# M.Ed. Special Education - Visual Impairment Specialization

## Program Options:

*Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education -- Visual Impairment*. This 36-hour distance hybrid degree program prepares students to serve as teachers of students with visual impairments in educational settings from birth- age 22 levels and receive a master’s degree in special education. This program includes academic coursework for certification as a teacher of students with visual impairments in Texas.\*

*Non-Degree Professional Certification in Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments Program*. This 27-hour distance hybrid program allows persons with a bachelor’s degree and another initial standard teacher certification to complete academic coursework for certification as a teacher of students with visual impairments in Texas. \*Students must apply and be admitted to the program prior to seeking certification. \*\*Certification is contingent upon completion of the Texas certifying exams, not upon completion of the program coursework (Certifying exams are not offered by the Texas Tech University).

**Performance Skills:** (alignment with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards and Outcomes for Special Education and Visual Impairment, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standards, and the Texas State Board for Educator Certification Visual Impairment and Braille Competencies)

Upon completion of the program the candidate can:

* Comply with all school, agency, and university policies, operating procedures and legal requirements (both state and federal regulations).
* Plan and adapt lessons to address students’ varied backgrounds, skills, interests, and learning needs, including language needs and visual impairment needs.
* Select learner-centered and developmentally appropriate instructional content and strategies within the core curriculum and expanded core curriculum.
* Establish an instructional environment that is safe, nurturing, inclusive, and productive.
* Use clear & accurate oral and written communication in the teaching and learning process & uses appropriate language and terms.
* Plan & apply instructional strategies to successfully and actively engage students in the learning process and promote critical thinking and problem solving.
* Organize activities, apply procedures, and manage time in ways to promote student learning, appropriate behavior, and ethical work.
* Conduct functional vision evaluations, learning media assessments, and expanded core curriculum evaluations and prepare written reports for students with visual impairments.
* Model ethical behavior and professionalism (punctuality, reliability, dependability) on a daily basis with staff, students, and colleagues.
* Demonstrate skills in consulting and collaborating with professionals and parents to assure appropriate programming for students with visual impairments.
* Incorporate the effective use of technology to plan, organize, deliver, evaluate, and modify instruction based on individual student needs.

Scope and Sequence of Specialization Courses:

* 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 5382 - Braille Code for Teaching Individuals with Visual Impairments: Knowledge and skills in reading and writing the Unified English Braille code, Nemeth mathematics code, and formatting. The purpose of this course is to provide competency in the reading and writing of contracted literary braille. Students will also learn the proper use of the slate and stylus for writing braille. They will be provided basic knowledge of braille formatting rules and the Nemeth Code of Braille Mathematics. All of these skills are essential for teachers of students with visual impairments.
* 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. Learning basic mobility skills under a blindfold is part of this hybrid course.
* **EDSP 5381 - Instructional Strategies for Individuals with Visual Impairments:** Strategies for teaching and adapting instruction in core curriculum content areas and expanded core curriculum areas such as independent living, career-vocational, social skills, P. E., leisure, etc. Includes a theoretical framework, evaluation strategies, and research applications.
* **EDSP 5389 - Strategies for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairments or Deafblindness:** This course prepares students 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 5093- Internship**

Program of Studies for Visual Impairments 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 Elective Core  Pick one (1) of the following:  3 credit hours | EPSY 5310 | | Philosophy of Education |
| EPSY 5314 | | History of Education |
| EPSY 5323 | | Cultural Foundations of Education |
| EPSY 5331 | | Human Development in Education |
| EPSY 5332 | | Educational Psychology |
| Special Education Core  6 credit hours | EDSP 5300 | | Exceptional Children and Youth |
| EDSP 5307 | | Collaborative Problem Solving in Special Education |
| VI Specialization Courses  21 credit hours | EDSP 5380\* | | Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments |
| EDSP 5381\* | | Instructional Strategies for Individuals with Visual Impairments |
| EDSP 5382\* | | Braille Code for Teaching Individuals with Visual Impairments |
| EDSP 5383\* | | Anatomy and Functions of the Visual System |
| EDSP 5384\* | | Basic Orientation and Mobility Skills |
| EDSP 5389\* | | Strategies for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment or Deafblindness |
| EDSP 5093\* | | Visual Impairment Internship in Special Education (3 hrs.) |
| Graduate Elective  3 credit hours | | (Choose a graduate level class of interest) | |
| Total of 36 credit hours\*\* | \*Required for TEA Supplemental Visual Impairment Certification (EC-12); TExES examinations in Braille and Visual  Impairment required. | | |

\*\*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 complete the Masters Comprehensive Evaluation Paper 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.

# 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](mailto: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 VI.

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

# 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

[TEA Certification](https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/certification)

[TExES Examination](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/Home.aspx)

Additional Information:

[Graduate Admissions Help Center](https://ttugradschool.force.com/admhelp/s/)

[Master’s Degree Plan](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/graduate/special-education/special_education_visual_impairment.php)

[CEC Code of Ethics](https://exceptionalchildren.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf)

[Graduate School Website](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/)

[College of Education Website](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/)

[Sowell Center Website](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/outreach-and-research/sowell/)

# Graduate Faculty

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| Rona Pogrund, Ph.D.  [rona.pogrund@ttu.edu](mailto:rona.pogrund@ttu.edu)  806-252-8026 | Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments Program Coordinator, Professor |
| Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D.  [n.griffin-shirley@ttu.edu](mailto:n.griffin-shirley@ttu.edu)  806-834-0225 | Orientation and Mobility Program Coordinator, Professor |
| Phoebe Aoko Okungu, Ph.D.  [phoebe.okungu@ttu.edu](mailto:phoebe.okungu@ttu.edu)(  806-834-0286 | Deafblind Program Coordinator, Assistant Professor |