



PHD PROGRAM IN EDUCATION

Concentration in Special Education



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OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
4501 Hampton Blvd., Child Study Center, Norfolk, VA 23529

Contents

<i>Ph.D. Program in Education: Concentration in Special Education (Special Education Ph.D. Program)</i>	3
Graduate Faculty	3
Primary Faculty	4
Entrance Criteria	7
Admission Process	8
Admissions Decisions	9
Timing of Admission	10
Doctoral Program Orientation	12
Program Requirements	12
Assignment of a Program Mentor	12
Continuance Procedures	12
Annual Continuance Review	13
Continuance Writing Evaluation	13
The Special Education Ph.D. Program Internship	14
Candidacy Examination	15
Goals for Candidacy Examination	15
Standards for Candidacy Examination	15
Candidacy Examination Components	16
Part I. Written Examination	16
Part II. Oral Examination	16
Admission to Candidacy	17
Dissertation Prospectus	17
Dissertation Components	17
Dissertation Format	18
Program Completion	18
Curriculum	18
Course Descriptions	19

Ph.D. PROGRAM IN EDUCATION WITH A CONCENTRATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Welcome to the Special Education Ph.D. Program at Old Dominion University!

We are delighted that you have joined our learning community. The journey that you have embarked upon will be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of your academic career. We look forward to working with you as you take steps toward your goal of earning your Ph.D. degree and advancing your professional career.

The information provided in this handbook is for your guidance and reference. Every attempt has been made to provide you the most accurate information at the time of publication. Please note that university and college policies for doctoral studies prevail over departmental policies. Our best advice is to consult with your faculty advisor before making significant program decisions to confirm that your choices are consistent with current procedures and requirements at all levels.

Please familiarize yourself with the program information on the website at:

<http://www.odu.edu/cdse/academics/sped/grad/Ph.D.-sped>

Additional information and forms related to your course of study can be found at:

<http://www.odu.edu/ao/gradstudies/>

***Ph.D. Program in Education: Concentration in Special Education
(Special Education Ph.D. Program)***

The special education Ph.D. program is designed to address the acute shortage of doctoral level special education personnel in the Commonwealth of Virginia and across the nation. Program graduates will be prepared as special education content experts to assume positions of leadership as special education faculty at the university and college level, as well as senior administrative roles in institutions and agencies in the United States. Additionally, graduates of the special education concentration will acquire the research skills necessary to work with school systems to address the diverse learning and behavior challenges of students with disabilities and those students at risk for developing disabilities.

This program is highly selective. The aim is to identify and train individuals whose prior education and experience show promise to develop modes of inquiry suitable to a rapidly changing field. Intensive course-related learning and guided field experiences prepare students for careers in schools, colleges, universities, and other agencies and for achieving prominence as teacher educators, researchers, and leaders in the field of special education. During their course of study, students will work closely with senior faculty members who have been recognized for their significant contributions to the field. Under the auspices of the special education faculty, students will participate in unfunded and funded research, preparation of research proposals, grants and contracts, and independent research activities. Program graduates will attain a degree of proficiency in research and writing that will prepare them to contribute to the professional literatures of special education and related disciplines. Furthermore, students will engage in supervised instruction of pre-service and in-service personnel by means of both traditional campus-based instruction and distance instruction through Old Dominion University's nationally recognized distance learning modalities.

An important aspect of doctoral preparation in special education relates to field placements and internships in state, federal, and private agencies that serve children and adolescents. Qualified doctoral students will serve in research internships and be assigned to research teams comprised of concentration faculty and external faculty representing major colleges of education across the country to examine critical issues of national significance in the area of special education. Furthermore, these doctoral students will participate in the preparation of research reports, manuscripts, and national presentations, all of which reflect skills that are essential for a successful career in higher education.

Graduate Faculty

Faculty members in the special education department have national and international recognition, which has earned them a variety of prestigious awards and honors such as the Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teaching from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities; Fulbright scholarships for work in Vietnam, India, Ukraine, the Czech

Republic and Armenia; the Constance F. and Colgate W. Darden Eminent Scholar award; and the Dominion Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

Faculty members are individually dedicated to specific disciplines while collaborating with all faculty members in the special education department. Our faculty expertise and interests are broad and cover areas such as early intervention; early childhood special education; children and adolescents with behavioral disorders, intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, learning disabilities, and/or severe/multiple disabilities; social skills training; social communication skills and communication facilitation strategies; classroom discipline; functional behavioral assessment; applied behavior analysis, sensory reinforcement techniques, national policy issues, collaboration, family involvement, and multicultural and literacy issues.

Primary Faculty

Jonna Bobzien, Ph.D., is an associate professor of special education. She currently serves as the department chair for Communication Disorders and Special Education. Dr. Bobzien received both her baccalaureate in biology and a master's degree in special education from ODU. Prior to pursuing her doctorate at ODU, Dr. Bobzien served as lead teacher at St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children. Dr. Bobzien's research interests include teaching functional academic curriculum to children with severe disabilities, collaboration with families of children with special needs, and use of appropriate instructional, sensory, and communication strategies for students with autism spectrum disorder. Dr. Bobzien's work in these areas has led to multiple interdisciplinary research publications, as well as local and international service projects. Dr. Bobzien is currently a member of TASH, Council for Exceptional Children, AERA, and Autism Society of America.

