

# **Stephen F. Austin State University Online Masters in Special Education Program Handbook**

## **(4 Online Program Options)**

- **M.Ed. in Special Education with initial teacher certification**
- **M.Ed in Special Education without teacher certification**
- **M.Ed. in Special Education with the Educational Diagnostician certification**
- **Educational Diagnostician Certification Seeking Only Plan**

**Accredited, Accessible, and Affordable**



**College of Education  
Department of Human Services  
Special Education Program**

# **Stephen F. Austin State University**

## **College of Education**

### **Department of Human Services**

### **Special Education Program**

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### **COE VISION**

The Perkins College of Education at Stephen F. Austin State University will be the college of choice for students striving to achieve professional excellence through exemplary programs that are recognized at state, national, and international levels.

### **COE MISSION**

The mission of the Perkins College of Education is to prepare competent, successful, caring and enthusiastic professionals dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development.

To accomplish this mission, the goals of the Perkins College of Education are to:

- Provide programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels based upon sound pedagogical and clinical practice.
- Prepare teachers, support personnel, and educational leaders for Texas.
- Employ and support faculty members who are committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Provide a variety of teaching venues incorporating the latest technologies to a range of diverse student interests, backgrounds, and aspirations.
- Maintain resources and facilities that allow each program to meet its expected outcomes.
- Collaborate with external partners to enhance students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and to influence the ongoing exchange of ideas for mutual benefit.
- Engage in outreach services
  - To address specific needs in the broader community,
  - To enhance student learning,
  - To instill commitment to service, and
  - To promote the reputation of the University, and to
- Conduct research to advance knowledge and to contribute to the common good.

### **CORE VALUES**

In the Perkins College of Education at Stephen F. Austin State University, we value and are committed to:

- Academic excellence through critical, reflective, and creative thinking
- Life-long learning
- Collaboration and shared decision-making
- Openness to new ideas, to culturally diverse people, to innovation and change
- Integrity, responsibility, diligence, and ethical behavior, and
- Service that enriches the community.

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### HUMAN SERVICES MISSION

The mission of the Department of Human Services is to prepare candidates for leadership and service roles across the state of Texas and the global community. The department is committed to the incorporation of community-based, service-learning experiences within its educational programs to maximize the advancement of candidates' personal and professional development.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

#### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

The term "standard" is used to describe what a teacher must know and be able to do. The special education program at SFA is aligned with both national and state standards for special education teachers. There are two sets of standards that form the foundation of our program. First, are the national standards set forth by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) which is the national professional association for special educators. Second, are the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards. The SBEC and CEC standards are complimentary to each other and Special education programs at SFA are aligned with national and state standards for beginning special education teachers and educational diagnosticians. We share accountability with our candidates for their performance on the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) certification exams in the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP). Based on an outstanding pass rate, our program is fully accredited by the State.

The Initial and Advanced Speciality Standards for Special Education teachers and Educational Diagnosticians may be accessed on the [Council for Exceptional Children](#) web site.

CEC [Advanced Preparation Standards](#)

CEC [Advanced Speciality Set: Special Education Diagnostician Specialist](#)

The Special Education program further aligns with the mission, goals and values of the Perkins College of Education. Additionally, all Texas educators are responsible for knowing the Texas Administrative Code that defines the [Educator Code of Ethics](#)

A performance based assessment system is used in which candidate performance is rated on key assessments in various classes in order to provide data for accreditation and for program improvement. The general goal of the masters degree program in special education is to prepare professional educators and practitioners with advanced competencies related to the field of special education.

The Special Education Program at SFA is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Human Services/Telecommunications Building (HSTC). Numerous school districts in the area cooperate with the program in placing special education teaching and educational diagnostician candidates for field and practicum experiences. Additionally, a Special Education Advisory Board comprised of area practitioners, special education directors, educational diagnosticians, and teachers provide input and feedback to the faculty.

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### Program Accreditations

The College of Education (COE) is fully accredited by the the [National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education](#), and the Special Education Program is nationally recognized by the [Council for Exceptional Children](#). All educator preparation programs in the COE are accredited by the State of Texas.

