

Florida State University

*College of Education
Department of Special Education and
Rehabilitation Counseling Services*

Part-time CSPD Master's Degree Program in Education of Students with Exceptionalities (ESE)

The Part-time Special Education Master's Degree program is a three year program open to out-of-field bachelor's level personnel currently hired in Exceptional Student Education settings within the 15 districts of the FSU/FAMU Regional Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Partnership. The primary purpose of this program is to attract teachers to be trained in the field of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and be retained as special educators within their local school districts. The focus of the project is to prepare a cohort of professionals to receive a Master's degree and Florida Certification in Exceptional Student Education.

Courses will be offered at FAMU, FSU, and through the Statewide Virtual Program. In order to complete the program, students must meet criteria for admission to the Master's degree graduate program in the College of Education and to the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling Services (SERCS). Courses for students will be individually determined and will be based on the Florida Department of Education's analysis of courses needed by each student to obtain ESE certification.

Program Mission

The mission of the Part-time CSPD Special Education Master's Degree Program is to graduate competent and confident educators who have a commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities. As such, students will be encouraged to:

- establish a value base that requires them to understand and respect persons with disabilities,
- focus professional efforts on empowering and enabling individuals with disabilities, and their families and on promoting their inclusion in all aspects of community and family life, and
- develop the abilities to think independently and creatively.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the program is defined by five dimensions. These five dimensions, abbreviated in the acronym TORCH, are:

- **T** Technological Literacy,
- **O** Open to Diverse and Global Needs,
- **R** Research and Scientific Inquiry,
- **C** Community of Professional Partners, and
- **H** High Academic and Professional Standards.

Additional information about the Conceptual Framework can be found at:
<http://saint.coe.fsu.edu/ncate/ncateprep.cfm>.

Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the CSPD Part-time Special Education Master's Degree Program is developed around the six tenants below:

- Learners with disabilities and members of other minority groups should receive services in normalized, natural, and least restrictive settings.
- A collaborative approach is needed to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Instruction should occur within the context of meaningful and age-appropriate activities, including the general education curriculum.
- Learners with disabilities and their families should be self-determining.
- Positive behavioral supports are humane, effective, and socially valid methods of addressing behavior problems.
- Professionals must be responsive to the changing needs of the population who receive services.

Application to Graduate Study

Students must apply to the Master's degree program within their first semester. Admission requirements are a minimum 3.0 GPA in the Junior and Senior years of undergraduate study or a minimum score of 1000 on the GRE (verbal and quantitative combined). In addition, applications must be approved by program faculty. Applications for admission to graduate school can be made on-line at <http://www.fsu.edu/prospective/graduate/admissions>.

An official GRE score must be on record at FSU before admission to the Master's degree ESE Program can be made. The GRE score is considered a factor in the application; students are encouraged to do as well as possible on the examination. By taking the GRE early in the program, students who do not earn adequate scores for admission to graduate study have time to re-take the examination.

Information about taking the GRE can be obtained at www.gre.org or (609)771-7670. The GRE is administered individually by the Sylvan Learning and Technology Center at 1410 Market Street or (850)385-8696.

Program Content

The content of the Part-time Special Education Master's Degree Program is based on national and state guidelines. The guidelines are provided by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices developed by the Florida Department of Education and the Florida requirements for ESE certification.

The competencies identified by the CEC Common Core of Knowledge and Skills center around:

- *Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education*
- *Characteristics of learners*
- *Assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation*
- *Instructional content and practice*
- *Professional and ethical practices*
- *Planning and managing the teaching and learning environment*
- *Managing student behavior and social interaction skills*
- *Communication and collaborative partnerships*

Competencies for the Florida Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices are arranged under the following categories of knowledge:

- *Assessment*
- *Communication*
- *Continuous Improvement*
- *Critical Thinking*
- *Diversity*
- *Ethics*
- *Human Development and Learning*
- *Knowledge of Subject Matter*
- *Learning Environments*
- *Planning*
- *Role of the Teacher*
- *Technology*

Advising Process

The advising process outlined below should be taken seriously by all students in the Part-time CSPD Special Education Master's Degree Program. Self-advisement is NOT recommended since special course sections will be offered for this program. Your advisor will be available during posted hours or by appointment. The advisor provides recommendations regarding regula-

tions, procedures, courses to take, graduation checks, application to graduate school, and Master's Degree Programs of Study.

It is suggested that students obtain, retain, and read a copy of the FSU Graduate Bulletin published the year of admittance to the program. This bulletin contains information regarding university regulations and procedures that must be followed, but are not necessarily contained in this document. In addition, legislative directives and rules and regulations of the State Board of Education may be implemented at anytime.

Department Blackboard Site. The Department of SERCS maintains a Blackboard Website for students. All students with a special education major code are entered into the listserve of this Blackboard Site if they have an FSU e-mail account. On each student's "My FSU" page, a link to the organization of "Department of SERCS -Students" should appear. The Blackboard site will be used to send e-mails to students via FSU e-mail accounts. Advising and other information is routinely passed onto students through this communication vehicle. In addition, it is imperative that students check frequently throughout the semester the Department Blackboard site. Information of which students should be aware is posted on a regular basis. Students must obtain and utilize an FSU e-mail account. If a link to the Department Blackboard site does not appear on your "My FSU" page, please contact the Program Coordinator.

