The M.S. degree in Special Education 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. The M.S. degree in Special Education offers two named options: the Teacher Certification program and the Research and Theory program.

Graduates of the Teacher Certification program are eligible to apply for Wisconsin K-12 cross-categorical Special Education licensure. The program is an applied professional training program, preparing students to go directly into positions as Special Education teachers.

The Research and Theory program option focuses on graduate-level research and theory in the field of Special Education. A plan of study generally includes multiple research courses and theory courses in Special Education as well as related coursework from other departments that contribute to the student's academic and research interests. The program deepens students' academic preparation to understand key questions and issues in the field of special education and to strengthen students' analytical and research skills. These skills contribute to the development of high-quality scholars and leaders in the field. Most graduates choose to pursue further study in a doctoral program, or to pursue positions in schools or community-based agencies, or advocacy organizations that promote independence and inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

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

Students apply to the M.S. in Special Education through one of the named options:

- **Research and Theory**
- **Teacher Certification**

**ADMISSIONS**

Students apply to the M.S. in Special Education through one of the named options:

- **Research and Theory**
- **Teacher Certification**

**FUNDING**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

For current funding opportunities, visit the department's Funding and Financial Aid page.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements, in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements Detail</th>
<th>Minimum Credit Requirement</th>
<th>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</th>
<th>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</th>
<th>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</th>
<th>Other Grade Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See Named Option for policy information.</td>
<td>16 credits</td>
<td>See Named Option for policy information.</td>
<td>See Named Option for policy information.</td>
<td>See Named Option for policy information.</td>
<td>The Graduate School requires that students maintain a cumulative gradepoint average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) for all graduate courses (excluding research) to receive a degree. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language  No language requirements.

Requirements

REQUIRED COURSES
Select a Named Option (p. 2) for required courses.

NAMED OPTIONS
A named option is a formally documented sub-major within an academic major program. Named options appear on the transcript with degree conferral. Students pursuing the Master of Science in Special Education must select one of the following named options:

View as list

- SPECIAL EDUCATION: RESEARCH AND THEORY, M.S. (HTTP://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/REHABILITATION-PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIAL-EDUCATION/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-RESEARCH-THEORY-MS/)
- SPECIAL EDUCATION: TEACHER CERTIFICATION, M.S. (HTTP://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/REHABILITATION-PSYCHOLOGY-SPECIAL-EDUCATION/SPECIAL-EDUCATION-TEACHER-CERTIFICATION-MS/)

POLICIES
Students should refer to one of the named options for policy information:

- Research and Theory (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-ms/special-education-research-theory-ms/)
- Teacher Certification (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/rehabilitation-psychology-special-education/special-education-ms/special-education-teacher-certification-ms/)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. (Research and Theory option) Articulates, critiques, or elaborates the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in the field of study.
2. (Research and Theory option) Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.
3. (Research and Theory option) Demonstrates understanding of the primary field of study in a historical, social, or global context.
4. (Research and Theory option) Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
5. (Research and Theory option) Evaluates or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.

6. (Research and Theory option) Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to the field of study.
7. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) Professionalism: Adhere to professional ethical standards and conduct her or himself in a courteous and professional manner.
9. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) Instructional Presentations: Present lessons and units of instruction that gain and maintain student attention and are consistent with students' interests and IEP goals.
14. (Teacher Certification option) 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. (Teacher Certification option) 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.
16. (Teacher Certification option) Adhere to professional ethical standards and conduct her or himself in a courteous and professional manner.

PEOPLE

Faculty:

Rehabilitation Psychology:
Malachy Bishop, Jina Chun, David Rosenthal, Susan Smedema, and Timothy Tansey

Special Education:

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

Special Education: Teacher Certification
Recommendation for certification to the state of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for a teaching license also requires successful completion of state mandated certification requirements including:

Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test - WFoRT: Minimum passing score - 240

Education Teacher Performance Assessment - EdTPA: Minimum passing score on the Special Education EdTPA - 38

For more information on required tests, see: https://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/pk-12-education/pathways-to-licensure/student-testing-and-assessment/.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/LICENSURE DISCLOSURE (NC-SARA)
The United States Department of Education requires institutions that provide distance education to disclose information for programs leading to professional certification or licensure about whether each program meets state educational requirements for initial licensure or certification. Following is this disclosure information for this program:

The requirements of this program meet Certification/Licensure in the following states:
Wisconsin

The requirements of this program do not meet Certification/Licensure in the following states:
Not applicable

The requirements of this program have not been determined if they meet Certification/Licensure in the following states: