Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide an overview of the MAEd Special Education program and how to navigate through a course of study in one of the four areas of SPED.

While the MAEd Special Education program strives to make the information in this handbook as timely and accurate as possible, the program/department makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in the contents. This handbook is not a contract between the University and students. The University reserves the right to make changes to the content of this handbook without notice to students. Information should be confirmed with the current ECU Graduate Catalog and website.

Mission Statement

The mission of the College of Education is the preparation of professional educators and allied practitioners, including professionals in business information systems, counseling, electronic media, and librarianship. Significant to this mission is a strong commitment to three important related areas, all of which are realized through partnerships and other endeavors. These three areas are:

1. the encouragement and nurturing of professional growth for educators and allied practitioners at all levels and in all areas of the educational endeavor;
2. a continuing emphasis on and support for scholarship and research/creative activity;
3. and service in all areas of professional education.

Critical to such commitment is the promotion of effective teaching; staff participation in the improvement of schools; and, in concert with other state agencies, the development and creation of educational policy for North Carolina.
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Welcome to the Department of Special Education, Foundations, and Research

The Department of Special Education, Foundations, and Research (SEFR) is a unique blend of three areas. SEFR includes a variety of courses providing a base for understanding the field of special education, meeting the needs of diverse learners and students with disabilities, and investigating educational research and practice.

The Special Education program offers several options for teacher licensure and professional development. Initial licensure pathways offered include Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees in either General Curriculum (GC) or Adapted Curriculum (AC), Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT; SPED GC) degree, and alternative licensure. The Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) – Special Education degree is offered in the areas of Behavioral Emotional Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, and Low Incidence Disabilities. Four Graduate Certificate programs in the areas of Assistive Technology, Autism, Behavior Specialist, and Deaf-blindness are also available.

The Foundations area, while housed in SEFR, serves across the College of Education and provides core courses essential to preparing educators for the diverse and changing student population in today’s schools. The structures on which education is built are coupled with an emphasis on learning diversity, cultural diversity, and global diversity.

The Research area also serves across the College of Education. Faculty in this area provide instruction in research methodology. They also assist faculty and students across the College in various research endeavors including theses, dissertations, scholarly investigation, and grant work.

Accreditation

All Special Education undergraduate and graduate degrees have earned national accreditation from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The College of Education is nationally accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and East Carolina University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
Faculty

Department Leadership

Dr. Guili Zhang, Professor, Interim Department Chair
Dr. Sandra Warren, Professor, Associate Department Chair and Graduate SEFR Programs Coordinator

Graduate Faculty in Special Education

Dr. Dan Boudah, Professor
Dr. Chan Evans, Associate Professor
Dr. Melissa Hudson, Assistant Professor
Dr. Laura King, Associate Professor
Dr. Linda Patriarca, Professor
Dr. Christopher Rivera, Assistant Professor
Dr. Debbie Rollins, Teaching Assistant Professor
Dr. Lora Lee Smith Canter, Associate Professor
Dr. Marsha Tripp, Teaching Assistant Professor
Dr. Karen Voytecki, Associate Professor
Dr. Sandra Warren, Professor
Dr. Stacy Weiss, Assistant Professor
Dr. Jennifer Williams, Associate Professor
Dr. Alana Zambone, Associate Professor

Additional information about faculty, including their research interests and curriculum vitae, may be found at: http://coeweb.ecu.edu/Directory/sefr/

Graduate Catalog

The ECU Graduate Catalog is the official document describing program requirements and university regulations. You can access the current Graduate Catalog online at http://catalog.ecu.edu/index.php?catoid=11.

The ECU Graduate Catalog includes information on the MAEd SPED program and the graduate certificates in Assistive Technology, Autism, Behavior Specialist, and Deaf-blindness.
**Academic Integrity**

The Department of Special Education, Foundations, and Research will not tolerate violations of academic integrity, and violations will be pursued to the fullest extent. East Carolina University has a clearly stated policy on academic integrity for distance education (DE) students (http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/DEOrientation/honorcode.cfm). SPED faculty support it and expect all graduate candidates to follow it explicitly.

