Graduate School and an application to take the Master's Comprehensive Exam with the College of Education early in your last semester.

You will receive an email notice from the COE Graduate School Coordinator containing instructions pertaining to graduation requirements prior to your final semester.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

College of Education™

Admission Requirements

Students applying to any Special Education Graduate programs must complete their application online through the Graduate School's admission site:

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/admissions/howtoapply.php>

There is a \$75 application fee to apply to the University, and it can be completed online. (Additional applications to add programs are \$25 each). You do not need GRE scores to apply for a certification program or for a Master's Degree in Special Education. You will need to have all of your other official college transcripts sent to the Graduate School Admissions office (transcripts.gradschool@ttu.edu).

When applying for certification instead of masters, on the application to apply: Select **Teaching Certificate in College of Education** for the first question, "**Select your major**". (Even if you already have your teacher's certification). Then on question #3 when you are asked "major area of interest" you can write in O&M

Contact Dr. L.J. Gould (lj.gould@ttu.edu or 806-834-4224) for admissions information regarding Special Education programs.

***All O&M applicants (MEd and Certification) are required to read, agree, and sign the O&M Technical Standards form (see end of this handbook).**

Registration & Academic Standards

Academic Quality

Students must maintain a level of academic integrity and progress in line with Texas Tech and the College of Education's standards of excellence. Students whose GPA is below 2.5 for 3 consecutive semesters will be placed under Academic probation, after 4 semesters the student will be placed under a suspension and dropped from the program. A new, complete application to the University with essay and references must be submitted for readmission after suspension period is over. Readmission to the program is conditional and up to the discretion of the program's respective coordinator.

Academic Integrity

Students who break academic integrity by cheating or plagiarism are liable to be dropped or suspended from the program at the discretion of the instructor of record and respective program coordinator. Repeat offenses are eligible for permanent suspension from the program with no readmission allowed. Please review the TTU handbook on Academic Integrity for standards and definitions:

https://www.depts.ttu.edu/tlpdc/Resources/NewFacultyResources/Student_Handbook_Academic_Integrity_Procedures.pdf

Specializations and Certifications

[ACVREP Orientation and Mobility Specialist Certification](#)

**Repeating Courses**

Students who receive a grade of C or F in EDSP 5386 Intermediate Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired or EDSP 5387 Advanced Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired must retake the course before completing Internship in Special Education (Orientation and Mobility), EDSP 5093.

Additional Information:

[Graduate Admissions Help Center](#)

[Master's Degree Plan](#)

[CEC Code of Ethics](#)

[Graduate School Website](#)

[College of Education Website](#)

[Sowell Center Website](#)

Graduate Faculty

Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D. <u>n.griffin-shirley@ttu.edu</u> 806-834-0225	Orientation and Mobility Program Coordinator, Professor
Phoebe Aoko Okungu, Ph.D. <u>phoebe.okungu@ttu.edu</u> (806) 834-0286	Teacher of Students with Deafblindness Program Coordinator, Associate Professor
Rona Pogrund, Ph.D. <u>rona.pogrund@ttu.edu</u> 806-252-8026	Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments Program Coordinator, Professor

Technical Standards for Orientation and Mobility Program

This document describes technical standards specific to the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Program which is accredited through the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired's Higher Education Accrediting Committee. An objective of the O&M program is to prepare graduates to enter a variety of employment settings (e.g., schools, rehabilitation centers, state government positions). The technical standards provided by the O&M Program provide students with the necessary skills for entry-level positions. As of September 1, 2020, the ability to meet these technical standards is required for admission to the graduate program and must be maintained throughout the time a student is enrolled in the program. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on satisfactory academic standing but also on non-academic factors that serve to ensure that students can meet the technical standards of the O&M program required for graduation.

These technical standards must be maintained throughout a student's program and may change over time. Applicants to the O&M program will be required to verify that they understand and meet these technical standards, or that they believe with reasonable accommodations they can meet the technical standards. A reasonable accommodation cannot fundamentally alter the academic and clinical requirements of the programs, pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the student or others, or present an undue burden to the institution.

In keeping with laws regarding disabilities, we are committed to making reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities to enable them to successfully meet all technical standards. Students with a disability who are accepted to the O&M program and anticipate the need for accommodations should contact the Student Disability Services office and complete the university approved process for establishing eligibility for accommodations.