Laura C. Chezan, Ph.D., BCBA-D, is an associate professor of special education. She currently serves as the Graduate Program Director for the Special Education Program and the Program Coordinator for the Applied Behavior Analysis Certificate Program. Laura earned both a M.Ed. and a Ph.D. degree with a focus on applied behavior analysis from the University of South Carolina. She is also a board certified behavior analyst at the doctoral level. Dr. Chezan has over 15 years of experience working with children, young adults, and adults with severe cognitive disabilities and autism spectrum disorder in classroom, postsecondary, and vocational settings. Her research interests include instruction of individuals with autism and severe cognitive disabilities, communication interventions, positive behavior support, and single-case experimental research methodology. Dr. Chezan has presented at both state and national conferences and has published articles in professional journals. She has also served as an Editorial Board member for several professional journals and as an Associate Editor for the *Preventing School Failure*.

Robert A. Gable, Ph.D., is the Constance F. and Colgate W. Darden Professor and Eminent Scholar at Old Dominion University. Before coming to Old Dominion University, he was on the faculty of special education at the University of Pittsburgh and George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Bob is a Research Fellow with the American Institute of Research, Washington, DC. He has written over 250 articles, textbooks, chapters, or monographs on academic assessment and instruction, functional behavioral assessment, professional collaboration, and differentiating instruction for students with diverse learning needs. He is executive editor of *Preventing School Failure* and serves on the editorial board of numerous other professional journals. Individually and with colleagues, he has secured external grants totaling nearly \$40 million dollars to support research and service-related projects from various sources, including private foundations, state departments of education, and federal agencies. Bob works closely with state departments of education and staff development personnel in school divisions throughout the United States and beyond. He is a past President of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD). An additional honor includes being a co-winner of the prestigious Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teaching from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in 2005. Finally, as a Senior Fulbright Specialist, Bob spent a semester teaching special education classes at Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Kristin A. Gansle, Ph.D., is a professor of special education. She earned her doctorate at the University of California at Riverside in school psychology. Before coming to Old Dominion University in 2020, she served on the faculty of Louisiana State University in Social Work and then in Education, where she was a professor in special education. She has published in the areas of treatment integrity, writing assessment, and evaluation of teacher preparation. She has had over \$2 million in private, state, and federal funding for research and program evaluation. She serves as editorial board member for *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Journal of School Psychology*, and as Associate Editor for *Journal of Child and Family Studies*.

Sabra Gear, Ph.D., is a senior lecturer of special education. Dr. Gear teaches special education core courses: educational and diagnostic assessment, instructional methods, individual education programming, directed field experience, collaboration, and transitions. Before teaching at ODU, she taught diverse learners in grades PreK-12th, general and special education in public school, treatment programs, home-based instruction, as well as adult basic education. She has authored and co-authored book chapters and peer-refereed journal articles and presented at international, national, and regional conferences. She is a reviewer for the *National Head Start Association Dialog: The Research-to-Practice Journal for the Early Childhood Field*. Dr. Gear was a co-recipient of the 2016 Largest Grant Award from the DCE for Project PEPSE/CHILI: *Professional Educator Preparation in Special Education for Children with Low Incidence Disabilities*, and a co-recipient of the 2017 Most Collaborative Grant from the Darden College of Education for Project Prepare! *A Model of Professional Development that Focuses on*

the Centrality of Teacher-Child Interactions in the Learning, Behavior, and School Readiness of Preschool Children with Disabilities or At-Risk for Disabilities. Her research goals include teacher and parent education to improve outcomes for children with learning and emotional disabilities.

Peggy Hester, Ph.D., is a professor of special education. She earned her doctorate at George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Dr. Hester is considered one of the true experts in early identification and prevention of emotional/behavioral disorders. Prior to coming to Old Dominion University, she served in both a clinical and research capacity at the Regional Intervention Program, an internationally recognized parent implemented program in which parents learned to work directly with their own children with behavioral disorders, language delays, and/or other developmental delays. In addition, she was a member of the research faculty at Vanderbilt University where she and her colleagues investigated language based interventions and their impact on diminishment of risk for psychopathology in young children. Dr. Hester has published extensively in the areas of early intervention, strategies for facilitating child social communication skills, and the role of the child's communication partners (teachers/parents/ peers/others) in enhancing the child's positive social interactions and communication skills. Her research highlights the great importance that early identification and prevention has in the education and treatment of young children at risk.

Annemarie L. Horn, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of special education. She currently serves as the Program Coordinator for the Adapted Curriculum MSED Program. Dr. Horn earned her doctoral degree in special education from ODU. She earned her master's degree in special education with research emphasis at ODU as well, and her baccalaureate in special education from Radford University. Dr. Horn started in the field of special education as a high school paraeducator before becoming a certified special education teacher. She was employed as a special education teacher in Texas, Nevada, and Virginia, having the opportunity to work with elementary and secondary students with various disability diagnoses in inclusive and more restrictive educational settings. Dr. Horn's research interests are twofold. Her first area of research includes special education teacher and paraeducator professional development (PD), with an emphasis on eCoaching with bug-in-ear (BIE) technology. Her second arm of research relates to improving postsecondary outcomes from transition-age youth with disabilities. Dr. Horn has presented at national and international conferences and has published articles in professional journals. She currently serves as a consulting editor for *Preventing School Failure* and *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*.

