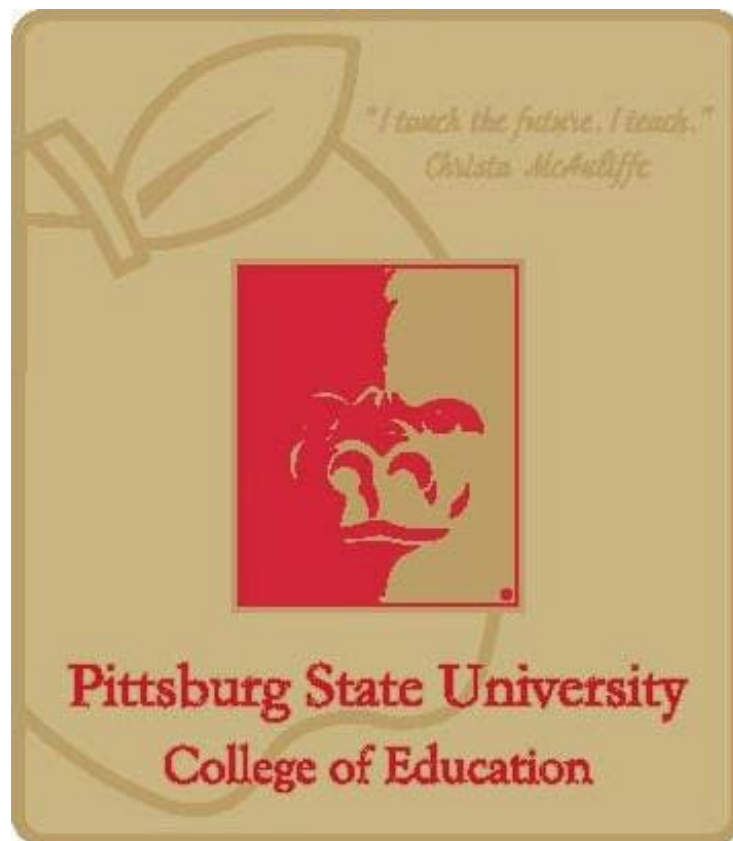


Master of Arts in Teaching -
Special Education
(High-Incidence Grades K-6 or 6-12)



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Program Overview

The Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education (MAT-SPED) is a licensure program designed for those with a degree outside of education who wish to become special education teachers. This is a two-year, 36 credit hour, online program with new cohorts beginning each summer. Candidates must have a bachelor's degree in a non-teaching area. The program allows teacher candidates to earn a Kansas teaching license in high-incidence special education, grades K-6 or 6-12 – for details on obtaining licensure in both K-6 and 6-12, [email Amanda Hill](#). The application deadline is March 1st.

The program has two paths for completion. Both paths require employment in a high-incidence special education setting for the duration of the program and the grade level must align with the program grade level selected. Candidates may change paths prior to the second year of enrollment.

Path 1 – Paraeducator

Candidates are employed as full time paraeducators in an accredited Kansas school, working with students who have high-incidence learning needs.

Path 2 - Teacher of Record

The paraeducator is hired by the school district to be the teacher of record in a high-incidence special education setting. Candidates on this path can serve as the teacher of record through the limited residency license.

Contact Information

Admission Questions:

[Email Office of Teacher Education](#)

620-235-6153

Licensure Questions:

[Email Amanda Hill](#)

Educational Licensing Officer, 620-235-6153

Academic or Program Questions:

[Email Marc Daczewitz](#)

Associate Professor of Special Education, 620-235-4393

The College of Education reserves the right to amend any policies, rules or regulations as needed to best serve its constituents.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Pittsburg State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status, ancestry, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, military or veteran status, or disabilities. The following person has been designated to address inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: [Director of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator](#), 212 Russ Hall, 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, KS 66762, 620-235-4189.

Admission Requirements

Prospective candidates should apply for admission to Graduate School [by completing the application online](#). Official transcripts for all completed coursework must be sent to PSU Graduate School (mail: 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, KS 66762 or [email Janet Miller](#)). A direct transcript should be submitted from each institution where college credit was earned.

Upon receipt of all transcripts, the Educational Licensing Officer will analyze the transcript(s) for academic eligibility. To be academically eligible for the MAT – Special Education program, one must hold a baccalaureate degree without an education emphasis with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00. Note – candidates seeking the limited residency license must also hold a GPA of 2.50 in their last 60 hours of college credit.