In addition, the ECU Graduate Catalog has a clearly stated policy as well, at http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=841&hl=%22Integrity%22&returnto=search#Academic_Integrity. The text is provided verbatim below:

Academic integrity is expected of every East Carolina University student. Academically violating the Honor Code consists of the following: cheating - the giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work; plagiarism - copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting those as one’s original work; falsification - statement of untruth, either verbal or written, regarding any circumstances relating to academic work; and attempting any act which if completed would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined above. No student may drop the involved course or withdraw from school prior to resolving an academic integrity charge. Procedures governing academic integrity violations are described in the *East Carolina University Student Handbook*. Students are encouraged to speak with their professors or contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities if they have questions regarding this policy.
Applying to the MAEd SPED Program: Requirements and Process

The MAEd in Special Education is a graduate degree leading to an advanced North Carolina special education license. In addition to meeting ECU Graduate School eligibility requirements, applicants must also hold, or be eligible to hold, a North Carolina initial special education teaching license.

Application Options

Degree-seeking Applicant
- The majority of MAEd SPED applicants apply through the degree-seeking route. This application process includes submission of official transcripts, three letters of reference, test scores from either the Miller Analogy Test or Graduate Record Exam, completion of the online application form, and payment of the application fee.

Degree-seeking Professional Track
- A select number of applicants with extensive professional experience in the field may apply via the Professional Track option. Potentially eligible applicants should contact the MAEd SPED Graduate Program Director to discuss eligibility and application process. Applicants deemed eligible for this route are exempt from the graduate exam requirement (i.e., Miller Analogy Test or Graduate Record Exam).

Non-degree-seeking Applicant
- Individuals may begin taking select MAEd SPED courses prior to applying and receiving acceptance to the program. Up to 9 semester hours taken in this status may apply toward the degree. Successful completion of SPED courses does not automatically result in admission as a degree-seeking student. All requirements for application must be completed in order to be considered for acceptance in the program.

Non-licensure Waiver Form
If you do not hold a North Carolina special education teaching license at the time of application, you will need to complete a Non-licensure Waiver Form.

Financial Support
ECU’s Office of Financial Aid provides education, guidance, and support to individuals and families in the financial aid process. Candidates must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA; https://fafsa.ed.gov/) by Valentine’s Day each year in order to be eligible for university financial aid.
The College of Education offers more than 50 scholarships ranging from $250 to $6000. Scholarship applications are accepted each January for the following academic year.

**Getting Started in the ECU System**

**Activating your ECU Pirate ID**
Look for your ECU Pirate ID and your ECU ID (i.e., Banner) in your acceptance letter. You will use your Pirate ID to access your ECU Email, ECU OneStop, Blackboard, and other course management systems. Visit the ITCS web site to activate your Pirate ID.

The Pirate ID includes your last name, first initial (or additional letters of your first name), and the year you are admitted to ECU. For example: Last name: Doe First initial(s):ja for James (or additional letters of the first name) year entered ECU:2010 (year first admitted) pirate id: doeja10

http://www.ecu.edu/cs-itcs/ithelpdesk/pirateid.cfm (Click on Pirate ID)

**Finding your Banner ID**
ECU uses the Banner ID system for all faculty, staff, and students to replace the use of Social Security numbers. This system was developed to better protect your identity and confidential information and to comply with the Identity Theft Protection Act.

Upon admission to the university, all students are assigned a unique ECU ID or Banner ID, that identifies you as an ECU student. All ECU IDs begin with the letter B followed by 8 digits. Example: B01234567

Your ECU Banner ID will be in your acceptance letter. Keep it handy at all times throughout your graduate studies.

**ECU Piratemail e-mail address**
Your ECU Piratemail e-mail account is your official channel of communication when contacting the university. Use this account when e-mailing anyone at ECU.