### **STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION (SBEC) STANDARDS RELATIONSHIP TO TEXES EDUCATOR COMPETENCIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIANS**

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) has approved Texas educator standards that delineate what the beginning educator should know and be able to do. These standards, which are based on the state-required curriculum for students — the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) — form the basis for the **Texas Examinations of Educator Standards™ (TExES™)** program. This initiative, administered by Texas Education Agency (TEA), affects all areas of Texas education— from the more than 170 approved Texas Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to the more than 7,000 Texas school campuses. This standards-based system reflects SBEC’s commitment to help align Texas education from kindergarten through college. SBEC and TEA’s roles in this K–16 initiative ensure that newly certified Texas educators have the essential knowledge and skills to teach the TEKS to the state’s public school students. ETS (2014, November 18). *The TExES Test for Texas Teachers*. Retrieved from <http://cms.texas-ets.org/texas/prepmaterials/texas-preparation-manuals/the-texas-tests-for-texas-teachers/>

### **SBEC Standards For Special Education Teachers**

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard I**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the philosophical, historical and legal foundations of special education.

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard II**

The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard III**

The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard IV**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard V**

The special education teacher understands formal and informal assessment procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.

#### **Special Education EC-12 Standard VI**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction and managing the teaching and learning environment.

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### **Special Education EC-12 Standard VII**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior and social skills.

### **Special Education EC-12 Standard VIII**

The special education teacher understands assistive technology as defined by state and federal regulations.

### **Special Education EC-12 Standard IX**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.

### **Special Education EC-12 Standard X**

The special education teacher promotes students' academic performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.

### **Special Education EC-12 Standard XI**

The special education teacher promotes students' performance in English language arts and reading.

### **Special Education EC-12 Standard XII**

The special education teacher promotes students' performance in mathematics.

## **SBEC Standards For Educational Diagnosticians**

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard I**

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard II**

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles and responsibilities.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard III**

The educational diagnostician develops collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies and related service personnel.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard IV**

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning and instructional decision making.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard V**

The educational diagnostician knows eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard VI**

The educational diagnostician selects, administers and interprets appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.

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### **Educational Diagnostician Standard VII**

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning and instruction.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard VIII**

The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management and organization.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard IX**

The educational diagnostician addresses students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning and instructional strategies.

### **Educational Diagnostician Standard X**

The educational diagnostician knows and understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Admission to any of the graduate Special Education Programs is contingent upon admission to the Graduate School; therefore, a student applying to Special Education graduate program must meet the criteria for admission to the graduate school. Criteria for admission to the Graduate School include a 2.5 GPA overall for Provisional admission, and a 2.8 overall GPA for Clear Admission. The GRE is waived for individuals who hold an M.Ed. in a related field or for individuals with an undergraduate (overall or last 60 hours) GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Before you complete an application to the Graduate School at Stephen F. Austin State University, please contact Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)) for a shared folder invitation that will allow you to electronically upload the pre-admission items listed below for your chosen M.Ed. or certification seeking only track. Each applicant's pre-admission items will be reviewed by the program faculty members. Please do not submit a Graduate School application before completing these requirements, as the \$50 application fee is non-refundable.

### **PRE-ADMISSION ITEMS: M.Ed. in Special Education without initial teacher certification and the M.Ed. in Special Education with initial teacher certification.**

1. Copy of undergraduate transcript and, if applicable, a copy of graduate transcript
2. Initial teacher certification only: Complete and return a provided initial teacher certification seeking tracking form. A copy of this form may be obtained from Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)). This certification tracking form will not be submitted until you are admitted to the program and enrolled in your first semester of coursework.
3. Three letters of recommendation (two of a professional nature and one can be a community member who has known you for some time). Please make sure these letters are signed.
4. Current resume
5. Essay – a typed, double-spaced written statement (minimum 3-5 pages in length) describing your experience in the field of special education, your philosophy on educating students with

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special needs, and how personal qualities and educational experience would make you an exceptional candidate for the special education graduate program.

6. A video-recording introducing yourself to program faculty in a professional manner. This video is to be no longer than 5 minutes in duration. A free video recording resource may be found at <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/>. Please include the following information in your video.
  - Name
  - Current employment
  - Years of teaching experience and/or types of teaching experiences
  - Teacher certifications (if applicable)
  - Qualities and competencies you possess that would make you a good candidate for our program and a future professional in the field.
  - Statement regarding your ability and motivation to participate in a rigorous program.

