

# Special Education

## Master's of Education and Certification Programs

### General Information

#### Program Overview

The general goal of the Master's Degree program in Special Education is to prepare professional educators with advanced competencies related to a field of special education. The following areas of specialization are offered:

#### Master's Degree Programs

- [Applied Behavior Analysis](#)
- [Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)
- [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)
- [Dual Sensory Impairment](#)
- [Generic Special Education](#)
- [Orientation and Mobility](#)
- [Professional Educational Diagnostician](#)
- [Transition](#)
- [Visual Impairment](#)

#### Non-degree programs

##### National and State Certification ONLY

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Generic Special Education
- Orientation and mobility
- Professional educational diagnostician
- Visual impairment

- Need to apply for certification on your own

##### Graduate Certificates

- [Autism](#)
- [Dual Sensory Impairment](#)
- [Sensory Impairments and Autism](#)
- [Transition](#)

## **Internship Experience in Teaching Fields**

All students seeking a Master's Degree and/or certification must complete an internship experience in a field-based setting. Field experiences are governed by the following policies adopted by the special education faculty.

1. A total of 350 hours must be completed for a Master's Degree.
2. The internship requirements will be developed cooperatively between a faculty member and the student to provide the best educational experience possible and to allow students to develop and grow professionally.
3. The internship requirements should be responsive to licensing/certifying organization requirements so that upon completion of the special education program, graduate students will be eligible for certification or licensure.
4. Since the majority of students are employed full-time, they may accomplish the requirements in two or more of the following ways as determined by their supervising faculty member.
5. The internship will be supervised by a university faculty member.

Students are placed full-time or part-time in programs that comply with standards established for educational programs by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), CEC, ACVREP and CAEP (or other recognized accrediting body). Students work under the direction of a mentor/supervisor who is an experienced educator of students with disabilities and who must:

- Be appropriately certified by the Texas Education Agency or other recognized accrediting agency to teach where the student is assigned for the field experience.
- Demonstrate professional practices that are consistent with the program in special education.
- Be assigned no more than one internship student for a given period.
- Have 3 years of teaching experience in teaching students in the area of emphasis.
- Be recognized by his or her supervisor as exemplary.

## **Master's Program Options:**

### **Thesis Option**

Each Master's Degree student will have an option of completing a thesis as part of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Special Education. Under this option, students enroll in 6 semester hours of EDSP 6000, and this becomes part of the minimum of 36 semester hours on the degree plan. Students completing a Master's thesis are exempt from taking the comprehensive evaluation. However, students must complete a final oral defense.

If interested in completing a Master's thesis, students should discuss these plans with their advisor. A thesis committee of at least two full-time faculty members of the College of Education will be recommended by the advisor and approved by the Graduate School. This committee will provide ongoing guidance as the student prepares the proposal, carries out the research project, and completes the written document. The process of planning the thesis, ideally, should begin in the semester in which the student takes Introduction to Educational Research.

The final copy of the thesis is prepared in accordance with the requirements in Instructions for Preparing and Submitting Theses and Dissertations, available online and in the Texas Tech Bookstore.

#### **Evaluation for the Master Degree Thesis**

1. Check with your advisor, and with your advisor's help, choose at least a 2-member thesis committee. This committee should match your degree plan.
2. Set up a meeting with your thesis committee to talk about your selection for an appropriate topic.
3. Your thesis committee should guide you through the process, including the Need for Human Subject approval. However, it is the responsibility of the student to fill out and submit paperwork to his/her advisor.
4. Thesis defenses should be completed by early November for fall or late March for spring to file the thesis with the Graduate School. Remember that the Graduate School has deadlines for submission, and students must adhere to these guidelines. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of all deadlines. Should a student miss the deadlines or fail the thesis defense, he or she has one semester to complete and successfully defend the thesis. Otherwise a failing grade will be recorded.

