

**Master of Arts in Education/Teacher Leader – Special Education: Learning and Behavior Disorders  
(Advanced Preparation)**



This program is designed to develop Teacher Leaders who can positively impact student learning in their classrooms and schools while serving students with Learning and Behavior Disorders. The School of Teacher Education, through the Exceptional Education program area, offers courses and experiences for initial preparation of Exceptional Education teachers and for those seeking advanced preparation. Advanced preparation programs include Professional Learning Communities in which students interact with other graduate students from various content areas and grade levels to discuss and work on real world challenges and promising practices they encounter in schools.

There are two concentrations for advanced preparation:

- Advanced Preparation in LBD for those with prior teacher certification in any teacher certification area.

Within each concentration, the student is expected to become competent in theory, research, and application of best teaching practices related to exceptional students with Learning and Behavior Disorders and to exhibit appropriate teacher disposition behaviors as indicated by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences Teacher Disposition Rating Form. Students in both concentrations will complete a professional education component and a specialization component based upon their certification status, educational background, and career goals.

**Admission Requirements**

*Criteria vary, depending on the student's undergraduate institution and GPA*

**WKU Graduate: automatic admission**

No qualifying GAP\*\* score is required for applicants with WKU baccalaureate degrees in Special Education as long as they have or are eligible for a teaching certificate in any area. A copy of the certificate or statement of eligibility must be submitted with the application.\*

**Graduate of a Kentucky higher education institution other than WKU**

Applicants with undergraduate degrees from Kentucky higher education accredited universities must have a 2.75 GPA or higher for all previous coursework (undergraduate and graduate) or qualifying GRE/GAP\*\* scores and must have or be eligible for a teaching certificate in any area of education. A copy of the certificate or statement of eligibility must be submitted with the application.\*

**Graduate of an out-of-state institution of higher education**

Applicants with undergraduate degrees from all other accredited universities with a GPA lower than 2.75 (undergraduate and graduate) must achieve a GAP score of 550 or higher. The 550 score must include a GRE Verbal Reasoning score of 139 or higher, a GRE Quantitative score of 139 or higher, and a GRE Analytical Writing score of 3.5 or higher.\*\* In addition, applicants must have a valid teaching certificate in any area. A copy of the teaching certificate must be submitted with the application.

\*Kentucky applicants whose certificates have expired may be admitted, but they may enroll for only six hours before they must apply to the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board for re-issued certificates. After completion of six hours, a student admitted with an expired certificate must submit a copy of the re-issued certificate before being allowed to register for any additional courses. Applicants from out-of-state with expired certificates must complete the requirements for their respective states to renew their certificates and submit a copy of the reissued certificate.

\*\*Qualifying GAP Score:  $\text{GAP Score} = [(\text{GRE V} + \text{GRE Q}) + (\text{GPA} * 100)]$  of 550 or higher, and a GRE Analytical Writing Score of 3.5 or higher. For GRE scores prior to August 1, 2011, a GAP score (GRE multiplied by the undergraduate GPA) of 2200 or higher and a GRE Analytical Writing score of 3.5 or higher

**Program Requirements for Advanced Preparation Special Education**

The program is divided into two instructional components: (a) **Professional Education**, which provides advanced level pedagogy, leadership, and content related to Kentucky Teacher Standards and applicable to all P-12 teachers working in a wide gamut of developmental levels and content areas; and (b) **Specialization**, which directs the student into an individual program in content, pedagogy, and/or areas of professional growth consistent with the goals of each candidate.