Example of ECU Email account: doej10@students.ecu.edu
To access your Piratemail account via the Web, go to https://mymail.ecu.edu/ and enter your Pirate ID and Passphrase.
You can verify your email account at the following link: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/email_phone.cfm (enter last & first name and select Students Only to access your information).
For an e-mail tutorial: [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/orientation/upload/TextPiratemail10.pdf](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/orientation/upload/TextPiratemail10.pdf)

For additional information see the tutorials on the DE Orientation page: [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/getting-started.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/getting-started.cfm) (Click on ECU E-mail)

**Distance Education Identification**
Distance Education (DE) students must request a [DE student identification card](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/orientation/upload/TextPiratemail10.pdf) during their first semester in the program. Inappropriate use of identification cards will be considered a violation of the ECU Student Conduct Code.

**Orientation**
New MAEd SPED candidates are encouraged to participate in the Graduate School orientation which is offered on-campus and online through Blackboard. Additional orientation information and resources are available in the [ECU Graduate School Orientation Magazine](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/options/orientation/upload/TextPiratemail10.pdf).

### Beginning Your Program

**Plan of Study**
The following plan of study is offered for all MAEd SPED candidates. While most candidates take two courses per semester and summer session, it is possible to increase or decrease the course load to meet personal needs. Since courses are typically only taught once a year and must be taken in a particular sequence, any deviations from this schedule must be approved by your advisor.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Summer Start</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
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<td>Summer 2</td>
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<td>Summer 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Elective</td>
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Advising
Each MAEd SPED candidate is assigned an advisor and this person’s name will be in Banner and visible in Degree Works.

The SEFR Graduate Programs Coordinator will serve as your advisor and will assist you with clarifying your academic goals and deciding on the appropriate courses for which to register. Your advisor (and administrative colleagues) will register you for your courses – however it is your responsibility to monitor your schedule to ensure you are registered for (and taking) the courses needed for your program completion.

Remember most courses are only offered once a year, therefore taking a course out of sequence could delay your completion. Please note that if you deviate from this plan at all without first discussing this with your advisor, there is no way to guarantee that you will still be on track to graduate on time. Contact your advisor before making any changes to your plan.

Please download a copy of each semester’s University Academic Calendar from the ECU website and note all important dates, including the date by which tuition must be paid so your class schedule is not canceled.

Registration
You will be registered by your advisor and department staff. It is your responsibility to review the registration and confirm accuracy of the registration.

Paying Tuition
Tuition payments for distance education courses can be made online through ECU’s PiratePort via a secure connection, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Click on the Tools tab and then click on the Tuition Statements and Payments Option in the box labeled Courses.

Candidates who are awarded financial aid, can have available funds moved to the Dowdy Student Store for purchase of textbooks prior to the term. This process can be completed by contacting Continuing Studies via email ocs@ecu.edu.

To avoid having class schedules canceled, consult the University Calendar for payment deadlines.

For information about tuition refunds see the Tuition Refund Policy page.

Textbooks
Enter OneStop to access your textbook listing for each semester. Then click on the Tools heading. Under Courses you will see Textbook Listing. Click on this link to find a listing of textbooks needed for classes noted on your registration schedule.
Student Services

**Student Counseling Services**
ECU has several locations for personal counseling services for students.
http://www.ecu.edu/counselingcenter/

**ECU Writing Center**
ECU has several writing centers to assist candidates in refining writing skills. MAEd SPED candidates are encouraged to take advantage of the Online Writing Lab.
http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/writing/uwc/OWL.cfm

**Information Technology & Computing Services (ITCS)**
The ITCS department houses the help desk for all technology including ECU email, passphrases, difficulties with online technologies, and personal laptops (if in Greenville). Much of their assistance can be done online or remotely.
http://www.ecu.edu/itcs/

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**Progressing through Your Graduate Studies**

**Retention and Probation**
The MAEd SPED program follows the Graduate School regulations for most academic issues including retention in the program and probation.