Candidates determined to meet the academic requirements for admission to the program will be conditionally admitted to Graduate School. The following are requirements that must be completed for full admission. Candidates must be fully admitted to the program by the time they have completed 12 credit hours. If one is not fully admitted at this time, future enrollment will be placed on hold. This may lead to a delay in program completion.

Writing Sample

Each candidate will be presented a teaching scenario and will create a writing sample based on the situation. More information will be provided by the program advisor.

Two Recommendation Forms

Candidates must have two positive recommendation forms submitted to the Office of Teacher Education. These recommendations should be completed by a university professor, direct supervisor, or someone who is knowledgeable of the candidate's work with young people. Specific recommendation forms are required and will be provided to candidates.

Background Check

Candidates are required to complete a background check for all graduate programs in the department of Teaching and Leadership. The background check for program admission is completed through Validity Screening Solutions. Specific instructions will be provided for the completion of this requirement.

This background check is specific to admission and will not take the place of the required background check for licensure. Once candidates have completed the program and are ready to apply for the initial teaching license, an additional background check will be required by KSDE. However, a valid Kansas teaching license, including an emergency substitute license, can also satisfy the background check requirement for program admission.

Orientation

Candidates will participate in an online orientation meeting prior to enrollment. This meeting will include the following:

1. Meet faculty and other students in your cohort
2. MAT-SPED program overview
3. GUS email account
4. Introduction to using Canvas
5. Field experiences in MAT-SPED
6. Licensure

Coursework

The 36-credit hour sequence of courses was designed to provide students an optimal academic experience. Candidates are expected to adhere to the following sequence.

Elementary Track

Summer 1

SPED 849 Partnerships with Families of Exceptional Children and Youth
SPED 755 – Individualized Education Programming

Fall 1

SPED 738 Characteristics of Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs
SPED 862 General Education Curriculum for Students with High-Incidence Disabilities

Spring 1

SPED 779 Teaching Elementary Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs
PSYCH 810 Advanced Educational Psychology

Summer 2

SPED 750 Assessment in Special Education
READ 870 Literacy Development and Instruction (K-2)

Fall 2

SPED 745 Behavior Analysis and Management
READ 871 Literacy Development and Instruction (3+)

Spring 2

SPED 761 Practicum I: High-Incidence Learning Needs
SPED 861 The Professional Special Educator

Secondary Track

Summer 1

SPED 849 Partnerships with Families of Exceptional Children and Youth

SPED 755 – Individualized Education Programming

Fall 1

SPED 738 Characteristics of Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs

SPED 862 General Education Curriculum for Students with High-Incidence Disabilities

Spring 1

SPED 780 Teaching Secondary Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs

PSYCH 810 Advanced Educational Psychology

Summer 2

SPED 750 Assessment in Special Education

READ 869 Disciplinary and Digital Literacies

Fall 2

SPED 745 Behavior Analysis and Management

READ 871 Literacy Development and Instruction (3+)

Spring 2

SPED 761 Practicum I: High-Incidence Learning Needs

SPED 861 The Professional Special Educator

Note: The course sequence is subject to change at the discretion of the Teaching and Leadership department. Please visit the [Graduate School page](#) for information, including those regarding academic standing requirements: once you get to the page: --> Graduate Students --> Policies

Additional Requirements

Portfolio

As a requirement for graduation, each candidate must create and submit a professional portfolio during the last semester of the program. The portfolio project is divided into two parts; Part I is a philosophy of education that utilizes the Professional Knowledge Base indicators as a foundation to describe personal beliefs regarding special education. Part II is based on the KSDE Standards for teachers of students with high-incidence learning needs.

Licensure Exams

In the state of Kansas, those applying for an initial teaching license must pass the appropriate content assessment for the endorsement(s) sought. These exams are a part of the *Praxis* Subject Assessments. Current testing requirements for the state of Kansas can be found at [Praxis website](#) → Check State Requirements → Kansas → Special Education

The *Praxis* exams are offered only in a computer delivered format. Test-takers may take the exams at any Prometric Testing Center. Tests are also available for administration through Praxis At Home.

It is important during registration to list Pittsburg State University as a designated score recipient so your scores will be officially reported to the Office of Teacher Education.

Licensure

The Educational Licensing Officer will provide assistance with submitting all license applications. Candidates can expect the following fees associated with licensing and testing.

- Licensure Exams
 - Content exams –\$130 - \$209 (A content exam is required for each endorsement sought for a teaching license.)
- License application fee - \$60 - \$70
- KSDE background check fee - \$57
- There will be additional application and background check fees for any other state from which licensure is sought.

