

SPECIAL EDUCATION (EDSP)

Graduate Degree Program
College: Education

Abstract

Graduate programs in special education are designed to prepare highly qualified teachers, to provide graduate level content, and to prepare researchers, teacher educators, and leaders in the field of special education. We offer the following graduate program options:

- M.Ed. in Special Education with Generic Elementary/Middle age based certification
- M.Ed. in Special Education with Generic Elementary/Middle age based and severe disabilities certification
- M.Ed. in Special Education with severe disabilities certification only
- M.Ed. in Specialty Program (30 credits)
- M.A. in Special Education (36 credits)
- Advanced Graduate Specialist Certificate (30 credits beyond the master's degree) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-cas/>)
- Ph.D. program
- Ed.D. program

Note that, as of 2012, the EDSP graduate programs are part of a new department, the Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education. The EDSP degree programs were previously housed in the Department of Special Education.

Financial Assistance

A limited number of fellowships, assistantships and/or grants are available to qualified applicants.

Contacts

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Website: http://www.education.umd.edu/CHSE/SE_overview.html

Courses: EDSP (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/courses/edsp/>)

ADMISSIONS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Statement of Purpose
- Transcript(s)
- TOEFL/IELTS/PTE (international graduate students (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements/>))

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

- Letters of Recommendation (3)
- CV/Resume
- Writing Sample (M.A. and Ph.D. only - one required, up to two more optional.)
- Supplementary Application (optional for M.Ed/Cert, not required for the other programs)

For the M.Ed. programs, students must submit scores on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators test (meeting the State of Maryland passing scores) prior to admission into the program and have an undergraduate 3.0 GPA. The Master's of Arts program requires a 3.0 undergraduate GPA and the submission of the Miller Analogies Test or the Graduate Record Examination test scores at or above the 40th percentile rank. The AGS program requires a 3.0 undergraduate GPA, a master's GPA of 3.5, and submission of scores on the MAT, GRE, or Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators test. Admission to the Ph.D. program requires:

1. Master's degree or equivalent in Special Education or a related field from an accredited institution with a GPA of 3.5 or better;
2. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better;
3. A score on the Graduate Record Exam placing the student at or above the 50th percentile on verbal, quantitative, and analytic subtests;
4. Two years of research or work experience with exceptional populations;
5. Three letters of recommendation from individuals who have direct knowledge of the applicant's academic capabilities, work experience, and professional characteristics;
6. A statement of academic and research goals including intended area of study, research interests, and plans for future employment;
7. Evidence of writing skills shown in the statement of academic and research goals;
8. EDMS Research Methods I or equivalent.

Students pursuing teacher certification in special education are required to take courses required by the Maryland State Department of Education which lead to certification in the State of Maryland. Programs for the Master's specialty program, the AGS, and the Ph.D. are planned individually by the students and advisor to reflect each student's background and goals.

A TOEFL score of 100 is required for international students who are not native speakers of English.

1. GRE for Ph.D., Miller Analogies or GRE for M.A., Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators for M.Ed., MAT, GRE or Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators for A.G.S. (at State of Maryland cut scores)
2. Three Letters of Recommendation
3. Statement of Goals
4. Transcripts from all previously attended colleges and universities
5. Interview required for Ph.D. and M.Ed. with teacher certification

Application Deadlines

| Type of Applicant | Fall Deadline |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Domestic Applicants | |
| US Citizens and Permanent Residents | M.Ed. (with Certification): March 3, 2026 |

M.Ed. (without Certification): June 16, 2026

M.A.: December 2, 2025

Ph.D.: December 2, 2025

International Applicants

F (student) or J (exchange visitor) visas; A,E,G,H,I and L visas and immigrants

M.Ed. (without Certification): March 13, 2026

M.A.: December 2, 2025

Ph.D.: December 2, 2025

RESOURCES AND LINKS:

Program Website: http://www.education.umd.edu/CHSE/SE_overview.html

Application Process: gradschool.umd.edu/admissions (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/>)

REQUIREMENTS

- Special Education, Certificate of Advanced Study (C.A.S.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-cas/>)
- Special Education, Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-edd/>)
- Special Education, Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-phd/>)
- Special Education, Master of Arts (M.A.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-ma/>)
- Special Education, Master of Education (M.Ed.) (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/special-education-edsp/special-education-med/>)

FACILITIES AND SPECIAL RESOURCES

The Special Education program provides an unparalleled setting for graduate study. The program's proximity to outstanding public schools in Maryland provides students who wish to pursue teacher certification the chance to gain experience with a culturally and linguistically diverse student population in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Additionally, students pursuing a doctoral degree can have experiences in advocacy and professional organizations, government agencies, including the US Department of Education in addition to the coursework they take at the University.