

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION/SPECIAL EDUCATION (PREK-12) CERTIFICATION

Program Description

In our Dual Certification Program, you'll embark on a transformative journey to become a highly skilled educator equipped to meet the diverse needs of young learners in early childhood education, with a specialized focus on supporting students with disabilities across all grade levels.

PreK-4 Early Elementary Focus: Beginning with the PreK-4 Early Elementary component, you'll immerse yourself in a comprehensive curriculum designed to prepare you for teaching and supporting young learners from pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. Through exploration of foundational principles in child development, early literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning, you'll establish a strong foundation. Engaging coursework and practical experiences will equip you with effective instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and assessment methods tailored to the developmental needs of young children. Our program places a strong emphasis on creating inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments, promoting play-based learning, and fostering positive relationships with students, families, and communities. Upon completion, you'll be empowered with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to create engaging and supportive learning experiences that establish a solid foundation for lifelong learning and success for young children.

Special Education Integration: Intertwined throughout the program is our PreK-12 Special Education curriculum. Here, you'll gain a comprehensive understanding of how to support students with diverse learning needs, including those with disabilities, across all grade levels. From learning about various disabilities to developing interventions and instructional strategies tailored to individual student needs, you'll acquire essential skills. Through coursework and field experiences, you'll hone your abilities in assessment, curriculum adaptation, behavior management, and collaboration with families and professionals. Our program maintains a strong focus on fostering inclusive learning environments, promoting equity, and advocating for the rights of students with disabilities. Upon completion, you'll be prepared to effectively support and empower students with disabilities to reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

This dual certification program offers a unique blend of early childhood education and special education expertise, ensuring that you're prepared to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Upon completion, you'll emerge as a versatile and highly qualified educator ready to create inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environments that foster the success and well-being of all students, especially those with disabilities.

Required for Program Completion

45 Credits

Commonwealth Of Pennsylvania Prerequisites

Studies or appropriate CLEPs to indicate knowledge of, American history (3 credits), art or music (3 credits), literature (3 credits), English composition (3 credits), and mathematics (6 credits).

Core Courses

- EDC 503 Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development
- EDC 510 Human Diversity
- EDC 613 The Role of the Developmentally-Oriented Teacher

Certification Courses

- EDC 555 Introduction to Early Childhood Methods
- BLS 601 Techniques of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- EDC 618 Reading and Writing in Elementary and Special Education
- EDC 619 Introduction to Assessment and Instruction of Reading and Writing Difficulties
- EDC 641 Teaching Science as Integrated Inquiry
- EDC 642 Development of Mathematical Thought
- EDC 644 Assessing the Needs of All Learners

Inclusion Practicum

- EDC 643 Developing and Adjusting Instruction
- EDC 645 Planning and Instruction for Students with Special Needs
- EDC 661 Teaching All Students in Inclusive and Special Education Settings

Professional Semester

- EDC 662 Elementary and Special Education Student Teaching (candidates with no teaching experience)

OR

- EDC 669 Elementary and Special Education Supervised Teaching/ Transitional Teaching Early Elementary and Special Education Supervised Teaching
- EDC 679 Special Methods of Teaching (seminar that accompanies student teaching)

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
EDC 503	Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development	3
EDC 510	Human Exceptionalities	3
EDC 555	Introduction of Early Childhood Methods	3
BLS 601	Techniques of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages	3
EDC 618	Reading and Writing in the Elementary-Special Education Classroom	3
EDC 643	Developing and Adjusting Instruction	3
EDC 645	Planning and Instruction for Students with Special Needs	3
EDC 661	Teaching All Students in Inclusive and Special Education Settings	3
Credits		24
Second Year		
EDC 613	The Role of the Developmentally Oriented Teacher	3
EDC 641	Teaching Science as Integrated Inquiry	3
EDC 642	Development of Mathematical Thought	3
EDC 644	Assessing the Abilities of all Learners	3
EDC 619	Literacy Difficulties: Diagnosis and Instruction for Reading Specialists and Classroom Teachers	3
Credits		15
Third Year		
EDC 662 or EDC 669	Elementary and Special Education Student Teaching or Elementary and Special Education Supervised Teaching/Transitional Teaching	3

EDC 679	Elementary and Special Education Special Methods of Teaching	3
	Credits	6
	Total Credits	45

Course Sequence

Eight-Week Sessions

EDC 503 Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development

This course provides an overview of the physical, cognitive, psychosocial, emotional, and moral development for humans across the lifespan.

Participants will explore theories of learning and development as they pertain to the individual in the home, in schools, the community, at work, individually, with families and with peers. Attention will be paid to both normative and nonnormative developmental trends.

EDC 510 Human Exceptionalities

This course introduces human exceptionalities and surveys the psychological, medical, legal, and social forces influencing the provision of services for exceptional people. Clarifies perceptions of exceptionalities, defines and describes key terms and concepts, and identifies major trends that affect the scope and nature of service to exceptional people.