All pre-admission items will be uploaded to a shared folder (via invitation email sent by Dr. Paige Mask). In order to receive the shared folder invitation, you will need to create a free Microsoft account that uses your current email address. Directions for creating this account may be obtained from Paige Mask. When your Microsoft account has been created and you are ready to upload your pre-admission items, please email Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)) to request a shared folder invitation.

When the above items have been completed and submitted, you may be asked to participate in a short, online video-conferencing interview session in which you will be asked up to five additional questions. You will access this interview via a provided web link. Once this process is completed and you been notified of your acceptance to the program, you may apply to the Graduate School. The application can be accessed and submitted electronically from the following website: <http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/101.asp>. Please complete the application as an M.Ed. seeking student. Please do not submit a Graduate School application before completing these requirements, as the \$50 application fee is non-refundable.

### **PRE-ADMISSION ITEMS: M.Ed. in Special Education with the educational diagnostician certification and the educational diagnostician certification seeking only track.**

1. Letter from your Special Education Director indicating permission for you to complete a 160-hour practicum experience over the course of two semesters at the end of your certification program. An information letter that you can provide to your special education director may be obtained from Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)). The practicum letter is not completed at this time but rather serves to inform your director of experiences we would like for you to have during your last two semesters in the program.

**Note: Please know that school districts are not required or obligated to grant permission for practicum experiences to prospective SFA program students. Your request for practicum experiences must be done respectfully and with the full knowledge that your first priority to the district/school are your teaching responsibilities or other currently held position in the district. You will have 2 semesters in which to earn 160 hours of practicum experience. The majority of our students continue to work full-time in a district while completing these hours.**

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2. Copy of your official Teacher Service Record (TSR)
3. Copy of undergraduate transcript and, if applicable, a copy of graduate transcript
4. Copy of your teacher certifications, which may be obtained from the following website: <https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/sbeonline/virtcert.asp>
5. Complete and return a provided advanced certification seeking tracking form. This certification tracking form will not be submitted until you are admitted to the program and enrolled in your first semester of coursework.
6. Three letters of recommendation (two of a professional nature and one can be a community member who has known you for some time). Please make sure these letters are signed.
7. Current resume
8. Essay – a typed, double-spaced written statement (minimum 3-5 pages in length) describing your experience in the field of special education, your philosophy on educating students with special needs, and how personal qualities and educational experience would make you an exceptional candidate for the special education graduate program.
9. A video-recording introducing yourself to program faculty in a professional manner. This video is to be no longer than 5 minutes in duration. A free video recording resource may be found at <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/>. Please include the following information in your video.
  - Name
  - Current employment
  - Years of teaching experience and types of teaching experiences
  - Teacher certifications
  - Qualities and competencies you possess that would make you a good candidate for our program and a future quality educational diagnostician in the field.
  - Statement regarding your ability and motivation to participate in a rigorous certification program.

All pre-admission items will be uploaded to a shared folder (via invitation email sent by Dr. Paige Mask). In order to receive the shared folder invitation, you will need to create a free Microsoft account that uses your current email account. Directions for creating this account may be obtained from Paige Mask. When your Microsoft account has been created and you are ready to upload your pre-admission items, please email Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)) to request a shared folder invitation.

When the above items have been completed and submitted, you may be asked to participate in a short, online video-conferencing interview session in which you will be asked up to five additional questions. You will access this interview via a provided web link. Once this process is completed and you been notified of your acceptance to the program, you may apply to the Graduate School. The application can be accessed and submitted electronically from the following website: <http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/101.asp>. Please complete the application as an M.Ed. seeking student. Please do not submit a Graduate School application before completing these requirements, as the \$50 application fee is non-refundable.

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### **GRE**

A GRE score is not required for special education program candidates that have an undergraduate (overall or last 60 hours) GPA of 3.0 or above or for those who currently hold an M.Ed. For individuals who do not meet the undergraduate or M.Ed. criteria, a satisfactory GRE score must also be obtained. See GRE details below.