Selena J. Layden, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA is an assistant professor of special education. Dr. Layden earned her doctorate degree from the College of William & Mary in Education Policy, Planning, and Leadership with an emphasis in Special Education Administration and her master's degree in Applied Behavior Analysis from St. Cloud State University in Minnesota. Prior to joining the

faculty at ODU, Dr. Layden worked in multiple school divisions focusing on challenging behavior and children with autism spectrum disorder. She was also the assistant director of training at the Autism Center for Excellence at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Layden's research interests focus on autism spectrum disorder, early childhood education, positive behavior supports, and providing effective professional development for school personnel.

Stephen W. Tonelson, Ed.D., is a professor of early childhood and special education. He earned his Ed.D. from the University of Virginia and has served on the faculty at the University of Virginia in both the College of Education and the College of Medicine. He began his career in education as a third grade teacher and has teaching experience in general education and in special education. Dr. Tonelson has published numerous articles, monographs, and book chapters addressing the education of children at risk and children with mild disabilities and their families. He has received almost \$15,000,000.00 in grants from the Virginia Department of Education, private foundations, and the federal government. Dr. Tonelson has extensive experience in program evaluation, especially in the areas of substance abuse and individuals and families with special needs. He serves as a consultant to many school divisions and agencies throughout the region. Dr. Tonelson, was named a 2005 co-winner of the prestigious Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teaching from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Silvana Maria Russo Watson, Ph.D., is a professor of special education. She completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Kansas. Dr. Watson earned her doctoral and master's degrees in special education from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. She completed her bachelor's degree in Arts and Letters from the Universidade Católica de Pernambuco, Brazil. Dr. Watson received a Fulbright Research Fellowship to Portugal in 2014 where she conducted research with psychologists from the University of Minho. She is the principal investigator of a \$2,189,000.00 federal grant entitled *Preparing Teams of Educators to Assess and Instruct English Learners with and without Disabilities*. Dr. Watson and three colleagues from other colleges received a \$299,999.00 research grant from the National Science Foundation to investigate the effects of pair programming on the performance of undergraduate students with learning disabilities in computing courses. She has published peer-refereed articles and book chapters on children prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs, ADHD, quality of life of students with disabilities, cognition, modification of science instruction, mathematics, reading comprehension, and written language. Dr. Watson's research interests include curriculum and instruction for students with learning disabilities, as well as multicultural and literacy issues.

Entrance Criteria

To be considered for admission into the Old Dominion University Ph.D. in Education: Special Education Concentration program (special education Ph.D. program) a candidate must include the following information in the application:

1. Proof of a completed master's degree in special education or an equivalent degree in a related discipline from a program that is accredited by an appropriate specialized accrediting agency or from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. Transcripts from universities outside the United States must be accompanied by a global credit evaluation from an accredited agency. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.60 (on a 4.0 scale) overall for the master's degree and in the major area of study in the master's degree is expected;
2. Acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE): 156 [550] on the verbal portion and no less than a 4.5 on the writing sample. Applicants whose first language is not English must submit a current score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) according to the standards established by Old Dominion University;
3. A minimum of three years teaching experience in a pre-K – 12 setting with students with disabilities;
4. A 500-800-word statement of academic and professional goals. This statement must describe applicants' research agenda to meet their academic and professional goals;
5. A professional curriculum vitae;
6. Three letters of reference from individuals capable of commenting on the applicant's readiness for advanced graduate study. At least two of these letters must be from academic sources. If a non-academic letter of reference is necessary, it should be from a professional source; and
7. Prior course work in statistics and in theories of learning. If this requirement is not met, a student may be admitted, and additional course work will be added to the candidate's program of study.

Admissions Process

Admission to the special education Ph.D. program usually occurs every year with new students admitted every other year. Admission to the program is competitive; typically, the number of applications exceeds the number of available openings. Applicants must submit the application package, including the online graduate student application and all related materials no later than March 1 of the admission cycle year.

Once the application deadline has passed, complete application packages will be initially reviewed by the special education Ph.D. program admissions committee. Following the preliminary review of complete applications, the admissions committee will invite eligible applicants to participate in a two-part interview.

Part 1: Formal Interview: a formal interview with the special education Ph.D. program faculty to determine the applicant's fit with program goals.

Part 2: Spontaneous Writing Sample: a one-hour, proctored writing session during which applicants will compose a spontaneous response to a question regarding special education policy and procedures in the United States.

*Spontaneous Writing Sample

For admitted students, the spontaneous writing sample will serve as a baseline measure of the student's writing ability (i.e., entry-level writing skills) at the beginning of the special education Ph.D. program. Further comparisons may be drawn as needed during the student's evaluation. All special education Ph.D. students will complete an additional writing evaluation after completing 12-18 credit hours in the program.