**Professional Education Component: 9-16 hours**

**TCHL 500, TCHL 530, and TCHL 560 are required for all students in this program**

\_\_\_ **TCHL 500** – Foundations of Teacher Leadership (3 hours)

*TCHL 500 is a required course and is a prerequisite to all other courses. There is no proficiency evaluation that can be substituted for this course. In TCHL 500 students will complete an assessment process that will be used in determining which TCHL core courses they must take. While enrolled in TCHL 500, students will use several documents, including their KTIP assessments or in-kind examples, dispositions self-surveys, referrals from school personnel, and their respective School Improvement Plan, to develop with their respective program advisors individualized programs of study of 30-31 hours related to Kentucky Teacher Standards and professional goals. Each student's program of study will include some or all of the TCHL courses, plus additional education-related or content courses. With the assistance of an assigned program advisor, TCHL 500 students will complete an official Form C and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies.*

\_\_\_ **TCHL 530** – Curriculum Development (3 hours)

\_\_\_ **TCHL 560** – Action Research Capstone for Teacher Leaders (3 hours)

*TCHL 530 and 560 are required for all students, and there are no proficiency evaluations that may be substituted for these courses.*

\_\_\_ **TCHL 545** – Classroom Instructional Strategies (3 hours)

\_\_\_ **TCHL 555** School and Classroom Assessment (3 hours)

\_\_\_ **TCHL 559** Action Research Design (1 hour)

*TCHL 545, 555, and 559 are required for all students OR the student must pass proficiency evaluations for these*

*Courses. More information about taking the proficiency evaluations may be found at the following link:  
[http://www.wku.edu/ste/programs/graduate/mae\\_tchldr\\_prof\\_evals.php](http://www.wku.edu/ste/programs/graduate/mae_tchldr_prof_evals.php)*

#### **Mid-Point Assessment Requirements**

To ensure that all students are proficient on Advanced Level Kentucky Teacher Standards, all Critical Performances associated with the TCHL courses must be completed, even if a candidate's program of studies does not include the courses. Except for TCHL 560, which should be taken toward the end of their program, students may complete no more than 6 hours in their specialization component before they have taken all TCHL courses and/or uploaded all Critical Performances and have achieved an average score of 3.0 on all performances and an average score of 3 on dispositions. Additional coursework may be required based on the assessment results.

#### **Specialization Component—21-24 hours**

| <b>Learning and Behavior Disorders Required Courses – Students are encouraged to take no more than 6 hours of specialization component before completing all TCHL requirements</b> |                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>SPED 518 – Issues in Behavior Management (3 hours)</b>                                                                                                                          | <b>SPED 530 - Advanced Assessment Techniques (3 hours)</b>                               | <b>SPED 531 - Advanced Prescriptive Teaching (3 hours) Note: Students must have been admitted to the Professional Education Unit (Teacher Admissions) prior to enrolling in this course.</b> |
| <b>SPED 532 - Families, Professionals, and Exceptionalities (3 hours)</b>                                                                                                          | <b>SPED 533 – Seminar: Curriculum in LBD (3 hours)</b>                                   | <b>SPED 630 - Special Education Law (3 hours)</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>SPED 590 - Internship in Special Education (3 hours) Note: Students must have a passing score on the Praxis II for LBD certification prior to enrolling in this course.</b>     | <b>*SPED 516 – Exceptional Child: Perspectives and Issues (3 hours) (SEE NOTE BELOW)</b> | <b>TOTAL SPECIALIZATION COMPONENT CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED: 21 – 24 HOURS</b>                                                                                                                   |

**\*NOTE: DEFICIENCY REQUIREMENT- STUDENTS WHO ENTER THE PROGRAM WITHOUT HAVING COMPLETED A PREVIOUS INTRODUCTORY EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION (SPECIAL EDUCATION) COURSE, MUST TAKE SPED 516 – EXCEPTIONAL CHILD: PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES – THIS WILL ADD AN ADDITIONAL 3 HOURS TO THE REQUIRED 37 HOUR PROGRAM.**

**OPTIONAL ELECTIVE: STUDENTS MAY TAKE SPED 534 – SEMINAR: RESEARCH IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ON THE SUGGESTION OF ADVISOR IF IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR FUTURE EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER GOALS – THIS WILL ADD AN ADDITIONAL 3 HOURS TO THE REQUIRED 37 HOUR PROGRAM.**

#### **Program Completion Requirements**

Students must successfully complete **TCHL 560 – Action Research Capstone for Teacher Leaders** (with a course grade of C or higher) and present research results in an approved venue.

Students must achieve a minimum 3.0 GPA overall and in program course work.

**Total Program Hours: 37-43**

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