SPECIAL EDUCATION, MS

Department of Special Education, College of Education

Vision Statement
The mission of the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders is to prepare dedicated practitioners, reflective scholars, and responsible citizens who are unique in their ability to facilitate, design, implement, and evaluate programs for individuals with disabilities. This is accomplished by creating opportunities for the acquisition and maintenance of knowledge, skills, and dispositions as prescribed by the Council for Exceptional Children, the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (for graduate program only), and state and federal regulations.

Graduate candidates follow a course of study with accompanying practical experiences that are grounded in learned society theory, research, evidence-based practice, and experience. Our candidates develop essential interpersonal skills that make them valued members of collaborative, interdisciplinary teams in a variety of settings. Thus, each program of study is designed to promote problem-solving skills that enable candidates to continue to broaden their skills and enhance their expertise throughout their professional career. These skills facilitate the recognition and integration of professional ethics with the individual needs and values of the communities they serve.

Program Contact Information
Shari DeVeney, PhD, Graduate Program Chair (GPC)
512 Roskens Hall (RH)
402.554.2993
sdevaney@unomaha.edu

Program Website (http://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-education/special-education-communication-disorders/graduate/special-education.php)

Other Program-Related Information
Candidates seeking a master’s degree in special education must meet the criteria for admission to the Graduate College and the department. Graduate-level hours taken as a non-degree student may be subsequently considered for admission.

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Unclassified Students
Students who are not planning to pursue a program leading to a graduate certificate or a master’s degree may enroll in a practicum course. Candidates completing the degree program meet the academic requirements for PK-6, K-6 or 7-12 endorsement by the Nebraska Department of Education. Candidates may complete practicum experiences at both the K-6 and 7-12 levels. One of these practicum experiences may be completed in the candidate’s classroom. The other must be completed outside the candidate’s classroom.

Program Website
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Program-Specific Requirements
- Two Letters of Recommendation
- Personal and Professional Fitness Form
- Copy of teaching certificate
- Praxis II Contest Test Information

All candidates seeking an endorsement in special education (Special Education Generalist or 33-hour Behavior Intervention Specialist) for the first time, are required to receive a passing score on the Praxis II content test in each endorsement area of their preparation prior to the endorsement being recommended.

This link (http://www.ets.org/praxis/ne/requirements/) will take you to the ETS website page for the Nebraska Department of Education requirements, which lists the Nebraska requirements for each endorsement area.

Admissions
Application Deadlines (Spring 2021, Summer 2021, and Fall 2021)
- Fall: July 1
- Spring: November 1
- Summer: April 1

Program-Specific Requirements
- Two Letters of Recommendation
- Personal and Professional Fitness Form
- Copy of teaching certificate
- Praxis II Contest Test Information

Degree Requirements

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Education Generalist</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior Intervention Specialist Concentration</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applied Behavior Analysis Concentration</td>
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Exit Requirements
Once course work is completed candidates must successfully pass a comprehensive examination or write a thesis to receive a Master of Science degree.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 8990</td>
<td>THESIS</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>
All candidates should carefully review the Graduate College requirements for forming the Supervisory Committee, Thesis/Thesis Equivalent Proposal Approval Forms and final approval and submission of the thesis.

All candidates must complete 6 credit hours in SPED 8990 in order to receive a Master’s of Science degree in special education.

**Graduate-Level Practicums**

All candidates must obtain the permission of their academic advisor prior to applying for and registering for practicums. All candidates who are adding an endorsement must complete one (or more) practicum experience(s) as part of their preparation. At least one of these experiences must be an all-day, 16-week experience in the endorsement area. **Applications will not be considered unless all materials are submitted by September 15 for Spring practicum and February 1 for all Fall practicum.**

The department will issue a permit that allows the candidate to enroll in the appropriate practicum course. It is the candidate’s responsibility to apply for the proper course. Professional seminars are required as part of the experience and attendance is mandatory.

Candidates may be removed from their placement at the request of the candidate, department, or school district/community agency.