Upon admission, one of the following two actions will apply based on the mean score obtained on the spontaneous writing sample:

- **Spontaneous writing sample score exceeds minimum standards (range 5.25-7 points):** if the mean score exceeds minimum standards, the student does not need to engage in any corrective action. Students should continue to refine their writing skills to achieve competence as expected for scholars in higher education.
- **Spontaneous writing sample score meets minimum standards (range 3.54-5.22 points):** Although every special education Ph.D. student will receive feedback in their courses aimed at increasing their writing proficiency, we will require students whose mean score meets only minimum expectations to pursue corrective action to improve their writing abilities and achieve competence as expected for scholars in higher education. The student will take the responsibility of locating and enrolling in appropriate sources of additional writing instruction either through the University or externally. The student's faculty mentor will maintain responsibility for identifying appropriate sources of writing support offered by Old Dominion University and must approve the student's choice of additional writing instruction. The period of corrective action will start at the onset of the student's first course in the Ph.D. program and continue until he or she completes between 12 and 18 graduate-credit hours and achieves a passing score on the continuance writing evaluation (see the Continuance Procedures for more information). Students who choose not to engage in this instruction will be dismissed from the program.

Admissions Decisions

Admissions decisions will be made using the following weighted scale:

Graduate GPA	15%
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score: Verbal Reasoning	5%
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score: Quantitative	5%
Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score: Analytical Writing	10%
Statement of Academic and Professional Goals	15%
Formal Interview	25%

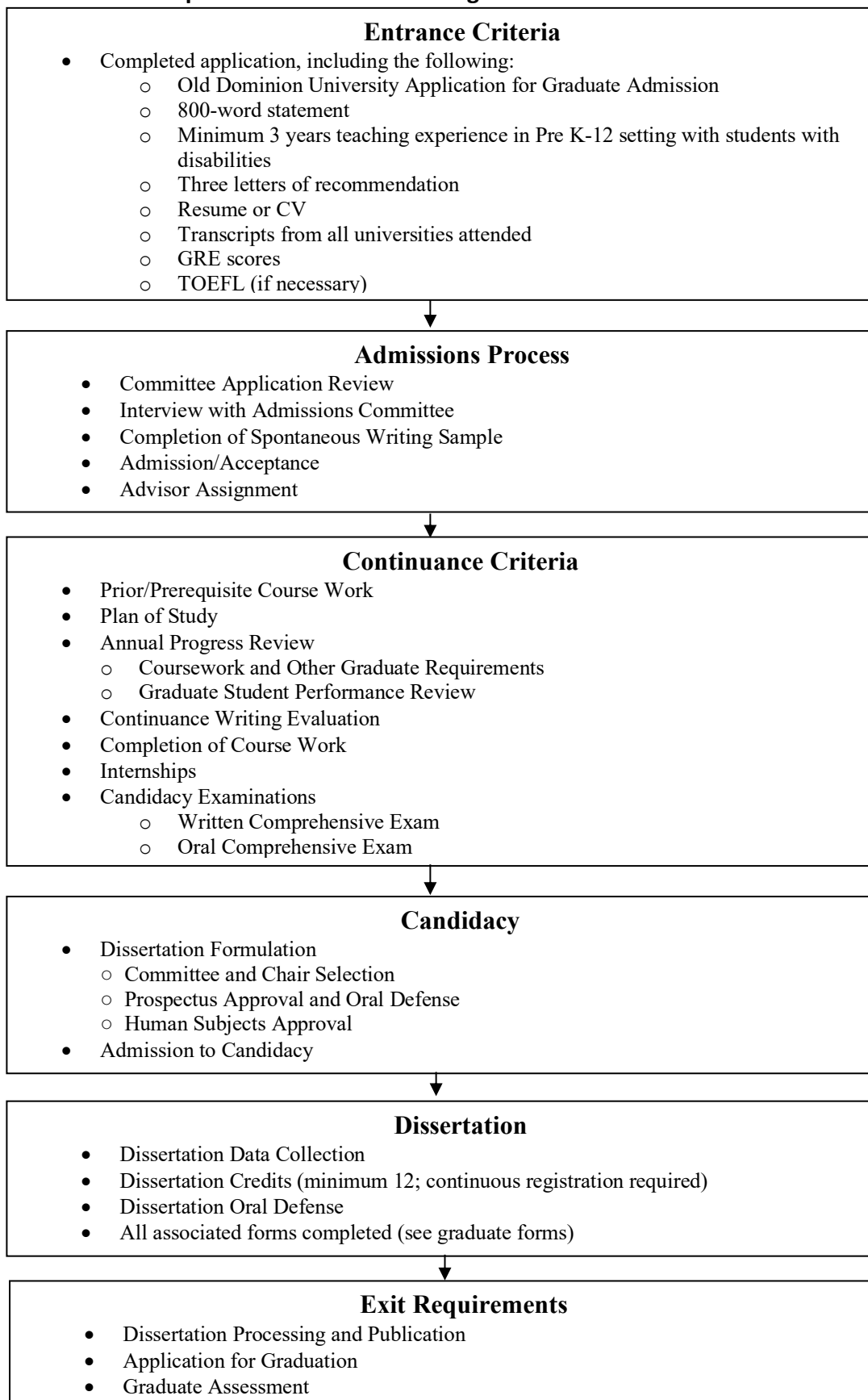
Spontaneous Writing Sample*	25%

PhD Admission: Average Weighted Score Ranges (100 points)		
Acceptable <i>(80% to 100%)</i>	Acceptable with Reservations <i>(65%-79%)</i>	Not Acceptable <i>(64% and below)</i>
5.60 to 7.00	4.55 to 5.59	4.54 and below