Professional Responsibilities

Teacher candidates are expected to observe and adhere to the professional requirements for educators. Candidates need to be familiar with each of the following in order to uphold policies and legal requirements for educators.

[Kansas Educator Code of Conduct](#)

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

[Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting](#)

All teachers, school administrators or other employees of an educational institution are mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect under the Kansas reporting law (K.S.A. 38-2223). Teacher candidates must be aware of their legal responsibility and the required steps to make such a report.

University Support Services

- [Student Success Programs](#) provides programs and services to promote the successful transition of new students into a university environment. These programs and services include academic success workshops, tutoring, and other resources.
- [The Writing Center](#) is located in 112 Axe Library. The center offers writing workshops and one-on-one consultations for any writing project. Consultations can be face-to-face or online. The services are free of charge for all PSU students.
- [Student Disability Services](#) provides support services to currently enrolled PSU students with disabilities which substantially impairs one or more major life activities. Students may qualify for services that accommodate for their impairments and provide equal access to educational opportunity.
- The [Gorilla Geeks Help Desk](#) assists students with various technological needs. Some of the services available include help with GUS and GusPINs, assistance with PSU email accounts, assistance with educational software packages used on campus, basic help with computer hardware or software problems and help with wireless connectivity issues. The Geeks are in 109 Whitesitt Hall.
- The mission of the [Bryant Student Health Center](#) is to provide quality healthcare that is accessible, affordable, culturally sensitive and student-focused.
- The [University Testing Center](#) administers tests offered by multiple testing companies. A full description of exams offered and testing availability can be found at their website.

Student Financial Assistance

- Student Financial Assistance provides guidance for those seeking financial assistance for tuition and fees. More information is available at the [Student Financial website](#).

Title IX

- Support services offered through Title IX can be found at the [Title IX website](#).

College of Education Professional Knowledge Base

The Learner and Learning

Professional educators must understand that learning and development patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.

1. The candidate knows how learning occurs (how learners construct knowledge, acquire skills and develop disciplined thinking processes) and how to use instructional strategies that promote individual growth.
2. The candidate understands that cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical development influences learning.
3. The candidate understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and designs experiences that incorporate individuals' strengths to promote growth.
4. The candidate understands students with exceptional needs and knows how to use strategies and resources to meet these needs.
5. The candidate knows how to access information about the values of communities and how to incorporate languages, experiences, and community resources into practice.
6. The candidate understands how to manage the learning environment by organizing, allocating and coordinating the resources of time and space.
7. The candidate knows how to design experiences using strategies that enhance learner motivation and engagement.
8. The candidate understands the processes needed to foster a respectful learning community.

Content

Professional educators must have a deep and flexible understanding of the field and be able to draw upon the central concepts and structures of their discipline as they work with learners. They integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and communication) to help learners apply content to propose solutions, forge new understandings, solve problems and imagine possibilities. Professional educators connect information to local, state, national and global issues.

9. The candidate understands that learners should question, analyze and understand concepts from various perspectives.
10. The candidate has a deep knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the discipline(s).
11. The candidate knows how to use supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all.
12. The candidate understands how disciplinary knowledge can be applied as a lens to address local and global issues.
13. The candidate realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and best practices in the field.
14. The candidate knows major concepts, assumptions and debates that are central to the discipline.

Instructional Practice

Professional educators understand and integrate assessment, planning and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways for effective practice. They understand how to design, implement, interpret and communicate results from a range of assessments.

15. The candidate knows how to engage learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skills as part of the assessment process.
16. The candidate understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.
17. The candidate knows how to engage learners actively in the assessment process and to develop each learner's capacity to reflect on and communicate about their individual progress.
18. The candidate understands the theories and processes of curriculum design (appropriate sequencing, developmentally appropriate instruction, builds on learners' prior knowledge and experiences).
19. The candidate understands the process for aligning instruction and assessment with learning targets.
20. The candidate understands how theory, research and best practices impact ongoing planning and instructional practice.
21. The candidate knows how to engage learners in using technology tools and a range of skills to access, interpret, evaluate and apply information.
22. The candidate knows how to incorporate a variety of strategies that stimulate the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization and recall).
23. The candidate knows how to apply a variety of developmentally and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning targets.
24. The candidate knows how to analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction and to provide meaningful feedback.