The General Test of the GRE is an objective and written essay examination requiring approximately three to four hours and yielding three scores-Verbal Factor (vocabulary and reading comprehension); Quantitative Factor (logical mathematical reasoning); and Analytical Writing. All 3 scores are required. GRE Verbal and Quantitative scores are reported on a 130-170 scale. GRE Analytical Writing scores are reported on a 0-6 scale in half-point increments. Minimum passing score ranges for each GRE area are reported below:

**Verbal Reasoning 143-157      Quantitative Reasoning 140-155      Analytical Writing 3.0 - 4.5**

If the GRE requirement applies, applicants have the individual responsible for making arrangements for taking the General Test of the GRE and for having the scores sent to the Graduate Office, P.O. Box 13024, SFA Station, Nacogdoches, Texas 75962. All of the Graduate Record Examinations, of which the General Test is merely one, are prepared and scored by the Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6000, Princeton, N.J., 08541-6000. Information about the GRE and registration instructions is available from the Educational Testing Service. For general inquiries, the Educational Testing Service can be contacted by phone (1-609-771-7670), by Fax (1-610-290-8975), by e-mail [https://www.ets.org/gre/contact/contact\\_form](https://www.ets.org/gre/contact/contact_form) or by Internet <https://www.ets.org/gre>

The General Test of the GRE is available through the Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Program of the Educational Testing Service. There are CBT test centers located throughout the United States, U.S. territories, Puerto Rico and Canada. The CBT Program also is being offered outside the United States. Stephen F. Austin State University is a designated CBT site. The applicant may register for the GRE by calling the CBT test center directly (at SFA, the number is 936-468-3958) or the GRE registration number, 1-800 473-2255 to schedule an CBT examination date. Under the CBT Program, the examinee is able to view the scores of the verbal and quantitative sections immediately. Paper score reports are available to the examinee and the designated score recipients approximately 15 days after the test date.

### **Four Types of Graduate School Admission**

#### **1. Clear Admission**

In general, clear admission to a degree program is met by an applicant having an overall undergraduate grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale and a 2.8 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work. **Note: Most financial aid programs will require Clear Admission to a program in order to qualify for the aid.**

#### **2. Probationary Admission**

An applicant failing to achieve clear admission to graduate study may be considered for

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Probationary Admission by having an overall grade point average of 2.3 on a 4.0 scale and consent of the program advisor. The departmental graduate program coordinator may require test scores and/or a combination of other factors, such as professional experience, to meet the requirements for probationary admission.

### 3. Provisional Admission

For all graduate degree-seeking students, applicants unable to supply all the required documentation prior to the first semester of enrollment, but who, based on previous academic performance, appear to meet the requirements for clear admission, may be considered for provisional admission. This status requires the recommendation of the appropriate department and the approval of the dean. It is valid for one regular semester or two summer sessions only. Complete and satisfactory credentials must be received by the Graduate School and reviewed by the department prior to the beginning of the following semester of work. If this does not occur, the person will not be permitted to continue as a degree-seeking student. A maximum of 12 hours of graduate level course work taken under provisional status may be applied toward a degree.

### 4. Overlap Program Admission

The Overlap Program permits qualified undergraduates to pursue a limited amount of graduate study concurrently with undergraduate study. A maximum of 12 credit hours is allowed. Graduate courses taken in the program are not applicable toward the baccalaureate degree. To be eligible for the Overlap Program, a student must be enrolled at SFA and must have achieved at least 95 semester hours of undergraduate credit. A student with fewer than 115 hours of undergraduate credit must present a 3.0 grade point average both overall and in the major field. A student with 115 hours or more of undergraduate credit, however, may be admitted to the Overlap Program by presenting a 2.5 grade point average overall and a 2.8 grade point average in the major field. Any student admitted to the Overlap Program must meet the admission requirements of the graduate program including the GRE.

#### **Steps For Admittance to the Overlap Program**

1. Apply to the Graduate School,
2. Complete an Overlap application,
3. Obtain the signature of the graduate program advisor Dr. Paige Mask (maskp@sfasu.edu) in the major department.
4. Obtain the signature of the appropriate academic dean.

#### **Graduate School Application Fees**

A \$50 application fee is to be included with the application materials. A fee of \$75 must accompany the application of all foreign applicants, except those under university-sponsored exchange programs.

#### **Appeal Process**

An applicant may appeal an admission decision to the Graduate Council. The appeal should be made in writing and routed through the Dean of Graduate School. The Graduate School web site may be

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viewed at <http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/100.asp> A copy of the graduate school application may be completed and submitted electronically for a fee from [https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c\\_start.WBX](https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX)

### PROGRAM COSTS

Stephen F. Austin State University reserves the right to change tuition and fees in keeping with acts of the Texas Legislature or the University Board of Regents. All charges are subject to correction. For the most current information regarding tuition and fees, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/controller/businessoffice/students/exp\\_fees.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/controller/businessoffice/students/exp_fees.asp). A tuition calculator is located on this site or you may access it from the following link: [http://www.sfasu.edu/controller/businessoffice/students/tuition\\_calc.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/controller/businessoffice/students/tuition_calc.asp)

### DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 36 hours of specified coursework is required for the M.Ed. in Special Education degree. An additional 3 hours may be required for students who do not have the prerequisite course SPE 439 or SPE 539 or an equivalent.