Advising Responsibilities. Please note that your advisor, committee members, faculty, and staff of SERCS and the office of academic services will be glad to provide assistance. However, it is **ULTIMATELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH STUDENT TO MEET PROGRAM AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND TO MEET DEADLINES.**

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. Students needing accommodations in the advising process are advised to speak with their Advisor as soon as possible to arrange for necessary and needed accommodations.

Annual Reviews and Expectations for Continuing in the Program

Students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 in their graduate coursework. In addition, students are expected to behave according to The Code of Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida and according to the code of ethics of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Professional behavior and attitude will be evaluated based on the standards established by these two codes of ethics.

The Florida Code of Ethics speaks to the teacher's:

- obligation to the student,
- obligation to the public, and
- obligation to the profession of education.

This Code of Ethics may be found at the Department Blackboard Website or at <http://www.politicsol.com/govsites/state-education-depts/fl.html>.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Code of Ethics states that special education professionals:

- Are committed to developing the highest educational and quality of life potential of exceptional individuals;
- Promote and maintain a high level of competence and integrity in practicing their profession;
- Engage in professional activities that benefit exceptional individuals, their families, other colleagues, students or research subjects;
- Exercise objective professional judgment in the practice of their profession;
- Strive to advance their knowledge and skills regarding the education of exceptional individuals;
- Work within the standards and policies of their profession;
- Seek to uphold and improve, where necessary, the laws, regulations, and policies governing the delivery of special education and related services and the practice of their profession; and
- Do not condone or participate in unethical or illegal acts, nor violate professional standards adopted by the Delegate Assembly of CEC.

The Department Blackboard Website has a link to the Council for Exceptional Children homepage. CEC's homepage contains a detailed Code of Ethics.

Tasks to Complete

In addition to successfully completing coursework, students must complete the tasks identified below in the specified semester:

Semester in the ESE Program	Tasks to complete
First through Ninth Semester	Take GRE Exam (if not taken prior to admittance) Have your college/university transcripts analyzed by the Florida Department of Education to determine courses needed to obtain ESE certification

	<p>Complete semester course requirements</p> <p>Meet with advisor before registering for the next semester</p>
Second Semester	Develop a draft Program of Study
Eighth Semester	File Program of Study
Ninth Semester in the Program	<p>Apply and take ESE Certification Exam</p> <p>Apply for graduation</p> <p>Rent cap and gown (optional)</p> <p>Obtain graduation check for Master's degree with advisor and with the Office of Academic Services</p> <p>Submit Graduate Portfolio to committee</p>

Certification Examinations for Florida Educators

In order to receive either the Master's degree, students must pass the appropriate subtests of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations. If a student took and passed the CLAST prior to July 1, 2002, the results of the CLAST will be applied to the examination process as the "general knowledge" component of the examination process. If a student has not taken and passed the CLAST prior to July 1, 2002, the "general knowledge" subtest of the CLAST will become part of the Florida teacher certification examination. Contact the Florida Department of Education for more information at 1-800-445-6739; or locate information on the Florida Department of Education Web Site: www.firn.edu.doe/sas/ftcehome.htm. It is recommended that students complete as much coursework as possible before taking the appropriate teacher certification test.

Master's Degree Coursework

A minimum of 32 hours is required to complete the Master's degree. No courses taken below a 4000-level may count toward the Master's degree. A maximum of six of the 32 semester hours may be at a 4000-level. No semester hours that are applied to the Bachelor's degree may count toward the 32 semester hours required for the Master's degree. Required courses for the Master's degree are included in the table on pages 8 and 9 of this handbook. Below is a tentative schedule for courses included in the program. Course offerings will vary among semesters.

Supervisory Committee and Major Professor

Master's degree students must form a Supervisory Committee at the time the Program of Study is developed. This committee is composed of three professors from Florida State University: the Department Chair of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling Services as a major professor, the CSPD Advisor, and Dr. Goldstein from the Department of Communication Disorders.

Program of Study Form

Students are required to file a Program of Study form. Program of Study forms may be obtained online from the College of Education's website under Academic Services. The Program of Study form lists the courses to be taken to complete the Master's degree. The form must be signed by the student's Supervisory Committee and the Department Chair before being registered with the Office of Academic Services (108 Stone Building). This form must be completed, approved, and on file before students may graduate. The Department will file the Program of Study with the Office of Academic Services. Once you have obtained signatures from all members of your Committee, give the original to the CSPD Advisor. S/he will obtain the Department Chair signature and file with the Office of Academic Services. Your Advisor will provide assistance to complete this form. The Program of Study form provides information related to program and graduation requirements. It is the student's responsibility to read this information and act accordingly.

Graduate Portfolio

In addition to coursework, students are required to compile a Graduate Portfolio during their last semester. The portfolio includes products of every course and represents the student's graduate work throughout the program. It is advised that students retain copies of course syllabi, papers, projects, evaluations, etc., to include in the portfolio. Directions for portfolio components will be discussed with your Advisor in class or private meetings. All grades of "Incomplete" must have been changed to a letter grade before submitting the portfolio. The portfolio is due one month before the graduation date.

Student portfolios are evaluated by each member of the student's Supervisory Committee to determine if a student has successfully completed the program. Students are informed in writing of the outcomes of the evaluation by the Supervisory committee. Students who do not successfully complete the portfolio are assigned remedial work by their Supervisory Committee.