Professional Responsibility

Professional educators create and support safe, productive learning environments. They must engage in meaningful and intensive professional learning and self-renewal by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection and collaboration. Professional educators contribute to accomplishing their school's mission and goals and demonstrate leadership by modeling ethical behavior, contributing to positive changes in practice and advancing their profession.

25. The candidate knows how to use information and technology ethically, legally and safely.
26. The candidate understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments.
27. The candidate understands laws related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., IDEA, FERPA, mandated reporting, etc.).
28. The candidate understands schools as organizations within a historical, political and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners.
29. The candidate knows how to contribute to an environment that supports high expectations for student learning.
30. The candidate understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice and relevant law and policy.
31. The candidate knows how to communicate effectively with all members of the learning community.

KSDE High-Incidence Special Education Standards

1. The special educator understands the historical and philosophical foundations of special education, the characteristics of the disability, the impacts of the disability on education, and the legal parameters appropriate for each learner's educational needs.
2. The special educator uses a variety of assessment instruments, procedures, and technologies for learner screening, evaluation, eligibility decisions, instructional planning, progress monitoring, and technology considerations
3. The special educator uses Individual Educational Programs (IEPs), learning environments, individual learner characteristics, assessment, teacher knowledge of subject matter, and technology for effective instructional planning and implementation.
4. The special educator uses a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies, including effective adaptations, learner performance, and transitions; to promote learning and improve learner outcomes.
5. The special educator demonstrates effective communication skills to enhance collaboration and consultation among school professionals, to improve learner outcomes while planning for and implementing effective instruction and services; to implement the IEP, deliver instruction, and evaluate IEP implementation; and, to plan for and implement effective transition services.
6. The special educator understands the critical elements of language and literacy; identifies and uses evidence-based interventions to meet the instructional needs specific to reading, writing, math and other content areas; and includes the principles of universal design for learning and the use of technology to support literacy and to make data-based decisions.
7. The special educator demonstrates knowledge and skill in the use of problem solving models, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) within the Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) framework; conducts Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and develops Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) to manage behavior and facilitate appropriate behavioral responses; demonstrates cultural sensitivity in the development and use of social skills curricula; and promotes the self-determination skills of learners.
8. Family and Community Engagement - The special educator understands the importance of family and community engagement in the special education process; includes families in special education program development and implementation; understands the legal rights of families; and works to actively engage and empower families as partners in the education of the learner.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following section includes frequently asked questions and answers intended to be helpful in understanding the MAT-SPED Program.

Can I enter the MAT program with an emphasis in Special Education if I do not have a degree?

No, a bachelor's degree with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required.

What if I do not have a 3.0 undergraduate GPA?

Applicants with less than a 3.0 GPA but greater than a 2.75 may be admitted conditionally; an additional GPA review will occur after the completion of 12 hours in which the candidate must have maintained at least a 3.0 GPA.

How long will it take to complete the program?

The 36-credit hour program is designed to be completed in a two-year sequence of six semesters, with six hours of course work being completed each semester. Courses are to be taken in sequence to maximize the learning experience.

Are courses offered online?

Yes, course content is presented online through Canvas, PSU's learning management system.

Can I continue to work as a paraeducator as I take classes?

*Candidates **must** be employed as a paraeducator in a level-appropriate high-incidence setting during the entirety of the program **OR** serve as the teacher of record in a level-appropriate high-incidence special education setting.*

When will I become certified to teach?

Candidates hired to be the teacher of record will apply for the limited residency license following the first semester of coursework. All other candidates will be eligible for full licensure in the state of Kansas upon completion of the program and appropriate testing.

If I am accepted into the program, when do classes begin?

The two-year cohort program starts once a year during the first summer session.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions?

Contact the [Office of Teacher Education](#): 620-235-6153.

What will happen if I do not meet the required conditions within the first 12 hours of the program?

Candidates are not allowed to continue in coursework until they have met all conditions to be fully admitted.

I've been conditionally admitted. How do I enroll myself in classes?

Your advisor will provide enrollment instructions each semester prior to pre-enrollment.

I need to take a break from school so I am not taking courses this semester. What will happen?

Provided there have been no concerns about your academic work or professionalism, you will be re-admitted to the program without issue. You will enter the program at the point which you stopped taking coursework. It is important to note that courses are offered during particular semesters so you may have to wait a full year to return to the program.

How do I know which textbooks to buy?

You need to visit the [PSU online bookstore](#), “Course Materials & Textbooks”

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