### M.ED. IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OPTIONS (4)

**There are four online program options for candidates seeking a M.Ed. with a major in Special Education. Each of these programs will be described below. Technology requirements for courses within these programs include the following:**

Access to a computer that has the following components: webcam/microphone, Powerpoint viewing and creating capabilities, Microsoft Word and Excel, video recording capabilities (e.g. iPhone or digital-video camera).

#### PROGRAM OPTION I:

##### **M.ED. in SPECIAL EDUCATION WITH EC-12 SPECIAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION**

The M.Ed. in Special Education program provides graduate level preparation in the area of disability awareness, instructional strategies, formal and informal assessment, and law. This M.Ed. and its accompanying certification would qualify an individual to teach in a Texas special education PK -12 public or private school setting. Before you complete the pre-admission process, please contact Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)) for details and resources regarding the required PACT test prior to program entry.

**Note:** This type of M.Ed. will require both a degree plan as well as a certification plan from the Teacher Education Department. The program consists of master's level coursework and preparation for certification as a special education teacher. To obtain a professional certification as a special education teacher, an individual person must pass 3 TExES exams: 1) #161 EC-12 Special Education TExES, 2) #160 All-Level Professional Roles and Responsibilities TExES, and 3) an additional content area based on coursework, the candidate interests and career goals, and planned with the graduate program coordinator.

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Required courses for the M.Ed. in Special Education with EC -12 Special Education Certification:

- SPE 532, 538, 539, 560, 561, 562, 564, 565, 566, and 567
- plus 6 hours of elective concentration planned with the graduate advisor. These electives will be used to fulfill the teacher certification courses on your certification plan (SED and RDG courses).

**Note:** SPE 561 should be taken as one of the last courses due to preparation for the #161 EC-12 Special Education TExES and field experience requirements.

More information regarding teacher certification may be found on the following site:

<http://www.sfasu.edu/coeadvising/266.asp>

### **PROGRAM OPTION II:**

#### **M.Ed. in SPECIAL EDUCATION (without teacher certification)**

The M.Ed. in Special Education program provides graduate level preparation in the area of disability awareness, instructional strategies, formal and informal assessment, and law. Individuals who typically choose this type of M.Ed. are certified teachers who desire to expand on his or her knowledge base and/or and individual who works for a state agency such as Early Childhood Intervention, Mental Health Mental Retardation (MHMR), other state facilities, hospitals, or like agencies. Required courses for the M.Ed. in Special Education

Required courses for the M.Ed. in Special Education with EC -12 Special Education Certification:

- SPE 532, 538, 539, 560, 561, 562, 564, 565, 566, and 567
- plus 6 hours of elective concentration planned with the graduate advisor.

### **PROGRAM OPTION III**

#### **M.Ed. in SPECIAL EDUCATION WITH EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIAN CERTIFICATION**

The Educational Diagnostician program provides graduate level preparation in the area of disabilities, instructional strategies, formal assessment, and law. An educational diagnostician is a master's level professional who works within the public school system to ensure that special education services are provided to eligible students in accordance with all applicable federal laws, regulations, state statutes, Texas Education Agency, and the Commissioner of Education. The program consists of master's level coursework and preparation for certification as an Educational Diagnostician.

Required courses for the M.Ed. in Special Education with Educational Diagnostician Certification:

- SPE 560, 561, 562, 567, 565, 571, 564, 566, 545, 544, 554, and 555

**Note:** SPE 554 and SPE 555 will be taken as one of the last courses due to preparation for the #153 Educational Diagnostician TExES and 160 hours of required practicum experience.