EDC 613 The Role of the Developmentally Oriented Teacher

This course enables students to more expertly apply child and adolescent developmental concepts to the practice of teaching. Explores strategic instructional planning, teaching styles, presentation skills, cooperative learning, and classroom management systems. Emphasizes the role of the teacher as an educational leader and decision-maker. Uses video-assisted micro-teaches both in the laboratory and the classroom. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503

EDC 555 Introduction of Early Childhood Methods

This course provides an overview of historical and current early childhood education models as well as curriculum, classroom management, and assessment considerations based on developmental theories of young children in PreK-4th grades. A special emphasis is placed on holistic curricula integrating literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, and movement into early childhood classrooms and including the family and community into the overall design. Understanding how to develop a classroom environment that embraces is emphasized. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503

BLS 601 Techniques of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

The course analyzes various methodologies used in teaching English as a second language. Emphasis is placed upon methods in teaching, listening, and speaking. Microteaching of difficult points of pronunciation and grammar is also emphasized. Significant attention is given to effective techniques in second-language acquisition.

EDC 618 Reading and Writing in the Elementary-Special Education Classroom

Promotes understanding of reading as a strategic interactive process that affects learners' efforts in all academic areas. Explores currently held views of the reading process, instruction techniques, and assessment concerns related to elementary and secondary education. Employs a variety of formats, including lecture, demonstration, discussion, and hands-on experiences. Course projects provide practical application of the theoretical, instructional, and diagnostic issues presented. Required of all certification candidates. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503

EDC 619 Literacy Difficulties: Diagnosis and Instruction for Reading Specialists and Classroom Teachers

The major goal of this course is to help future and practicing teachers understand how reading and writing ability develop, why some students have difficulty learning to read/or write, how to diagnose and address reading and writing problems, why a variety of assessment and teaching techniques must be used to identify students' strengths and needs, and how to use the results to design appropriate instruction. The premise for this goal is that both understanding why and knowing how are necessary for a teacher to make informed decisions that impact reading and writing instruction. Prerequisite(s): EDC 617 or EDC 618; or enrolled in Special Education certification program

EDC 641 Teaching Science as Integrated Inquiry

This course focuses on how to develop student understanding of scientific knowledge and nature of scientific inquiry through inquiry-centered approaches that are in harmony with the contemporary research on cognitive science, motivation, and learning and instruction. It also addresses science education standards, issues, research, and application. Throughout the semester, students are provided with many opportunities to engage in personal and collaborative inquiry about teaching and learning science. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503

EDC 642 Development of Mathematical Thought

Assists students in understanding how children develop quantitative reasoning and examines implications for teaching math concepts, skills, and problem-solving approaches across content areas. Provides a basis for understanding the changing mathematics curriculum and offers opportunities to plan and evaluate instructional techniques. Required of all Elementary and Special Education Certification candidates. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503

EDC 643 Developing and Adjusting Instruction

This course is designed to help elementary and special education teachers use a developmental perspective in order to design instruction that maximizes learning for a diverse groups of pupils. Further, this course will provide the knowledge necessary for teachers to adjust instruction to accommodate the wide variety of needs commonly found among children with and without disabilities and other needs in current elementary and special education classrooms. Education 643 provides the background necessary for understanding developmental levels, learning styles, and research-based instructional strategies that connect to unit development. Education 645 and 661 represents a summer practicum experience necessary to implement instruction in inclusive and non-inclusive educational settings. Prerequisite(s): EDC 503, EDC 510

EDC 645 Planning and Instruction for Students with Special Needs

This course will extend graduate students' understanding of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) planning, including the Individual Transition Plan, and how to collaborate with parents and outside agencies. Included will be IEP interpretation and accommodations for students classified as low incidence students, including autism. In addition, students will learn how to adjust standards-based units of instruction to meet the needs of students with moderate to severe disabilities. Addressed will be the following: functional and basic academics, communication, daily living skills, socialization, community experiences and related services. Prerequisite(s): EDC 643

EDC 661 Teaching All Students in Inclusive and Special Education Settings

An extension of EDC 645 in which participants design and deliver instruction to moderately and severely handicapped learners. Emphasizes the classroom application of research-based knowledge of child development and individual differences. Prerequisite(s): EDC 643 and EDC 645 or EDC 647

EDC 644 Assessing the Abilities of all Learners

This course provides an overview of norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, curriculum-based, and authentic assessments used in the evaluation of students with and without disabilities. Classroom-based practices using differentiated assessments are also emphasized in this course. Students will be engaged in evaluating a focus child and writing a report containing Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) goals to meet the needs of the student. Prerequisite(s): EDC 510 or permission

EDC 662 Elementary and Special Education Student Teaching

Required of all Elementary and Special Education Certification candidates with no teaching experience. Prerequisite(s): Must be taken as final course in certification sequence.

EDC 669 Elementary and Special Education Supervised Teaching/ Transitional Teaching

This course can, with permission of the Candidacy Committee, replace student teaching for candidates with one or more years teaching experience who are also currently employed as teachers. For one semester, the supervised teacher is observed and guided by University faculty while teaching in his/her own current private or public school position. The supervised teacher also conducts an action research project. Required of all certification candidates who are not required to take student teaching. Prerequisite(s): Must be taken as final course in certification sequence.

EDC 679 Elementary and Special Education Special Methods of Teaching

Weekly seminars held either on campus or at the practicum site designed to help students translate theory into practice by exploring teaching methods in the chosen area of certification. Research project required. Required of all certification candidates. Prerequisite(s): Must be taken as final course in certification sequence.

Course Descriptions

Education