Timing of Admissions

Under normal circumstances, admissions will be offered on an alternating year cycle to build efficient cohort groups for advanced study. To enhance the experience of the students and to increase the efficiency by which courses are offered, a cohort will be admitted each year during the summer semester. Upon acceptance, most full-time students will begin their course of study each summer semester following a summer orientation.

Special Education Ph.D. Program Admissions Flowchart



Doctoral Program Orientation

All applicants who have been accepted and are going to begin the program will attend a doctoral program orientation, which is conducted on the main campus of Old Dominion University. This orientation program is designed to provide the incoming special education Ph.D. students an opportunity to meet with the faculty and become familiar with the resources of the University. The students will meet with the faculty to discuss and confirm the content and schedule of their study plan. This will include a detailed review of the Ph.D. program milestones and dissertation process.

Program Requirements

The special education Ph.D. program is comprised of courses totaling a minimum of 60 academic credit hours beyond the master's degree. The curriculum includes four parts:

- specialty core of 9 credit hours;
- special education concentration core of 24 credit hours;
- research core of 15 credit hours; and
- dissertation, for a minimum of 12 hours

Students are expected to have completed an introductory statistics course or to demonstrate competence in this area. If they have not or cannot, students entering the program must complete one introductory statistics course. This requirement is in addition to the required statistics and research core. The dissertation, which is the culmination of the student's Ph.D. studies, will often include more than 12 credit hours depending on the length of time necessary for completion.

Assignment of a Program Mentor

Active mentoring of students toward leadership roles is an integral part of the special education Ph.D. program. Students will be assigned a mentor/major professor through consultation with the graduate program director, who will review the student's past academic work and professional experiences and discuss the student's research goals. Students should plan to meet with their mentors on a regular basis to discuss future plans and work to establish research interests and academic experiences that will allow students to meet their professional goals. Although every effort will be made to pair students with a mentor who has shared research interests, students will be distributed across all faculty to ensure adequate time is allotted for each student.

Continuance Procedures

It is the expectation that the special education faculty will prepare Ph.D. candidates to become competent professionals with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to assume positions as researchers, teachers, advocates, and scholars in special education in the United States. To this end, both annual continuance reviews and a one-time written continuance evaluation will be conducted.

1. *Annual Continuance Review*: At the end of each spring semester, the special education Ph.D. committee will convene to discuss the continuance of each student in the special education Ph.D. program. This process involves the following evaluation procedures:

- a) Each Ph.D. committee member will complete the continuance rubric which assesses the skills, knowledge, work habits, leadership qualities, research skills, evidence of independent learning, and dispositions of special education Ph.D. students. Scores for each rubric will be tallied and a mean calculated (see Candidate Dispositions p. 66-69, Graduate Catalog).
- b) The special education Ph.D. students' GPAs will be reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the University's minimum standards for graduate student continuance (see Academic Expectation p. 21, Graduate Catalog).
- c) The Ph.D. committee will discuss both observed strengths and areas of concern for each candidate, as well as information regarding strengths and/or areas of concern from additional doctoral faculty who have taught the student during the evaluation period. A summary of this information will be recorded on the continuance evaluation form (see Continuance Evaluation form p. 65, Graduate Catalog).
- d) Following Ph.D. committee discussion, a vote will be conducted so that each committee member has an opportunity to share their perspective on whether or not the candidate has the academic skills, personal initiative, dispositions, and professional commitment to become a productive scholar in higher education or a professional field. For continuance, candidates must achieve a unanimous vote for continuance from the faculty.

A summary of this information will be recorded on the continuance evaluation form and provided to the doctoral candidate by either the special education graduate program director or the student's mentor/major professor. This evaluation process is conducted annually, even if the student is not currently enrolled in coursework.

2) *Continuance Writing Evaluation*: Following the completion of 12 to 18 graduate credit hours, all special education Ph.D. students will complete a continuance writing evaluation. This evaluation will assess the student's ability to summarize and synthesize literature using professional writing style, organization, and correct APA formatting. The evaluation process will include:

- a. The completion of an on-campus, proctored writing evaluation during which the student will read, synthesize, and summarize material from two peer-reviewed journal articles with a similar research topic (e.g. assessment, transition);
- b. The student will be given access to a computer on which to complete his/her writing evaluation;
- c. The student will be given two hours to complete the writing evaluation;
- d. Following the completion of the writing evaluation, the Ph.D. committee will read and score the writing evaluation using the Critical Reading of Research Rubric. A mean will

be calculated across faculty evaluations; each is weighted equally. A passing score is 70%.

- If a student passes the evaluation, then he or she will continue the program based on the recommendation of the Ph.D. committee.
- If a student does not pass the evaluation, then the Ph.D. committee may vote to discontinue the student's program of study.