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### PROGRAM OPTION IV:

#### CERTIFICATION SEEKING ONLY FOR THE EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIAN CERTIFICATION

To be eligible for a professional certification as an educational diagnostician, an individual must have a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education and have two years of classroom teaching experience in a public or accredited private school. An individual possessing a master's degree in a related field and teacher certification may be eligible for the option of seeking certification for the Educational Diagnostician certificate. If you meet this criteria, please submit the following information to Dr. Paige Mask ([maskp@sfasu.edu](mailto:maskp@sfasu.edu)) for review before completing the pre-admission process:

- copy of your undergraduate transcript
- copy of your graduate transcript
- copy of your teacher certifications (<https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/sbeconline/virtcert.asp>)

#### COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR M.ED. IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- **SPE 532. Educational Appraisal of Exceptional Children.** Fundamental concepts in measurement with emphasis upon the utility of various test and assessment procedures.
- **SPE 538 Transition.** This course is for instruction in transition assessment and instruction from birth through young adulthood for individuals with disabilities. It includes individual education planning strategies for functioning, independent living, and post-secondary education/work life for young adults with disabilities. Focus is on family, school, community, and related services supports and collaboration with an emphasis on transition supports for culturally and linguistically diverse families, self-determination skills, and independent living
- **SPE 539. Principles of Behavior.** Management for classroom and community use with students with disabilities.
- **SPE 560. Children with Behavioral Disorders.** The etiology, characteristics and remediation of behavior disorders in children.
- **SPE 561. Medical and Educational Aspects of Sensory and Motor Disabilities.** The development of basic sensory discrimination and perceptual processes and abnormalities manifested by exceptional children.
- **SPE 562 . Instructional Strategies for Exceptional Learners.** Methods of evaluation and remediation of sensory and perceptual deficiencies.
- **SPE 564 . Early Childhood Special Education.** A comprehensive overview of the field including medical aspects of serving young children with disabilities, methods, technology, transition, and interagency coordination.

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- **SPE 565. Educational Programming for Students with Autism.** Etiology, research, characteristics, and program components related to children and youth with autism. Traditional and current causation will be discussed with subsequent implications drawn for providing appropriate educational interventions.
- **SPE 566. Assistive Technology.** Assistive technology for individuals with disabilities. Instruction in the use of technology that enhances learning, functioning and independent living for individuals with disabilities. Focus on both "low-tech" and "high-tech" with emphasis on new technologies.
- **SPE 567. Trends in Educating Exceptional Children.** An advanced survey course. Emphasis on current research.
- **SPE 568. Seminar in Special Education.** Problems in special education, current research, implications for teaching.
- **SPE 571. The Educational Diagnostician.** The roles and responsibilities of the educational diagnostician.
- **SPE 544. Psycho-educational Assessment.** The administration and interpretation of tests designed to measure achievement, adaptive and maladaptive behavior, and social/emotional behavior for use in educational planning and interventions with disabled students.
- **SPE 545. Individual Intelligence Testing.** The administration and interpretation of intelligence tests, report writing, selection and interpretation of assessment batteries including measures of social/emotional behavior.
- **SPE 554. Practicum in Professional and Ethical Practice.** Supervised experience in administration and interpretation of various psycho-educational instruments resulting in written and electronic diagnostic evaluation reports and/or supervised practicum experience providing instruction and services to children with disabilities.
- **SPE 555. Practicum In Diagnostic Evaluation.** Supervised experience in administration and interpretation of various psycho-educational instruments resulting in written diagnostic evaluation reports or supervised practicum experience providing instruction to children with disabilities. Prerequisites: SPE 571, 544, 545 and consent of instructor.

### **Additional Courses for EC-12 Special Education Initial Teacher Certification Plan**

- **RGD 501. Reading Methods for Early Childhood.** Focus on acquisition and development of reading skills in early childhood. For post-baccalaureate initial certification students only. Prerequisites: Admission to Teacher Education and the Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certification Program.
- **SED 527. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century EC-12.**