**Grade Requirements for Continuance in MAEd SPED Program**

In order to remain in good academic standing, MAEd SPED candidates must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 once they have a total of 9 credit hours attempted.

MAEd SPED candidates who fail to remain in good academic standing in accordance with the paragraph above, will be automatically placed on academic probation by the Graduate School, during which time they will have an opportunity to correct their academic deficiencies. The probationary period will last for the term(s) in which the next nine credit hours are attempted. Enrollment in the Graduate School will be automatically terminated for candidates who fail to correct their academic deficiencies by the end of the probationary period. MAEd SPED candidates will not be allowed to take classes and are subject to immediate dismissal once it becomes mathematically impossible to achieve an overall cumulative GPA of 3.00 by the end of the remaining probationary period.

**Grade Disputes, Appeals, and Readmission**
The Graduate School maintains a final course grade appeal policy which candidates can utilize in very specific situations.
The MAEd SPED program follows the Graduate School’s procedures for readmission and appeals.

**Graduate Evidences Electronic Portfolio**

Since Fall 2011, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has required that candidates for advanced teacher licensure create and submit a portfolio containing evidence of their competency as defined by the NC Professional Teacher Standards. This portfolio must be available in an electronic (digital) format. Graduate candidates enrolled in the MAEd SPED program leading to advanced teacher licensure are required to use TaskStream to create and maintain this portfolio (see how to use TaskStream below). Candidates in ADED 6550, ELEM 6550, LEED 6000, and EDUC 6001 are also required to submit electronic evidences to TaskStream.

The required Graduate Evidences are:
- GE1 – Teacher Leadership (ADED 6550, ELEM 6550, or LEED 6000)
- GE2 – Diversity (EDUC 6001)
- GE3 – Action Research Project (SPED 6994/7002)
- GE4 – MAEd SPED Electronic Portfolio (SPED 6011/6994/7002)

**MAEd SPED Electronic Portfolio**

All MAEd SPED candidates will complete an Electronic Portfolio based in TaskStream that contains assignments from designated courses.

**Getting Started with TaskStream**

Taskstream is a subscription-based application that is accessible via the Internet. You will need to have an active TaskStream account when you are enrolled in any course with a required evidence submission. There is no fee for your subscription.

TaskStream is user-friendly and most students are able to access it without formal training. See the [TaskStream User Support page](#) for assistance with it. On this site you will find information on how to create your account, enroll in your program, submit work, and other student tasks.

All candidates taking courses with a required TaskStream assignment are eligible for a prepaid TaskStream subscription. In order to “pay” for your subscription, you will need to request the current key code from your course instructor or the [COE Help Desk](#). Key codes are valid for one year, August 1 – July 31. A new code is issued each year.
Your account is password protected. Only you, your instructors, and COE administrators will have access to your account. Portfolios are stored on TaskStream servers. It is important to remember your username and password for TaskStream since it is not part of the ECU computer system.

**TaskStream Subscription Expiration**

When your subscription expires, your account will be placed into inactive status. Your work will remain as is, but you will not be able to access your portfolio. Your account will remain inactive for up to one year. Contact TaskStream directly if you need a longer inactive period. You will need the current key code in order to renew your account.

**More Help with TaskStream**

If you have difficulty using TaskStream, first check the [TaskStream User Support page](#). If you are unable to find a solution, submit a request for help on the [COE Help Desk](#) website.

**Internship**

Throughout the MAEd SPED program, candidates are required to work with learners with disabilities in their specific licensure program area (i.e., emotional/behavioral disabilities, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, low-incidence disabilities).

A supervised internship is embedded in the instructional strategies course included in each licensure area (SPED 6021/6022/6023/6031). Typically this internship can be completed in your daily instructional/professional setting. However, if this is not possible, arrangements can be made (in conjunction with the College of Education Office of Clinical Experiences) for a placement.