A summary of this information will be recorded on the continuance writing evaluation form and provided to the special education Ph.D. student by either the graduate program director or the student's mentor/major professor.

The Special Education Ph.D. Program Internship

As an integral part of the doctoral training program, each special education Ph.D. student is expected to be actively engaged in research, college teaching, program development, and other scholarly activities. One aspect of doctoral preparation is an internship experience. Internships in teaching, research and other professional activities will provide experience in roles students will assume after completing their degrees. The successful completion of a 3-credit internship is required to fulfill program requirements and necessitates commitment of a minimum of 150 contact hours. Internships may be at the regional, local, or national levels.

In consultation with the graduate program director and program mentor, students are responsible for selecting and designing specific internships that are consistent with their academic and research goals. Students must submit a formal application and receive written approval for an internship from the student's advisor in collaboration with the Graduate Program Director (see Special Education Application for Internship p. 70). Although every internship experience will be different, special education Ph.D. students will receive intensive and comprehensive training and supervision in one or more of the following areas to broaden the scope of their preparation.

- The production of curricular (e.g., creation of course, course module or textbook chapter) and research projects (e.g., contributor or research position in a research study with resulting critical analysis, creation of an assessment with literature review).
- The instruction of college level courses and the development of a scholarly product (e.g., action research conducted while instructing the course, resulting in an article draft).
- The conduct of a (pilot) research study, written results, and journal submission (e.g., article draft and notice of submission).
- The development and implementation of a program evaluation plan, resulting in a formal evaluation product.

Upon completion of the internship, a formal, summative written product is required to achieve a grade. The written product can be course/module development documents, textbook chapter, literature review, evaluation report, article draft or other product approved by the

special education graduate program director and course mentor supported by a minimum of 10 current references. The completed product will consist of a minimum of 15 pages excluding references (see page 70).

Candidacy Examination

The candidacy examination, consisting of a written examination and an oral presentation, is a compulsory and culminating component of the special education Ph.D. program, and, when passed, allows the student to enter the candidacy phase of the program. The student will use the candidacy examination to examine an important contemporary issue in the field of special education. The student must apply to take the comprehensive examination after completing all course work and prior to preparing a dissertation proposal. The student may apply in the last semester of his/her program of study with permission of his/her program mentor. Prior to beginning the candidacy examination, the student must submit the topic to the special education Ph.D. committee for review and approval.

Goals for Candidacy Examination:

1. To demonstrate mastery of the accumulated literature related to the student's doctoral program of study;
2. To demonstrate proficiency in skills related to higher order thinking;
3. To develop capacities and accomplishments that lead to success in obtaining and advancing in the student's chosen leadership role; and
4. To demonstrate mastery of doctoral-level academic writing skills and citation.

Standards for Candidacy Examination

The demonstration of mastery of comprehensive curricular content must meet the following standards:

1. Mastery of literature on topics within the student's major area of interest and that of general special education;
2. Incorporation of significant theoretical, historical, philosophical, and/or empirical areas that relate to the accumulated literature;
3. Synthesis of solutions to significant contemporary problems in the field of special education;
4. Evidence of elevated critical thinking characterized by analyses, syntheses, and/or evaluation;
5. Demonstration of high level of cognition characterized by creativity, problem solving, and data based decision-making; and
6. The manuscript must be prepared expressly for the comprehensive examination (must not have been submitted in prior course work or for a course in which the student is currently enrolled).

Candidacy Examination Components

Part I. Written Examination

Following approval of the candidacy examination topic by the special education Ph.D. committee, the student will conduct a critical and integrative review of the accumulated literature using refereed journals and articles. Seminal articles on the topic may be used for background information. The student must produce a well-reasoned position paper regarding the chosen topic and submit it within **30 days**. The content should include contrasting views of professionals in the field with distinctions between empirical fact and expert opinion. In the conclusion section, the student must draw upon the review to offer a well-supported position on the issue. The paper should be 15 to 20 pages, excluding the references and the abstract. The content should reflect the qualities of a paper worthy of journal submission and be consistent with the guidelines found in the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. A copy of the rubric that the special education Ph.D. committee members will use to evaluate the quality of the paper will be provided in advance.

Potential options include but are not limited to the following.

1. Full inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms.
2. Restrictive classroom (or separate school) placement of various subpopulations of students with disabilities, such as students with emotional/behavioral disorders or intellectual impairment.
3. Disproportional representation of students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and/or linguistic backgrounds among students with disability labels.
4. Use of classroom instruction based on disparate philosophical perspectives on the teaching and learning process.
5. Cross-categorical placement of students with disabilities.

The members of the special education Ph.D. committee will evaluate each examination product on the criteria of writing style, clarity, and depth of understanding as reflected in the final product.

In the event a student fails to pass the written portion of the candidacy examination, he/she will be allowed one resubmission. Resubmission must occur within 15 business days following feedback from the special education Ph.D. committee. Failure to achieve a passing score on the resubmission will result in failure to move to the candidacy phase of the program and dismissal from the special education Ph.D. program.