## Master's Program Options:

### Non-thesis Option: Comprehensive Evaluation

#### Option 1: Pilot Comprehensive Examination Project

For Applied Behavior Analysis, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Educational Diagnostician, Generic, and Transition Master's Program Students

1. Register electronically with the College of Education Graduate Office for the Comprehensive Examination choosing the paper option by the due date. Let your advisor know that you will be completing the Pilot Project instead of the paper.
2. Submit your Intent to Graduate electronically with the Graduate School.
3. Candidates are required to complete a single subject design procedure to evaluate the impact of a behavioral or instructional intervention developed through the collaborative consultation process using data gathered from assessment procedures. You have practiced for this project across a variety of courses including EDSP 5303 and EDSP 5307. The procedure should include:
  - a. An initial consultation with parents and/or teachers to plan an intervention based on the assessment data. Select only one behavior or academic skill to change during this process.
  - b. The intervention plan should include the exact methodology that you will use.
  - c. Baseline and intervention data collection concerning behavior/student change will be presented in graph format.
  - d. The results of the intervention will be discussed in another collaborative consultation meeting.
  - e. A new plan for intervention based on intervention data collected developed.
4. Complete the Comprehensive Examination by gathering data across the last two semesters of your master's program to demonstrate mastery of the following goals as addressed on the Comprehensive Examination rubric:
  - **ED6S1 Communicates** with team members to determine assessment needs
  - **ICC8S4 Develops or modifies individualized** intervention or assessment strategies using the collaborative consultation process
  - **ICC8S8 Evaluates** instruction or therapy and monitors progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs
5. Steps for Completion of the Comprehensive Examination:
  - a. You will create one document that will include the following sections:
    - i. Completed Evidence Template in bulleted format
    - ii. Baseline and Intervention graph
    - iii. Assessment report

- iv. Intervention plan
- b. You will upload the videos that show the evidence of mastery for each of the 4 required skills.
  - i. Video evidence of the candidate actually performing the skills
  - ii. Submit Videos via TeachScape
    - 1. First, log on to [www.teachscape.com](http://www.teachscape.com) using the user name and password provided.
    - 2. Click 'Reflect Video Library' from the menu on the left hand side.
    - 3. Click 'Upload Video' button on the top of the page.
    - 4. Enter a title for your video, select a subject and grade level. Then click 'Next'.
    - 5. Click the 'Choose File' button and select the video file you want to upload from your computer.
    - 6. Click 'OK' and your video will be uploaded.
- c. **Submit in a finished product:**
  - i. Written summaries of behaviors that provide specific evidence of each descriptor on the Comprehensive Examination Rubric using the Scoring and **Evidence Template** for the Comprehensive Examination
    - 1. Write the evidence in bulleted form not sentences.
    - 2. Describe exactly what is taking place in the video that provides evidence of mastery
    - 3. Avoid general descriptions like ("I'm nice to them.")
  - ii. **4-5 video clips** which provide direct visual evidence of the candidate's mastery of the each subskill.
    - 1. Areas for the video clips will include:
      - a. Communicating in a team meeting setting
      - b. Developing or modifying individualized assessment strategies in a team meeting setting
      - c. Implementing the chosen intervention with an individual
      - d. Explaining the effectiveness of the intervention in a team meeting setting
    - 2. Mark the evidence by stating the exact time that it takes place on each video using the time stamp.
    - 3. The entire segment of video clips may not exceed 8 minutes.
  - iii. Include the **assessment report**
  - iv. Include an **intervention plan**
  - v. Include both the baseline and intervention **graphs**
- d. Turn in the finished product to your graduate advisor by the Comprehensive Examination due date for the semester.
- 6. A passing score for the Comprehensive Examination will reflect the candidate's ability to perform and describe the descriptors for the Collaborative Consultation skills in the four areas at the "Meets Expectations" level.

### Evidence Template for the Special Education Comprehensive Examination

Subskills	Descriptions of Specific Evidence of Mastery
<b>ICC10S10 Communicate</b> effectively with families and educators of individuals with exceptional learning needs from all backgrounds	
<b>ICC8S4 Develops or modifies an individualized academic intervention plan</b> using the collaborative consultation process	
<b>ACC4S2</b> Design and implement research activities to <b>examine the effectiveness</b> of academic intervention plan	

Rubric for P3: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trademark Skill:** Effectively communicate and collaborate with other professionals to improve outcomes for students/clients with disabilities in classroom settings.

**Distinctive Outcome:** Engage in collaboration with stakeholders to improve educational outcomes for students/clients in assessment settings.