**Capstone Research**

All MAEd candidates will complete a two-semester capstone research experience. Most will meet this requirement through the “problem of practice” Action Research option (SPED 6994/7002) while others may opt for the more traditional Thesis research option (SPED 6994/7000). Both result in an extensive written paper and presentation. You are encouraged to discuss options with your advisor to explore which option is best for you.
Graduating with your MAEd SPED Degree & Advanced SPED License

Degree Works
It is your responsibility to ensure that Degree Works lists the appropriate department, degree program, and any concentrations. Missing information must be corrected at least one semester prior to graduation.

Applying for Graduation
You will apply to graduate through Banner Self Service one semester prior to the semester of graduation. Log into OneStop and click on Banner Self Service. Click on Student and then Student Records. Click on Apply to Graduate and select your term. The first date you select is not the actual graduation term, but the curriculum term for the graduation application (current term). After you select the term you are currently in, then you will be prompted to enter the term in which you will be graduating. Graduation takes place in spring and fall semesters only. If graduation is anticipated at the end of summer session, application must take place at the beginning of spring semester immediately preceding this final summer session.

You must be enrolled in at least one course during the semester in which you plan to graduate.

Records Retention & Destruction Standard Operating Procedure
The Department of of Special Education, Foundations, and Research (SEFR) complies with the General Standards of the state of North Carolina regarding the retention of student academic and clinical records. Specific information for students is described below to ensure all students are aware of the procedures for future record keeping of their academic credentials.

1. The General Standards of NC indicate that student academic files may be destroyed 5 years after the student graduates. It is the practice of SEFR Department to destroy academic records 5 years after a student graduates.

2. Students are advised that the SEFR Department will not have copies of evaluation forms, GRE scores, PRAXIS (or other licensure exam) scores, or any other academic documentation 5 years after the date of graduation. Students are able to obtain copies of PRAXIS and GRE scores from the ETS organization (www.ets.org) according to their records retention policy. Students should request copies of their scores when these tests are taken and retain a personal copy for future use. SEFR Department will not make copies of these test forms to disperse to students.
3. All paper records will be destroyed per the university’s policy for shredding documents. This includes contracting a university-approved document destruction service annually to shred records.

4. A log of all records destroyed will be maintained by the Department Chair and/or his/her designee. This log will include general information about groups of students. No student names or identification numbers will be kept in this log.

5. Students will be able to obtain their transcript through the University Registrar at any time per the rules and regulations of the University Registrar.

**Remaining an ECU Pirate!!!**

Join the ECU Alumni Association and stay connected to ECU! Be informed and involved in alumni activities and events. Check out the blog, East magazine, ECUPDate, annual report, and photos.

Please consider contributing to the College of Education to support scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. In August 2016 we were fortunate to award over $500,000 of scholarships to COE students! Every contribution is greatly appreciated!
### Quick Check Resources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COE Help Desk</td>
<td><a href="http://coehelp.ecu.edu/helpdesk/WebObjects/Helpdesk.woa">http://coehelp.ecu.edu/helpdesk/WebObjects/Helpdesk.woa</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Catalog</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificates in SPED</td>
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</tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/sefr/sped/graduate.cfm">http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/sefr/sped/graduate.cfm</a></td>
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<td>Pirate Port</td>
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### Additional Resources

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<th>Information Regarding</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<tr>
<td>Appealing a Grade</td>
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<td>Appealing of All Decisions (except appeal of grade)</td>
<td><a href="http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=3&amp;navoid=185#Graduate_School_Appeals_Procedur">http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=3&amp;navoid=185#Graduate_School_Appeals_Procedur</a> e</td>
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<td>Privacy of Student Educational Records</td>
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<td>Refund Policy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/options/refund-policy.cfm">http://www.ecu.edu/options/refund-policy.cfm</a></td>
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<td>Office for Equity and Diversity</td>
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<td>Notice of Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy</td>
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<td>Sexual Harassment Prevention Plan, Policy, Grievance Procedure</td>
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<td>Regulation of Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment</td>
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