**SPECIAL EDUCATION, M.S.**

The M.S. degree program in special education offers two master’s tracks including a teacher certification track and a general track. The Special Education master’s program prepares students to serve as resources and advocates for students with disabilities and their families, and to work cooperatively with schools and community agencies to improve the quality of life for students with disabilities. Graduates of the teacher certification master’s program are eligible to apply for Wisconsin cross-categorical Special Education licensure at the middle childhood through early adolescence level (ages 6–12/13), and at the early adolescence through adolescence level (ages 10–21).

Special Education is one of the two academic areas in the Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education. The areas are joined by a common mission of preparing professional leadership personnel to address the educational and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities across the life span. Both special education and rehabilitation psychology offer programs leading to Ph.D., M.S., and B.S. degrees. Special education addresses the needs of children, youth, and young adults through its teacher education, research and service programs. Rehabilitation psychology addresses the needs of older youth, young adults, and adults. Department faculty in both areas join resources to provide training and research programs that promote successful transition from school to the world of work, post-secondary, education and successful psycho-social adaptation for individuals with disabilities.

Special Education faculty research focuses on the following areas:
- Research methodologies in special education
- Diversity and equity issues in the field of special education
- Literacy and reading instruction for individuals with disabilities
- Teacher education and preparation of high quality special education teachers
- Evidence-based interventions with students with severe disabilities including multiple disabilities, intellectual disability and autism
- Special education issues in adolescence, transitional and vocational education

**ADMISSIONS**

Application information is available on the department website (http://rpse.education.wisc.edu/rpse/programs/graduate-degree-programs/special-education-graduate-programs/application-requirements-and-deadlines). Applicants are expected to meet general requirements for admission to the Graduate School. The admissions committee considers a variety of factors including academic preparation, letters of recommendation, personal statement, and professional experiences.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

**FUNDING**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

General M.S.—funding sometimes available through department; not guaranteed

M.S. with Teacher Cert.—funding generally not available through department

M.S. with Teacher Cert. EPIC—tuition remission and stipend provided

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Instruction</th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mode of Instruction Definitions**

**Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.

**Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.
CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Credit Requirement
30 credits

The teacher certification track incorporates a professional program; average number of credits taken by students exceeds 30 credits.

Minimum Residence Credit Requirement
16 credits

Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement
M.S. general track: Half of degree coursework (15 credits out of 30 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/).

M.S. teacher certification track:
36 credits must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

Overall Graduate GPA Requirement
3.00 GPA required.

Other Grade Requirements
The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.

Assessments and Examinations
Students in the master’s with teacher certification program must complete Wisconsin required teacher certification examinations.

Students in the general master’s program are required to complete a comprehensive examination, and a master’s project or thesis.

Language Requirements
No language requirements.

REQUIRED COURSES

M.S. General Master’s Program
Requires a minimum of 30 credits to include:

• RP & SE 700 Seminar: Rehabilitation Psychology Research
• Additional coursework to be determined in consultation with faculty advisor
• Master’s comprehensive exam
• Project and/or thesis (to be determined in consultation with faculty advisor)

M.S. Teacher Certification Program
Program admission requires completion of RP & SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities, and verification of basic skills teacher certification requirement.

Requires completion of the Special Education teacher certification program including the following courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 330</td>
<td>Behavior Analysis: Applications to Persons with Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 403</td>
<td>Promoting Adolescent Literacy for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 660</td>
<td>Special Topics (Development, Learning and Educational Foundations in Special Education)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 464</td>
<td>Diagnosis, Assessment, and Instructional Planning in Special Education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURRIC/ RP &amp; SE 506</td>
<td>Strategies for Inclusive Schooling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURRIC 374</td>
<td>General Educ Practicum &amp; Instructional Planning for Diverse Learners</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 465</td>
<td>Language and Reading Instruction for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 473</td>
<td>Management: Students with Learning and Behavioral Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 401</td>
<td>Augmentative and Alternative Communication and Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 402</td>
<td>Methods in Teaching Functional Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 700</td>
<td>Seminar: Rehabilitation Psychology Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 467</td>
<td>Elementary Student Teaching Seminar</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 477</td>
<td>Special Education Student Teaching: Middle Childhood - Early Adolescence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 468</td>
<td>Secondary Student Teaching Seminar</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 478</td>
<td>Special Education Student Teaching: Early Adolescence - Adolescence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 472</td>
<td>Methods in Transition and Vocational Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP &amp; SE 660</td>
<td>Special Topics (Access to the Gen Curriculum for Students with Disabilities)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 These tracks are internal to the program and represent different pathways a student can follow to earn this degree. Track names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding
general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

**MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES**

**GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

The Graduate Program Handbook ([http://rpse.education.wisc.edu/rpse/programs/graduate-degree-programs/forms-and-handouts](http://rpse.education.wisc.edu/rpse/programs/graduate-degree-programs/forms-and-handouts)) is the repository for all of the program’s policies and requirements.

**PRIOR COURSEWORK**

**Graduate Work from Other Institutions**

Students are allowed to count graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**UW–Madison Undergraduate**

With program approval, students are allowed to count 7 credits of coursework numbered 300 level or above from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree toward the graduate degree. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**UW–Madison University Special**

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

**PROBATION**

A semester GPA below 3.0 will result in the student being placed on academic probation. If a semester GPA of 3.0 is not attained during the subsequent semester of full time enrollment (or 12 credits of enrollment if enrolled part-time) the student may be dismissed from the program or allowed to continue for one additional semester based on advisor appeal to the Graduate School.

**ADVISOR / COMMITTEE**

Students are assigned a faculty mentor upon admission to the program.

**CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED**

15 credits

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Master’s degree students who are absent for five or more years will not be given credit for prior work.

**OTHER**

n/a

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources ([https://grad.wisc.edu/pd](https://grad.wisc.edu/pd)) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. (General Master’s Program) Articulates, critiques, or elaborates the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in the field of study.

2. (General Master’s Program) Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.

3. (General Master’s Program) Demonstrates understanding of the primary field of study in a historical, social, or global context.

4. (General Master’s Program) Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.

5. (General Master’s Program) Evaluates or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.

6. (General Master’s Program) Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to the field of study.

7. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Special Education Advocacy and Leadership: Prepared to advocate for and provide leadership in the education of students with a wide array of learning, cognitive, social/emotional and behavioral disabilities in accordance with the standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children.

8. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Professionalism: Adhere to professional ethical standards and conduct her or himself in a courteous and professional manner.

9. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Collaboration and Communication: Collaborate and effectively communicate with students their families, other educators, related service providers and members of the community to address the needs of students with disabilities.

10. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Assessment: Collect information on student backgrounds, learning characteristics and achievement that can be used to determine students’ present level of performance and guide instruction.

11. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Special Education Evaluation and Individualized Educational Planning: To the maximum possible the teacher candidate will participate in the Educational Evaluation and Individualized Educational Planning process.

12. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Instructional Planning: Plan instruction that meets the needs of students, is consistent with State and local standards and provides access to the general education curriculum.

13. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Instructional Presentations: Present lessons and units of instruction that gain and...
maintain student attention and are consistent with students’ interests and IEP goals.

14. (Master’s with Teacher Certification Program) Classroom Management: Create and maintain a safe, positive and supportive learning environment that is conducive to learning and the mental health of the students.

15. (General Master’s Program) Recognize and apply principles of ethical and professional conduct.

16. (Master's with Teacher Certification Program) Adhere to professional ethical standards and conduct her or himself in a courteous and professional manner.

PEOPLE

Faculty:

Rehabilitation Counseling and Rehabilitation Counselor Education:
Professors Fong Chan, Brian Phillips, David Rosenthal, Susan Smedema, and Timothy Tansey

Special Education:
Professors Aydin Bal, Bonnie Doren, Taucia Gonzalez, Melinda Leko, Andrea Ruppar, and Kimber Wilkerson

For more information about faculty in the Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education Department, see: https://rpse.education.wisc.edu/rpse/people/faculty