

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: SPECIAL NEEDS (M.ED.)

<https://cola.unh.edu/education/program/med/early-childhood-education-special-needs>

Description

The Education Department offers a Master of Education degree in Early Childhood Education: Special Needs. New Hampshire educator certification is available as an early childhood special education teacher (birth through eight years) through this degree. Requirements for this certification supplement the master's degree and may be completed as electives for the degree.

This program is an advanced course of study designed for teachers, administrators, and other early childhood practitioners who wish to improve their professional competence and broaden their career opportunities. The program emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge and competencies in child development (birth through eight years), learning environments, developmentally appropriate curriculum, developmental exceptionalities, and professional leadership. The coursework culminates in an extensive field-based experience.

Studies in the degree concentrate on young children who are at risk for, or have, developmental difficulties and special needs. Coursework emphasizes an understanding of the role of the family, community, and social policy in early development and intervention. The program is non-categorical in its approach to assessment and educational planning.

Admission Requirements

All applicants are expected to have taken at least one course in child development at the upper undergraduate level and have at least 200 hours of supervised classroom experience with children from birth through eight years of age, or the work equivalent.

Admission Criteria

In determining admission of students to teacher education graduate programs, several criteria are used:

1. The undergraduate record. The undergraduate overall minimum grade point average for admission is 3.0. For UNH students pursuing the accelerated masters degree pathway, a minimum GPA of 3.2 is required.
2. Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators (Core) exam scores are required. Applicants must obtain, at a minimum, a qualifying score (as set by the state of New Hampshire at the time of testing) on all three (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) Core exams in order to be considered for admission. Current NH qualifying scores may be found at the [ETS Praxis Website](#) under the "Tests required for all licensure areas" page.
3. Clearance on a criminal history records check through the NH Department of Safety.
4. Additional required application materials can be found at the [Graduate School website](#) under programs.

Requirements

The M.Ed. degree requires a minimum of **36** graduate-level credits. The exact number of credit hours will depend on the student's background, competencies, and professional goals, and will be determined by the advisor.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Requirements		
EDUC 861	Designing Curriculum for Inclusive, Equitable Settings for Young Children (birth-8)	4
EDUC 801	Human Development & Learning: Cultural Perspectives	4
EDUC 803C	Classroom Management: Creating Positive Learning Environments	4
EDUC 973	Policy, Politics, and Planning in Education	4
Additional Special Needs Requirements		
EDUC 860	Introduction to Young Children with Special Needs	4
EDUC 862		4
EDUC 856	Advocating for Diverse and Inclusive Family-School-Community Partnerships	4
Internship Requirements		
EDUC 900B	Internship and Seminar in Early Childhood Education ¹	3 or 4
EDUC 901B	Internship and Seminar in Early Childhood Education ^{1, 2}	3 or 4
Electives ²		
EDUC 803F	Teaching Elementary School Science	4
EDUC 803M	Teaching Elementary Social Studies	4
EDUC 806	Teaching & Learning Literacy in the Elementary Classroom	4
EDUC 845		2
Concluding Experience ³		

Note: All coursework listed above must be completed, therefore some students may exceed the minimum credit requirement while completing the required coursework.

¹ Students seeking certification need to register for 4-credits

² Select in consultation with the program advisor based on interest and certification requirements. Teacher Certification option (for those seeking Teacher Certification).

³ **Concluding Experiences:** Teacher Candidate Assessment of Performance (TCAP) and Graduate Portfolio

TCAP: In 2013, all New Hampshire institutions of higher education (IHEs) that prepare educators voted unanimously to adapt, pilot and validate a common assessment of teacher interns. All IHE's were committed to adapting a common assessment tool that would evaluate teacher candidates' preparedness for the classroom, and simultaneously serve as a tool for candidate and programmatic learning. To that end, the IHE Network adapted the California PACT for New Hampshire classrooms. A central goal of the NHTCAP is to act as an assessment of learning as well as an assessment for learning.

Graduate Portfolio: By the end of the graduate program in Early Childhood with Special Needs Option, students should be able to provide evidence of their professional development in a variety of ways. Through the presentation of a graduate portfolio, students will demonstrate professional knowledge and competencies.

Accelerated Master's

This graduate program is approved to be taken on an accelerated basis in articulation with certain undergraduate degree programs.

General Accelerated Master's policy, note that some programs have additional requirements (e.g. higher grade expectations) compared to the policy.

Please see the [Graduate School website](#) and contact the department directly for more information.

Student Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of theories of learning and development and theories of instruction, as they apply to children from birth through age eight.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to translate those theories into developmentally appropriate practices for all children, including those who are culturally and/or developmentally diverse.

Disclosures

Professional Licensure/Certification Disclosures

The University of New Hampshire offers a number of academic programs designed to lead to professional licensure or certification in New Hampshire. However, completing a UNH degree/program does not guarantee professional licensure or certification. Eligibility may also depend on factors like years of work experience, professional examinations, passing a background check, and other criteria.

UNH does not guarantee that its professional licensure programs will satisfy the criteria of professional licensure boards in other states. Some states maintain different requirements for professional licensure or certification and requirements can change frequently. Federal regulations require the University to make public disclosure of certain information regarding professional licensure or certification programs, regardless of the modality the program is offered (i.e., in-person or online). The University provides guidance below but recommends students contact their state/territory licensing or certification board to ensure a program meets specific state/territory requirements.

Visit the Office of the Registrar's [website](#) for information about whether this program meets professional licensure requirements in your state.