Part II. Oral Presentation

Based on the content of the written candidacy examination, the student will prepare an oral presentation that is consistent with the standards of a conference presentation of a national professional organization such as the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The presentation will be limited to 30 minutes and include a PowerPoint presentation and handout for the audience. A copy of the rubric that the special education Ph.D. committee

members will use to evaluate the presentation will be provided prior to the student's presentation to the special education faculty.

Successful completion of the oral candidacy examination is noted by the graduate program director submitting Form D3, Result of Ph.D. Examination or Requirement, to the Registrar's Office and to the students. In the event the student fails to deliver a satisfactory oral presentation, he/she is permitted to present again one time following consultation with his/her advisor. Failure to achieve a passing score on the oral presentation will result in failure to move to candidacy and dismissal from the special education Ph.D. program.

Admission to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy includes dissertation chair and committee selection, prospectus approval and oral defense, Institutional Human Subjects Review approval, and completion of Form D9-Advancement to Candidacy. Following the guidelines as stated in the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies Ph.D. Handbook is the responsibility of the student. The student's mentor in collaboration with the Graduate Program Director and will assist the student through this process.

Dissertation Prospectus

Following approval of the dissertation topic by the dissertation chair and committee, the student may begin writing the dissertation prospectus following the outline below:

- Overview
- Review of Related Literature
 - Summary of Review of Related Literature
- Hypothesis (as appropriate)
- Purpose of the Study or Research Questions
- Method
 - Subjects/Setting (as appropriate)
 - Procedures
 - Instrumentation or Measures (as appropriate)
 - Materials (as appropriate)
 - Data Analysis (as appropriate)

Once the student's dissertation chair and committee have approved the written prospectus, the student will orally defend the prospectus to members of the Special Education Ph.D. committee.

Upon approval of the prospectus, the student may begin dissertation research.

Dissertation Components

The following sections of the manuscript will be completed upon committee approval of the dissertation prospectus.

Results
 Discussion
 Limitations
 Implications
 References
 Appendix A
 Extended Review of Related Literature
 Appendix B
 Method and Results of Multiple Dependent Variables
 Appendix C
 Other

Dissertation Format

To satisfy the requirements for the Ph.D. in Education – Concentration in Special Education, the student may pursue one of two dissertation options: a five-chapter dissertation or an extended journal article dissertation.

Extended Journal Article Format

With the approval of the dissertation committee chair and committee members, the student may submit a dissertation prospectus that reflects the organization and content of a manuscript of publishable quality in a peer-referred professional journal. The most common investigations to be presented in this manner include ethnographic, descriptive, historical, survey, or experimental single subject or group design investigations. The student will write one or more paragraphs that describe the content of each of the sections in sufficient detail so that committee members will have a clear understanding of the proposed dissertation.

Once the student's dissertation chair and committee have approved the written dissertation, the student will orally defend the dissertation to members of the Ph.D. committee.

Program Completion

Successful completion of the program includes content below, all requirements noted in the University catalog for graduate students, and within the Ph.D. in Education Handbook. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain these materials and comply with all requirements.

Curriculum

Prerequisites (6 Credits)

FOUN 722	Introduction to Applied Statistics and Data Analysis
SPED 720/820	Curriculum/Instruction: Research into Practice

Research Core (15 Credits)

SPED 830	Single Subject Design
FOUN 812	Research Design & Analysis

FOUN 813	Program Evaluation in Education
FOUN 814	Qualitative Research Design in Education
FOUN 822	Applied Linear Models in Educational Research

Specialty Core (12 Credits)

CDSE 797	Independent Study: Doctoral Student Seminar
SPED 821	Critical Issues I: Readings in Special Education & Professional Writing
SPED 822	Critical Issues II: Research and Professional Writing
SPED 893	Professional Seminar: Teaching, Research, & Service

Special Education Concentration Core (18 Credits)

TLED 800	Social/Emotional Aspects of Child Development
SPED 801	Historical & Contemporary Research in Special Education
SPED 802	Cognitive Processes & Learning Strategies for Students w/ Special Needs
SPED 807	Advanced Instructional Procedures in Special Education
CDSE 897	Independent Study: Topics in Special Education
SPED 868	Internship: Special Education

Electives (3 Credits)

With approval of the Graduate Program Director students will select 3 hours as electives. Such substitutions must be approved in writing. Electives may be taken in other areas in the College of Education (e.g., educational leadership, higher education, instructional design and technology) or in other colleges with the approval of the appropriate college official.

Dissertation (12 Credits)

SPED 899	Dissertation
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Course Descriptions

Prerequisites:

FOUN 722. Introduction to Applied Statistics and Data Analysis. 3 Credits.

Introduction to basic topics in statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and simple inferential statistics such as correlation, regression, t-tests, one-way analysis of variance, and chi-square.

SPED 7/820. Curriculum and Instruction: Research Into Practice. 3 Credits.

This course provides an overview of research methods employed in the field of special education. Current trends related to curriculum and instruction in general and special education will be investigated. Strategies and procedures for identifying learner characteristics and application of that knowledge will be included. Implementation of quality curricular modifications and/or instructional accommodations for students with diverse needs in a variety of educational settings and evaluation of instruction will be addressed.

