

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Web Site: <https://twu.edu/teacher-education/graduate-programs/special-education/>

The Ph.D. in Special Education prepares graduates to teach, conduct research, and provide professional service related to evidence-based practices in educating students with disabilities. Our graduates are engaged, prepared, and professional educators who are ready to lead in the field of special education. Coursework includes specialized doctoral seminars, applicable research classes, a cognate ("minor") area of study, and focused mentorship experiences. Our program is student-focused and individualized as needed. Please refer to Special Education (<https://twu.edu/teacher-education/graduate-programs/special-education/>) for additional details.

The Ph.D. in Special Education is offered as a cooperative program between Texas Woman's University, the University of North Texas, and Texas A&M Commerce under guidelines established by the Federation of North Texas Area Universities (<http://www.twu.edu/federation/>). The Federation enables students to utilize the combined faculty, library, computer facilities, and research opportunities available at all three universities in the development of their doctoral studies. The federation doctoral program provides opportunities for formal course work, seminars, independent study, participation in regional and national conferences, and dissertation research. The program also includes federation-sponsored seminars featuring outstanding nationally and internationally recognized educators. The purpose of the federated doctoral program in special education is to prepare professional educators to assume leadership roles in higher education and EC-12 educational settings. Graduates are prepared to assume diverse roles including teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. Students initially apply for admission to the graduate school of one of the participating universities. Admission is based on a holistic evaluation of a variety of factors.

Marketable Skills

Defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 60x30 Strategic Plan (<https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/miscellaneous/the60x30-strategic-plan/>) as, "Those skills valued by employers that can be applied in a variety of work settings, including interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skills areas. These skills can be either primary or complementary to a major and are acquired by students through education, including curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities."

- Effectively manage leadership opportunities related to the teaching, service, and scholarship efforts of those who support the education of students with disabilities and their families.
- Accurately design, implement, and evaluate independent research related to special education and disseminate research results to the appropriate audience in an effort to bridge the research-to-practice gap in the field of special education.
- Articulate and take advantage of service opportunities where their professional expertise is needed and valued, thus improving the education and life outcomes for learners with disabilities and their families.

Admissions

All students must meet the University requirements as outlined in the Admission to the TWU Graduate School (<http://catalog.twu.edu/graduate/graduate-school/admission-graduate-school/>) section of the catalog.

This academic program may have additional admission criteria that must also be completed as outlined on the program's website.

Degree Requirements

Total Semester Credit Hours Required

A minimum of 90 semester credit hours (SCH) beyond the baccalaureate, including 6-12 SCH for dissertation.

Code	Title	SCHs
Required Courses		
EDSP 6103	Social, Psychological, and Educational Aspects of Intellectual and Development Disabilities	3
EDSP 6303	Seminar in Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	3
EDSP 6403	Seminar in Learning Disabilities	3
EDSP 6603	Social Constructs of Disabilities	3
Research		15-18
EDSP 6003	Single Subject Research	
Two courses in statistics, selected with advisor		
Two or three additional research courses, selected with advisor		
Mentorship (i.e., EDSP 6913, taken twice)		6
Dissertation		6-12
EDSP 6983	Dissertation	
EDSP 6993	Dissertation	
Cognate/Minor Area of Study (courses selected with advisor)		12-18
Please note: Students in the COMS cognate (15 SCH) will take the following:		
COMS 5113	Seminar in Communication Sciences (must be repeated once for credit)	
COMS 5253	Research Application in Communication Sciences (must be repeated once for credit)	
COMS 5383	Seminar in Pedagogy	
Additional Major Courses as Needed		24-39
Courses selected with advisor; may include the following if needed.		
EDSP 5013	Collaborating for Effective Intervention	
EDSP 5033	Using Assessments for Effective Interventions	
EDSP 5043	Legal and Administrative Issues of Special Education Programs	
EDSP 5123	Students with High-Incidence Disabilities	
EDSP 5133	Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities	
EDSP 5313	Behavior Interventions for Students with Disabilities	
EDSP 5423	Instructional Interventions for Students with Disabilities	

Major/Emphasis

Requirements will depend upon individual student's needs. Transfer of coursework from a student's masters' degree is not automatic; please see the Graduate School guidelines for credit by transfer (<http://catalog.twu.edu/graduate/graduate-school/general-requirement-regulations-doctoral-degrees/credit-by-transfer/>). Courses from a masters' degree are only transferred with advisor approval.

Research Tools

Students must take EDSP 6003 (Single-Subject Research), two sequential statistics classes, and three or four additional research courses at the 5000 or 6000 level as determined by their advisor.

Residence Requirement

Two semesters of mentorship (i.e., EDSP 6913) supervised by a TWU Teacher Education faculty member replaces the residency requirement. One of these individual studies is a supervised university teaching experience; the other is a supervised research experience.

Qualifying Examination

A comprehensive portfolio examination that demonstrates a student's depth and breadth of knowledge related to special education determines a student's eligibility for candidacy. The student's advisory committee and other Special Education faculty grade the portfolio on a rubric. Sections deemed unsatisfactory may be presented again one time after six months.

Final Examination

Students must successfully complete a research project, write the dissertation according to advisory committee and TWU Graduate School guidelines, and defend the dissertation in an open meeting, which requires answering questions effectively and demonstrating competence and fluency with content.

Courses of Instruction in Special Education with Federation Universities

Students wishing to enroll in Federation courses will do so through a cross-registration mechanism administered by the TWU Graduate School after their major advisor has approved the coursework.