Subskill	Exceeds Expectations -5	4	Meets Expectation-3	2	Unacceptable-1
<b>ICC10S10</b> <b>Communicate</b> effectively with families and educators of individuals with exceptional learning needs from all backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always pays close attention to speaker and maintains eye contact with speaker</li> <li>Always summarizes or asks questions for clarification</li> <li>Always uses I messages, states behaviors objectively</li> <li>Always asks direct, informational questions</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes pays close attention to speaker</li> <li>Sometimes offers advice, direction or labeling</li> <li>Sometimes uses you messages and but instead of and statements</li> <li>Sometimes asks questions</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely pays attention to speaker</li> <li>Often engages in directing, advising and labeling without regard</li> <li>Has trouble maintaining eye contact and does not relate to the group</li> <li>Does not ask direct questions</li> </ul>
<b>ICC8S4</b> <b>Develops or modifies individualized intervention or assessment strategies</b> using the collaborative consultation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always identifies and prioritizes target behavior</li> <li>Always operationally defines the target behavior</li> <li>Always keeps meeting focus on the target</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes identifies the target behavior</li> <li>Sometimes refers to the definition of behavior</li> <li>Sometimes keeps group focused on target behavior</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discusses a variety of behaviors</li> <li>Does not have an operational definition for the target behavior</li> <li>Allows the group to stray from discussing the target behavior</li> </ul>
<b>ICC8S8</b> <b>Evaluates</b> instruction or therapy and monitor progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always collects &amp; graphs baseline data</li> <li>Always presents intervention fidelity data</li> <li>Always reports intervention data in a graph</li> <li>Always makes a decision about future goals based on data</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collects data but does not graph</li> <li>Has intervention fidelity data but does not present it</li> <li>Has progress monitoring data but does not present it in a graph</li> <li>Makes some decisions based on presented data</li> </ul>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not collect data</li> <li>Does not collect intervention fidelity data</li> <li>Does not collect progress monitoring data</li> <li>Makes data based on opinions rather than data</li> </ul>

\_\_\_ Content Issues    \_\_\_ Technical Issues    \_\_\_ Quality of Work Issues    \_\_\_ Synthesis Issues

## **Option 2: Comprehensive Exam Paper**

*Not available to students in Applied Behavior Analysis, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Educational Diagnostician, Generic, and Transition who began their program after Summer 2013.*

1. Prior to your final semester, choose a topic of interest regarding special education. Consult your advisor regarding the topic for approval. Fill out the [Comprehensive Exam Paper Proposal Form](#) and submit it to your advisor for approval. The paper must be submitted by the date of the comprehensive evaluation each semester. If work is not satisfactory or is not turned in by the deadline, the student will have to re-enroll for the following semester and meet those specific deadlines. Students have two trials for successful completion of the comprehensive exam paper for their M.Ed.
2. Write a comprehensive exam paper over the body of research you have collected. Include a review of literature, a concluding section over practical implications of the research for the field of special education and your classroom, and a complete reference page with an annotated bibliography. The exam paper should be 20 to 25 pages in length, have a minimum of 20 sources, and adhere to APA guidelines. Materials should be presented electronically to your advisor and to the College of Education Graduate Education and Research Department to [stephenie.a.jones@ttu.edu](mailto:stephenie.a.jones@ttu.edu). These materials will be available for public view on the special education website for professional development of other educators. For more information, refer to the rubric located in Attachment 6.

## **Option 3: The Four-hour Written Comprehensive Exam**

*Not available to students in Applied Behavior Analysis, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Educational Diagnostician, Generic, and Transition who began their program after Summer 2013.*

1. This option is a four-hour long written and proctored comprehensive exam.
2. File with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies to take the Master's Comprehensive Exam.
3. Request an exam review packet from your advisor.
4. If further guidance is needed, check with your advisor.

## **Useful Resources**

- [Steps required for Master's Program](#)
- [Graduate Faculty contact list](#)
- [Certifications](#)
- [Evaluation Form for Comprehensive Exam Paper](#)
- [Master's Degree Plan](#)

## **Additional Information**

- [CEC Code of Ethics](#)
- [Graduate College Website](#)



- [Fellowships and Grants](#)