Research Core:**SPED 830. Single Subject Research Designs. 3 Credits.**

This course is designed to provide the student knowledge and skills that relate to single subject methodology. It includes an overview of historical and philosophical foundations, basic issues in behavioral assessment, and single subject research and design methodology, including trend and statistical analysis in single subject research. Students will analyze critically empirical research and be able to plan, implement, and evaluate original research.

FOUN 812. Advanced Research Design and Analysis. 3 Credits.

This course focuses on the application of advanced research design as it is applied in various educational disciplines. It provides an in-depth examination of quantitative research approaches, sampling techniques, threats to validity, ethical considerations and reviewing, writing quantitative methodology descriptions for research proposals and reports.

FOUN 813. Advanced Program Evaluation. 3 Credits.)

Examines procedures and problems in the design and utilization of program evaluation in education. Identifies evaluation purposes and the methods of evaluation especially as affected by organizational behavior, ethical considerations, and political influences. Evaluation methodology includes, but is not limited to, design considerations, data utilization, and teacher evaluation. Both quantitative and qualitative strategies will be covered.

FOUN 814. Qualitative Research. 3 Credits.

This course concentrates on the theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research; methodology and methods including identification of ways to collect and analyze qualitative data; examination of ethical issues; development of proposals; and writing up studies.

FOUN 822. Applied Linear Models. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the general linear model with emphasis on concepts and applications of multiple linear regression (MLR) to problems in educational research. Topics include estimation and interpretation of MLR models, relationships between MLR and analysis of variance (ANOVA), logistic regression analysis, and trend analysis. Prerequisite: [FOUN 722](#).

Specialty Core:**CDSE 797. Independent Study: Doctoral Student Seminar. 3 Credits.**

This course prepares doctoral students to understand expectations of a doctoral program in special education. The course is designed to build skills necessary for advancement in the doctoral program.

SPED 821. Critical Issues I: Readings in Special Education and Professional Writing. 3 Credits.

The intent of this course is to provide doctoral candidates an opportunity to do the following:
(a) become thoroughly involved in the literature relating to current critical issues in special

education, and (b) begin the process of developing writing skills suitable for positions and tenure in higher education. The course stresses APA writing guidelines and style, conducting literature searches, and beginning development of a writing product that is suitable for publication. The course introduces the skills necessary for advancement in higher education and professional institutions.

SPED 822. Critical Issues II: Research and Professional Writing. 3 Credits.

This course provides doctoral candidates an opportunity to read, analyze and synthesize research in special education with the intent to contributing to the literature. The course emphasizes skills necessary for developing writing skills suitable for positions and tenure in higher education. APA writing guidelines and style, analyzing and synthesizing research/literature, and producing a lengthy written product suitable for publication are stressed. The course is designed to build skills necessary for advancement in higher education and professional institutions. Prerequisites: [SPED 821](#).

SPED 893. Professional Seminar: Teaching, Research, and Service. 3 Credits.

This course prepares doctoral candidates to meet professional standards in teaching, research and service in special education in higher education institutions. Teaching includes an understanding of adult learning and the design, delivery, evaluation of content, and use of technology in college teaching. Research includes recognizing and critically discussing scholarly work, systematically planning and preparing for research, and developing research proposals. Service includes identifying professional organizations and agencies and creating integrated professional development programs. The course is designed to build skills necessary for advancement in higher education and professional institutions. Prerequisites: [SPED 821](#) and [SPED 822](#).

Special Education Concentration Core:

TLED 800. Social/Emotional Aspects of Child Development. 3 Credits.

The emphasis of this course is on the theoretical approaches to the social/emotional development of the child that include the psychodynamic, humanistic, cognitive, behavioral, and social learning models as applied to responsive practices that promote the healthy emotional wellbeing of children.

SPED 801. Historical and Contemporary Research in Special Education. 3 Credits.

This course covers contemporary and historical topics related to problem issues in special education. This is a course of study that will enable participants to examine various topics in special education and research a position on an issue.

SPED 802. Cognitive Processes and Learning Strategies for Students with Special Needs. 3 Credits.

The intent of this course is to provide an overview of research and critical issues relative to the cognitive and affective development of individuals with disabilities. Research-based

interventions that address deficits of cognitive processes will be discussed and specific learning strategies will be presented.

SPED 807. Advanced Instructional Procedures in Special Education. 3 Credits.

This course provides students with advanced skills in educational planning, development, and implementation for students with learning problems. Techniques focus on inclusive and self-contained classroom arrangements. Prerequisite: graduate standing.

CDSE 897. Independent Study: Topics in Special Education. 3 Credits.

Independent study of special topics in communication disorders and special education for doctoral students. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

SPED 868. Internship: Special Education. 3 Credits.

Internships in teaching, research, and other professional activities will provide experience in the roles that students will assume after completing their doctoral degrees. The successful completion of a 3-credit internship is required to fulfill program requirements and necessitates a commitment of a minimum of 150 contact hours. Internships may be at the regional, national or international levels.

SPED 899. Dissertation. 1-12 Credits.

Dissertation. Prerequisites: Successful defense of prospectus and admission to candidacy.