Special Education

at Benedictine University

Why study special education at Benedictine?

Candidates seeking a teaching career must have a sincere desire to teach, show intellectual promise and display personal, professional and academic characteristics indicative of competent teachers.

The School of Education's major goal, according to its conceptual framework, is to create effective practitioners who are committed to scholarship, lifelong inquiry, leadership and social responsibility. These enduring outcomes are developed and nurtured through the curriculum. Educators develop scholarship by acquiring a breadth and depth of knowledge in the field. As scholars, they develop lifelong inquiry by immersing themselves in a process of on-going questioning and reflection that results in informed thinking and decision making. They assume leadership roles in a variety of venues where they can affect change and improve practice. Their leadership is guided by a sense of social responsibility to create fair and equitable environments that support and enhance learning in order to maximize each individual's potential.

What are the advantages of studying special education at Benedictine?

- Personal attention and guidance provided by skilled academic advisors.
- The career flexibility made possible by a liberal arts degree.
- The opportunity to gain experience through off-campus preclinicals and a 16-week student teaching experience under the guidance of certified professionals.
- Integration of technology into coursework.
- Quality instruction from experienced faculty who have worked extensively in both private and public schools.
- Exposure to theoretical and practical aspects of teaching at the elementary, middle and secondary levels.
- Advantage of job placement aid through the Office of Career Development.
- Licensure as a Learning Behavior Specialist I.

How does the program work?

As a Special Education major, the student receives a liberal education through courses in mathematics, natural sciences, fine arts, English and social science. Professional preparation includes courses in history and philosophy of education, educational psychology, methods of reading and language arts, and technology for education. Students learn to develop lesson plans, prepare instructional materials, and teach within small and large group settings. In addition, students complete coursework in special education and related disciplines, including courses in learners of diverse abilities, characteristics and methods of children with learning disabilities, emotional disorders, and physical and mental disabilities, as well as classroom management, working with families of children with disabilities and psychological assessment. Benedictine University is committed to developing dedicated, competent, and educated teachers, who are well versed in the principles and skills for successful teaching. Students also receive a solid foundation in methodologies through the following experiences:

- Preclinicals: experiences that involve observing and teaching under a professional teacher in an off-campus classroom setting.
- Micro-teaching: the opportunity to participate in and evaluate various teaching activities.
- Student Teaching: a full semester of teaching under professional guidance.

As candidates progress through their program, they will develop an understanding of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and the Content-Area Standards for Educators. In addition to successful completion of their coursework, they will also develop a professional portfolio that demonstrates their growth in teaching and service to education as well as their understanding of the Illinois standards. Their preparedness to teach will also be demonstrated through passage of the Test of Academic Performance, Content-Area Test, General Curriculum Test and Assessment of Professional Teaching Test.

What careers are available with a degree in Special Education?

The Special Education program at Benedictine University offers the student an opportunity to earn licensure as a Learning Behavior Specialist I (LBS I). Coursework in the major is organized in a manner that entitles certification in a variety of special education settings.

Recommended Program

Bachelor of Arts in Special Education

A grade of "C" or better is required in all coursework necessary for certification.

Benedictine University recently reformed its undergraduate curriculum and implementation begins in Fall 2014. This recommended program of study is an example only and subject to change.

FRESHMAN***

Writing Colloquium	3
Mathematics for Elementary Teachers	4
Elective**	3
American Government	3
Religious Studies Core elective**	3
	16

Research Writing	3
Speech Communication	3
History and Philosophy of Education/ Preclinical Experience*	4
Technology for Teachers	3
Survey of Exceptional Children	3
	16

JUNIOR

Learning Behavior Characteristics of Individuals with Emotional Disorders	3
American History	3
Reading and Language Arts	3
Science Core elective	3
Contemporary World (HUMN 250)	3
	15

Learning Behavior Methods of Teaching Individuals with Emotional Disorders*	3
Assessment and Diagnosis	3
Fine Arts/Music Core elective**	3
Diagnostic and Corrective Reading*	3
Wellness	2
Science Core elective	3
	17

SOPHOMORE

Learning Behavior Characteristics of Individuals with Physical Disabilities and Mental Retardation	3
Classroom Management*	3
Cultural Heritage (HUMN 220, 230 or 240)	3
Learning Behavior Characteristics of Individuals with Learning Disabilities	3
Science Core elective and Lab	3
	15

Introduction to Education Seminar	0
Educational Psychology	3
Learning Behavior Methods of Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities and Mental Retardation*	4
Cultural Heritage (HUMN 220, 230 or 240)	3
Learning Behavior Methods of Teaching Individuals with Learning Disabilities*	3
Working with Families of Children with Disabilities	3
	16

SENIOR

Elective**	3
Philosophy Core elective	3
Economics	3
Professional elective	3
English/Literature Core elective**	3
	15

Student Teaching, Elementary Special Education	6
Student Teaching, Secondary Special Education	6
	12

Completion of degree requirements is a minimum of 120 semester hours.

**Courses have 20- or 35-hour preclinical experience.*

***One course should be selected to satisfy a Multicultural/Non-Western culture requirement.*

****Programs in education require successful completion of state licensure exams. The Test of Academic Performance (TAP) must be successfully passed prior to admission into the Teacher Education Program. This exam can be taken during the freshman year.*

A cumulative GPA of 2.75 and a 3.0 GPA in the major are required for teacher education programs.

Changes in state licensure requirements must be met at the time they go into effect. This could change the program requirements. See your academic advisor with questions.