Certification Requirements

To successfully complete the O&M program, a student must meet the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) competencies located at <https://www.acvrep.org/certifications/coms-bok>. Graduates of the O&M Program are qualified to sit for the national certification examination through ACVREP. Successful completion of the O&M Certification examination is required for an individual to be certified in many states and can vary from state to state. We adhere to the standards set by this organization as well as a Code of Ethics from ACVREP. **Code of Ethics for Orientation and Mobility Specialists** (*Revised: June 11, 2013*) URL: <https://www.acvrep.org/certifications/coms-code>

To acquire the knowledge and skills requisite to the practice of O&M to function in a variety of situations and to successfully complete the O&M program, students must have multiple abilities and skills divided into the following areas: communication, motor, intellectual-cognitive, sensory-observational, and social-behavioral. The following technical standards reflect the applicable subset of abilities that are required under each skill:

Communication

Prospective and current students must possess adequate communication skills to:

- Communicate effectively with individuals and groups in person, by phone, and in written form while considering the communication needs and cultural values of the listener at a level which will support competent professional practice.
- Communicate proficiently in oral and written English.
- Communicate professionally, effectively, and legibly to meet demands required as part of coursework and during clinical work to ensure student safety (e.g., medical information, O&M reports, assessment).
- Convey information accurately with relevance and cultural sensitivity.
- Possess sufficient speech/vocal productions for provision of O&M services.

Physical and Mental Demands/Environment Factors

Prospective and current students must possess adequate physical and mental skills to:

- Sustain necessary physical activities for the defined workday.
- Efficiently select and use materials, equipment and environment to complete O&M assessments and education/rehabilitation programs.
- Access technology and equipment for O&M documents (e.g., assessments, reports).
- Regular travel to multiple teaching sites as assigned (e.g., classroom, education/rehabilitation setting, and in the community).
- Access various forms of transportation to attend academic courses and internship placement(s).
- Safely manipulate student-utilized equipment (e.g., GPS, canes, low-vision devices, wheelchairs, scooters).
- Provide a safe environment for students when responding to emergency situations (e.g., fire, choking, or other medical emergencies) and in the application of universal precautions.
- Maintain emotional control under stress.
- Frequent standing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, bending, reaching, pulling, pushing, heavy lifting, and moderate carrying.
- May be required to lift and transfer students to and from wheelchairs or assist with positioning students with physical disabilities.
- Must be able to lift and/or move up to a minimum of 25 pounds.
- Teach in rain, cold, heat and other inclement conditions.

Intellectual/Cognitive

Prospective and current students must possess adequate intellectual/cognitive skills to:

Comprehend, retain, integrate, synthesize, infer, evaluate, and apply large amounts of written and verbal information from various sources and disciplines in a short period of time sufficiently to meet O&M program requirements.

- Read, comprehend, record, and interpret information accurately from equipment, medical and student records to develop and implement an O&M program, and ensure student safety.

- Analyze and solve problems, reason, and make sound judgments in student assessment, planning and implementation of an O&M program.
- Accurately identify and communicate limits in one's own professional knowledge and skills and utilize resources to increase one's knowledge and skills.
- Use technology to meet requirements of courses and internship (e.g., internet access, records).

Sensory/Observation

Prospective and current students must possess adequate sensory skills to:

- Identify normal and disordered characteristics in motor planning that affects orientation and mobility (e.g., gait patterns, posture).
- Observe students' activity and behavior accurately during an O&M assessment and implementation of a program.
- Monitor students' responses and use of equipment and materials to ensure their safety while traveling.
- Discriminate text, numbers, tables, and graphs associated with diagnostic instruments (e.g., eye reports, audiograms).
- Recognize and interpret the student's and a family/caregiver's understanding of the student's eye conditions and individualized O&M program.

Repeating Courses

Students who receive a grade of C or F in EDSP 5386 Intermediate Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired or EDSP 5387 Advanced Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired must retake the course before completing Internship in Special Education (Orientation and Mobility), EDSP 5093.

Immediate Dismissal

Success in the O&M program consists of more than grades. Work habits and attitudes play a major role in the success of any O&M student. Any of the following actions are considered just cause for immediate dismissal from the O&M Program:

1. Violations of the rules, regulations, and principles in the *Code of Ethics* for Orientation and Mobility Specialists and *Texas Tech Code of Student Affairs*.
2. Interns who fail in the internship are required to show reasonable cause why they should not be excluded from the O&M program. Interns who successfully show cause and can re-enroll in the internship course will be required to complete the full internship again.
3. Failure to maintain an overall GPA of 2.5 or higher.
4. Willful submission of false information or alteration of any official records, O&M reports, papers, or examinations.
5. Willful conduct that may cause injury to self or others.

I understand and acknowledge that I must meet the technical standards required for this O&M certification/degree program to complete the program, with or without accommodations.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____