SPECIAL EDUCATION - MASTER OF ARTS

Enrollment in graduate licensure program courses with field experiences in Special Education is limited to persons who have been accepted into the graduate program in Special Education. For other special education graduate courses, enrollment of students outside of the special education program is contingent upon meeting prerequisites and availability after enrollment of Special Education graduate students. To complete a course of study, each student must meet the program's academic and field based competency criteria, including a grade of B or higher in each course in the program of study, satisfactory evaluation in field experiences for those seeking licensure, and a passing score on the MA Comprehensive Exam. The Master of Arts in Special Education has five pathways to meet the varied needs of students pursuing graduate education and can be completed in two years for full-time students.

MA in Special Education Pathways

1. MA in Special Education (preparation for an initial license in Special Education). This route is 42 credits including student teaching and provides preparation for the New Mexico pre-K-12 Special Education license. Candidates must be admitted to the Teacher Education Program before completing practicum and student teaching experiences.

2. MA in Special Education (preparation for a second license, in Special Education, for students who already have an initial license in another area such as Early Childhood, Elementary, or Secondary Education). This route requires 30 credits of special education coursework and provides preparation for the New Mexico pre-K-12 Special Education license.

3. MA in Special Education (preparation using the Alternative Licensure process). This route includes 39 credits. It begins with completion of alternative licensure components, which includes 21 credits of state-approved coursework and two semesters of university supervision while concurrently employed as the special education teacher of record in a classroom. After completion of the alternative components, students complete the remaining coursework (18 credits) and degree requirements.

4. MA in Special Education (a Scholarly route for students who are not seeking licensure or who already have a license and are seeking additional depth of knowledge). This route requires 30 credits of special education coursework and does not lead to licensure.

5. MA in Special Education with an emphasis in Visual Impairment (preparation for licensure in teaching school-aged children/infants/toddlers and/or orientation and mobility). This route requires 30-36 credit hours in visual impairment and special education coursework. Students who meet qualifications and are interested in visual impairment may elect to pursue licensure only, rather than a master’s degree, with 15-27 credits leading to a Blind and Visually Impaired Teaching License or National Certification in Orientation and Mobility.

Admission

The Special Education Program has a “rolling admissions” procedure for MA programs. Applications are reviewed upon submission to determine if candidates meet admission requirements. Application requirements follow:

1. A completed Graduate School admission application.
2. A letter of interest explaining the applicant’s goals in pursuing an MA in Special Education.
3. Complete transcripts of all college work, including notation of a BA or BS Degree and a cumulative GPA of a 3.0 or higher.
4. A curriculum vitae or resume.
5. Email addresses to contact three individuals who can provide a professional recommendation, such as professors, employers, or others qualified to evaluate potential for graduate work.
6. For alternative licensure, a letter from a school district indicating consideration for a position.
7. For international students with English language testing requirements, TOEFL test results of at least 79 iBT, 550 paper, or IELTS results of at least 6.5.