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- **SED 522. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.** Emphasis on the application of learnercentered principles for designing and implementing developmentally appropriate instruction and assessment. Analysis of state and national standards.
- **SED 523. Responding to Ethical and Legal Issues of Diversity.** A focus on understanding and responding to diversity (i.e. cultural, learning styles, special needs, linguistic, socioeconomic) in the classroom and community. Ethical and legal issues related to promoting equity will be explored.
- **SED 525. Classroom Management and Professional Responsibilities.** Emphasis on discipline theory, ethical responsibilities and legal issues involved in classroom management. Focus on understanding teacher roles, responsibilities, communication and professionalism.
- **SED 543. Synthesis Seminar.** Enables students to apply professional expectations for teachers as expressed through the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) standards adopted by the state of Texas. The course synthesizes the PPR standards and research based practices for educators. SED 543 is graded on a pass-fail basis.
- **SED 541 PBIC Internship/First Semester.** First semester of emphasis on mentoring and assisted performance of the PBIC student who is employed as a teacher in a practical setting.
- **SED 542 PBIC Internship/ Second Semester.** Second semester of emphasis on mentoring and assisted performance of the PBIC student who is employed as a teacher in a practical setting.
- **SED 544 Student Teaching.** Student teacher is supervised jointly by the partner school and the university. Fall and Spring only.

## Optimal Course Sequence Map

(Course availability and offerings may vary based on enrollment.)

Year One M.Ed. Educational Diagnosticians			
Fall	Spring	Summer I	Summer II
SPE 567.501 Ed. Except. Child.	SPE 544: Psychoed. Assessment PM	SPE 566.501: Learn/ Assist Tech.	SPE 545.501: Intelligence Testing if not taken previously
SPE 571.501 The Educational Diag.	SPE 560.501 Children/Behav. Disorders	SPE 561.501 Phy. Health Impair.	SPE 565.501 Autism
SPE 545.501 IQ Testing.	SPE 571.501 The Educational Diagnostician		SPE 567.501 if not taken previously
<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>
Year Two M.Ed. Educational Diagnosticians			
Fall	Spring		
SPE 554.501 Practicum Part 1	SPE 555.501 Practicum Part 2		
SPE 564.501 Early Childhood Spec. Ed.	SPE 562.501 Instr. Strat/Except Learners		
	SPE 565.501 Autism		
<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>		

For M.Ed. seeking individuals, financial aid requires 6 hours of coursework each fall and spring. A total of 6 hours over the course of the summer is needed for financial aid purposes. The graduate advisor will create a schedule of coursework based on course availability and current enrollment. Course permits will be issued each semester and the student notified by email when the permits have been issued. It is important that students adhere to their provided schedule due to the testing courses (SPE 545.501, SPE 544.501, and SPE 571.501) needing to be successfully completed prior to the practicum courses. If the testing courses are not taken as advised, it could delay graduation by one academic year. If you are in need of a schedule change due to your personal responsibilities or unforeseen circumstances please contact the graduate advisor as soon as possible so that a new course schedule can be developed and your place reserved in the course

**Year One Ed. Diagnostician Certification Seeking Only – Summer Start**

<b>Summer I</b>	<b>Summer II</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
SPE 545: Individ. Intelligence Testing PM	SPE 544.501: Psychoed. Assessment PM	SPE 554.501 Practicum Part 1 PM	SPE 555.501 Practicum Part 2 PM
SPE 571.501: The Ed. Diag. TW	SPE 545.501 IQ Testing	Other SPE course needs (SPE 561, SPE 566, SPE 567, SPE 564, etc.) based on transcript review.	Other SPE course needs (SPE 561, SPE 565, etc.) based on transcript review.
SPE 544.501 ACH Testing	SPE 571.501 The Educational Diag.		
* Some students may need SPE 539. If so, one of the above courses would be moved to Summer II.	SPE 567.501 Trends in Ed. Except. or other needed courses based on transcript review.		
<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 3-6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 3-6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 3-6 hours</b>

The graduate advisor will create a schedule of coursework based on current enrollment. Course permits will be issued each semester and the student notified by email when the permits have been issued. It is important that students adhere to their provided schedule due to the testing courses (SPE 545.501, SPE 544.501, and SPE 571.501) needing to be successfully completed prior to the practicum courses. If the testing courses are not taken as advised, it could delay graduation by 1 academic year. If you are in need of a schedule change due to your personal responsibilities or unforeseen circumstances please contact the graduate advisor as soon as possible so that a new course schedule can be developed and your place reserved in the courses.

