

Special Education, MS, MEd, EdS

Department: Special Education and Rehabilitation Department
College: Emma Eccles Jones College of Education & Human Services

Overview

About This Degree

The special education master's degrees provide an advanced level of preparation for professionals who work with children, youth, and adults with disabilities. USU's graduate program in special education is in the top 20 of nationally ranked special education programs, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. The program is designed to develop and improve teaching skills in the classroom as well as to develop the skills of those who work with individuals with disabilities in community-based settings. Participants include school personnel and others involved in education-related activities across a variety of community, work, and clinical settings.

With the **MEd**, students can also receive an Administrative/Supervisory Concentration, and with the **MS**, students can opt to complete coursework that leads to national certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst.

- **MEd with Administrative/Supervisory Concentration:** This is designed for individuals pursuing administrative or supervisory positions in the public school system. The program combines the special education focuses on refining school practices in instruction and management, legal requirements, and cultural and linguistic diversity with the knowledge and competencies of the [Administrative/Supervisory Concentration](#) program.
- **MS with National Board Certified Behavior Analysis:** This is a three-year MS sequence that prepares individuals as behavior specialists. Participants complete the coursework necessary to sit for the National Board Certified Behavior Analysis (BCBA) exam (individuals already possessing a master's degree can apply to take only BCBA-preparation courses). Students gain valuable clinical and research experience that strengthens their professional skills and prepares them for further graduate study.

The **EdS** is designed for advanced graduate students seeking instruction beyond a master's degree. Programs are individually planned to address specific student needs.

Distance Education

The MS and MEd in special education are available through USU's [Regional Campuses](#).

Career Options

In the special education programs, teachers are trained to teach special education or general education students. They can choose to become:

- Classroom teachers
- Supervisors
- Mentors

Students in the MS program are also given the groundwork to pursue a doctoral degree, which gives them the opportunity to become professors or administrators in either higher education or at a state level.

With the **Administrative/Supervisory License**, students can serve in educational administrative positions as principals or superintendents.

With the **National Board Certified Behavior Analysis** qualification, students can become a certified behavior analyst and work in schools, clinics, or private practices.

What it takes

Admissions Requirements

Students who apply to this program must have a bachelor's degree in special education.

Application Requirements:

- Complete the [online application](#)
- Pay the \$55 application fee
- Score at or above the 40th percentile on in the GRE
- Provide official transcripts of all college/university credits
- Provide three contacts for letters of recommendation
- GPA of 3.0 or higher during most recent 60 semester hours
- Teaching experience is strongly encouraged
- Provide letter of intent

In addition to the above requirements, the following is required for the **MEd with Administrative/Supervisory Licensure** program:

- Level two license in Utah required
- Two years of certified experience required

Students pursuing the **National Board Certified Behavior Analysis** coursework are strongly encouraged to have teaching experience.

International students have [additional admissions requirements](#).

Admissions Deadlines

The department has the following application deadlines:

- Fall semester - June 15
- Spring semester - October 15
- Summer semester - March 15

Master's Degree Plan Options

Students completing the standard **MS** program or the **MS with BCBA** (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) requires students to complete the following plan option:

- In the **Plan A** option, students complete graduate-level coursework and must write a thesis.

Students receiving the **MEd** or the **MEd with Administrative/Supervisory License** must complete this plan option:

- The **Plan B** option requires the production of a paper or creative work of art and is expected to reflect equivalent scholarship standards as a thesis.

Financial Assistance

A variety of funding opportunities are available, including [fellowships](#), [scholarships](#), [assistantships](#), [tuition awards](#), and [travel support](#) each year. Additionally, students may be eligible for subsidized [health insurance](#) through qualifying assistantships.

Program Requirements

[Click here](#) to see course requirements for the **Master of Science**.

[Click here](#) to see course requirements for the **Master of Education**.

[Click here](#) to see course requirements for the **Educational Specialist**.

Contact

Advisor(s)

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Faculty

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Get Involved

Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

Association for Behavior Analysis International: This is a nonprofit professional membership organization with the mission to contribute to the well-being of society by developing, enhancing, and supporting the growth and vitality of the science of behavior analysis through research, education, and practice.

Council for Exceptional Children: This is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

Labs, Centers, Research

Autism Support Services - Education, Research, and Training: ASSERT is a classroom at the Center for Persons with Disabilities that offers training opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students, while providing intensive, individualized instruction to preschool children with autism spectrum disorder. USU students can apply to work in the program and earn either university credit or compensation while learning how to effectively teach students with autism spectrum disorder.

Center for Persons with Disabilities: The CPD is a nationally recognized research center that joins the expertise of researchers and faculty with community partners to address the most difficult challenges facing persons with disabilities and their families. Research addresses issues that cross fields ranging from biomedicine to education. In clinical experiences, learners join teams of professionals, family members, and individuals with disabilities to deliver services and supports.

Early Intervention Research Institute: The EIRI is an interdisciplinary organization committed to investigating and improving policies and practices that support the well-being of at-risk children as well as those with special needs and their families. The institute conducts research as well as provides training and technical assistance at community, state, national, and international levels.

Edith Bowen Laboratory School: EBLs is one of Utah's charter schools, offering services to more than 300 students grades K-5. The school, in cooperation with Utah State University, trains more than 200 pre-service teachers preparing to become professional educators, as well as supporting several other departments/colleges on campus, including special education, physical education, music, psychology, and business. Because the school is funded through state funds and donations, no tuition is charged to students.

Institute for Interdisciplinary Transition Services: The mission of the IITS is to empirically validate and promote the use of quality transition services for students with disabilities and their families. The mission will be accomplished through establishing evidence-based practice in transition through research, conducting research on the impact of state and federal legislation and policies on the transition process, disseminating the findings of research activities to the community systems involved in transition services, and assist in the process of translating that knowledge into practice and fostering pre-service and in-service education to transition practitioners, individuals in transition, and their families.

Severe Behavior Clinic: This is an outpatient clinic that serves children and adults with disabilities who engage in problem behavior. The clinic is a cooperative project between the Special Education and Rehabilitation and Psychology departments as well as USU's Center for Persons with Disabilities. Services provided include functional analysis of problem behavior, function-based interventions, and caregiver training.

SKI*HI Institute: The SKI-HI Institute enhances the lives of young children with special needs, their families, and care givers. The institute's training and services focus on early intervention and early childhood programming for infants and young children, ages birth to five years, with hearing and vision impairments and other disabilities.