

SPECIAL EDUCATION, PHD

The PhD program prepares leaders in the field of special education to bring systemic change to educational and community settings in ways that improve access and equity for children and youth with disabilities and their families. The program prepares graduates to address pressing issues in the field including increasing equity across diverse groups of students, improving post-school outcomes for individuals with disabilities, and enhancing teacher efficacy in 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

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. 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.

The department is a national and international leader in preparing PhD professionals to serve in leadership positions in university teaching, research, and program administration. This leadership is evidenced by the publication and research record of its faculty and graduates, and by the routine placement of PhD graduates in major universities and colleges.