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Secondary Special Education (7-12)

Introduction

The Special Education program prepares teachers to work with students who have high incidence disabilities. Students work closely with faculty and gain a large DOSE of direct real-world experience, developing the specialized skill set required by this challenging but rewarding profession.

Special Education teachers make a real difference in the lives of students and their families. The United States is currently experiencing a critical shortage of special education teachers, so graduates of this program often have a wide range of employment options, not only in schools but also in rehabilitation facilities, parent guidance centers, and counseling programs.

Professional Preparation

Graduates of the Special Education program are certifiable to teach in the state of Delaware and are prepared to assume the complex responsibilities of teaching students with special needs. Preparation is focused on developing researched-based strategies for instruction, assessment, behavior analysis and change, classroom management and for students with diverse backgrounds and needs in least restrictive environments.

Graduates will be able to:

- Create individualized educational programs (IEP) tailored to each student?s strengths and needs
- Manage and monitor student behavior and social interaction skills
- Use adaptive technology in the classroom
- Communicate and collaborate with parents and other teachers
- Use art, music, fitness, and wellness in their special education programming
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Plan a culturally responsive special-education program

- Use adaptive and assistive technologies
- Collaborate with families and other stakeholders

Faculty

In the challenging field of special education, experience is the greatest teacher. Our special education faculty members have all worked in special education classrooms, providing them with researched-based approaches and practices. Their experience enables them to act as mentors and career coaches, offering specific guidance and problem-solving advice to teacher education students.

In addition to their practical experience, professors bring years of academic study, research, and scholarship into the classroom.

Research and Experience

Real-word experience for the Special Education major occurs in three phases; early field experience (EFE) during the sophomore year; a practicum for method course in the junior year; and a full semester of student teaching in the senior year.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in research on subjects such as behavior change and response to intervention (RTI), and to present their findings at the annual University-wide Honors Day presentation event.

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