**Year One M.Ed. in Special Education (6 hours of electives/without teacher certification)**

**Note: Initial Teacher Certification at the PBIC level will follow a similar schedule with some SPE coursework being replaced with SED coursework.**

Fall	Spring	Summer I	Summer II
SPE 566.501 Assistive Tech or Elective	elective	SPE 539.501 Applied Behav. Anal	SPE 565.501 Autism
SPE 532.501 Ed. Appraisal Except	SPE 560.501 Child/Behav. Dis.	SPE 561.501 Phy./Health Impairments	SPE 567.501 Trends in Ed. Exceptional Children
<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>
<b>Year Two Non-Teacher Certification</b>			
Fall	Spring		
SPE 566.501 Assistive Tech or elective	SPE 562.501 Instructional Strategies		
SPE 564.501 Early Child. Spec. Ed	SPE 538.501 Transition		
<b>Total: 6 hours</b>	<b>Total: 6 hours</b>		

**The graduate advisor will create a schedule of coursework based on course availability and current enrollment. Course permits will be issued each semester and the student notified by email when the permits have been issued. It is important that students adhere to their provided schedule so that graduation is not delayed due to enrollment or course offering issues. If you are in need of a schedule change due to your personal responsibilities or unforeseen circumstances please contact the graduate advisor as soon as possible so that a new course schedule can be developed and your place reserved in the courses.**

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### SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

#### Become a Teacher

Receive up to \$8,000 for graduate initial teacher certification. This grant is available to students who intend to teach in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. If, after reading the information on the [TEACH Grant website](#) you are interested in learning more about the grant, you should contact the [SFA Financial Aid](#) office.

#### Financial Aid

Stephen F. Austin State University Office of Student Financial Assistance is committed to helping graduate students meet their financial needs. SFA provides graduate students traditional financial assistance in the form of state grants, work-study programs and student loans. To be considered for these funds, an applicant must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

For priority consideration, applications should be received by the Office of Student Financial Assistance by April 1; however, applications received after this date will be accepted and processed. Once this information is received, graduates will be evaluated for all available funds. Electronic notification of awards will be made within two weeks after receipt of all required documentation. Typically, graduate students qualify for grant funding through the state TPEG and institutional Lumberjack Grant programs, and benefit from elevated federal loan eligibility. For more information or to speak with a counselor, contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance at (936) 468-2403 or e-mail at [www.sfasu.edu/faid](http://www.sfasu.edu/faid).

Dropping courses may result in a reduction of financial aid funds for the current term. In order to receive financial assistance for future terms, you must make Satisfactory Academic Progress and dropping courses will affect your Satisfactory Academic Progress standing. For information concerning this policy, visit the office's Web site at [www.sfasu.edu/faid.com](http://www.sfasu.edu/faid.com)

#### SFA LIBRARY RESOURCES

The Ralph W. Steen Library is the main library at Stephen F. Austin State University and is the university's primary library and learning resource environment. Steen Library houses almost 1.9 million volumes, subscribes to 47,414 and provides access to 66,585 serials, (27,263 are unique), both print and electronic, and subscribes to 58 over 200 databases, through library subscriptions and consortia participation. The library catalog is available for

use on campus and remotely online. Sixty-five percent of the serials collection is available in full-text online. Over 25,000 e-books are listed in the online catalog. Steen Library encompasses 245,000 gross square feet, is ADA-compliant, and has a wireless network throughout. The library is open 106 hours per week when classes are in session. Steen Library is home to the LINC Lab (Library Information and Networking Center), a 135-seat open-access computer laboratory featuring both PC and Macintosh platforms. A total of 200-plus computers are available within the library for open use. Steen Library is home to the Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC), a state-of-the-art tutoring center, which is open to all SFA students free of charge. The library also is home to the

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East Texas Research Center (ETRC), an archive featuring cultural materials indigenous to East Texas and is a designated Federal and State Document Depository. The library also is responsible for the university's Web site.

The library is a member of TexShare, a Texas State College and University Library Consortium. As a member, the library provides students with free in-house and remote electronic searching of almost 100 databases of full-text articles and more than 27,000 e-books. Students can request a TexShare library card, which gives them borrowing privileges when they visit other TexShare participating Texas state college and university libraries.

### **UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM POLICIES**

#### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

To obtain disability related accommodations and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, (936) 468-3004/ (936) 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify me and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. You will then need to schedule a time to meet with me, discuss your accommodations, and I will sign the Special Accommodation Request Form. For more information, visit [Disability Services](#).

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

##### **Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (2) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

#### **Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic

## **M.Ed. in Special Education Program Handbook**

chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

### **Grade Appeals**

If you believe there is an error in your final grade, contact me immediately so that your concern can be resolved in a timely manner. The procedure for formal appeals is detailed in the [Academic Appeals by Students Policy](#).