**Concentrations**

**Applied Behavior Analysis Concentration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 8030</td>
<td>TEACHING STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 4800/8806</td>
<td>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH</td>
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**Core Courses**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED 8120</td>
<td>HIGH INCIDENCE DISABILITIES</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8156</td>
<td>READING AND WRITING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8810</td>
<td>RESEARCH METHODS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>or PSYC 9100</td>
<td>CHARACTERISTICS OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8820</td>
<td>INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8850</td>
<td>INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8870</td>
<td>AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS: BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS</td>
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<td>SPED 8910</td>
<td>ASSESSMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8980</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 8576</td>
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<td>PROSEMINAR LEARNING</td>
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<td>PSYC 9570</td>
<td>APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 8550</td>
<td>PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 8700</td>
<td>ETHICS AND LAW FOR PSYCHOLOGY AND APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS</td>
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**Total Credits** 39

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**Behavior Intervention Specialist Concentration**

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<tr>
<td>Prerequisites</td>
<td>All candidates must have completed the following prerequisite courses or an equivalent.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an undergraduate reading methods course</td>
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<td></td>
<td>an undergraduate math methods course</td>
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<td>SPED 8860</td>
<td>BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION</td>
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<td>AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS: BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED/COUN 8016</td>
<td>MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS: RISK FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 8816</td>
<td>BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED/COUN 8656</td>
<td>TRANSITION PLANNING</td>
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**Total Credits** 36

1. PK-6 must take SPED 8816
2. 7-12 must take SPED 8656

**Generalist Concentration**

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**Total Credits** 39
A student can enroll only twice in each graduate course included on a plan of study. If the course is not successfully completed on the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program. An enrollment is defined as being enrolled in the course after the last day to withdraw via MavLINK and receive a 100% refund. The last day to withdraw will be stated in the current academic calendar. This course is designed to allow graduate candidates to pursue independent study of a topic under the direction and guidance of a faculty member. Topics studied and the nature of the learning activities is mutually agreed upon by the candidate and instructor. 

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Permission by the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

**SPED 8016 MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS: RISK FACTORS AND INTERVENTIONS (3 credits)**

This course explores the role that educators and school mental health professionals play in identifying the risk factors and warning signs of children and youth with mental health concerns. Students will understand the risk and protective factors at the individual, family, school, and community level as related to children and youth's mental health. The course will provide an overview of externalizing and internalizing disorders as well as school-based and community-based treatments and interventions. (Cross-listed with COUN 4010, COUN 8016, SPED 4010).

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Not open to non-degree graduate students.

**SPED 8030 TEACHING STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES (3 credits)**

This course is designed to describe the characteristics and learning styles of students with various exceptional learning needs. This course also is intended to provide candidates with a knowledge base for the foundation of special education including the basic procedural flow of referral, identification and instruction and strategies for modifying the learning environment and individualizing instruction.

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Graduate standing.

**SPED 8046 WORKSHOP IN SPECIAL EDUCATION OR SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY (1-6 credits)**

The purpose of this course is to provide workshops or special seminars in the area of special education and communication disorders. This course will prepare graduate candidates as dedicated practitioners, reflective scholars, and responsible citizens who can meet the challenges of their profession in a changing world. (Cross-listed with SPED 4040).

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Must have graduate status and permission.

**SPED 8100 RESEARCH PROJECTS (1-3 credits)**

The purpose of this course is to allow candidates to participate in research activities other than those related to the thesis. Specific course content and type of research will be dependent on the nature of the intended research and must be approved by the supervising advisor and Department Chair prior to registration.

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Graduate standing and admitted into a special education or speech-language pathology program of study.

**SPED 8120 HIGH INCIDENCE DISABILITIES (3 credits)**

This introductory course is designed to examine characteristics of learners with high incidence disabilities and the impact of those characteristics on learning. The focus will be on the manifestation of disabilities including learning disabilities, behavior disorders, mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, speech and language disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders, and autism spectrum disorders.

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Graduate Standing.

**SPED 8156 READING AND WRITING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3 credits)**

This course is designed to provide graduate candidates skills and strategies for instructing students with learning disabilities that struggle to acquire literacy skills. Emphasis is placed on diagnosis and assessment of specific reading and writing difficulties to determine effective instructional strategies. Instructional strategies will address modifications directed at reading and writing difficulties to determine effective instructional strategies. Specific course content and type of research will be dependent on the nature of the intended research and must be approved by the supervising advisor and Department Chair prior to registration.

**Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s):** Admission to the Master of Science degree program in special education or permission of the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.
SPED 8236 LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND DISORDERS FOR TEACHERS (3 credits)
This course is designed to introduce the candidate to the nature and structure of language, current theories of language, normal first and second language development, language disorders, multicultural issues in language assessment, and contemporary classroom management of language deficits. The topics will be examined from an educational perspective to enhance the teachers knowledge of language and to facilitate classroom management of language deficits exhibited by exceptional children in grades pre-K through 12. (Cross-listed with SPED 4230).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to Graduate College

SPED 8250 LITERACY ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (3 credits)
This course is designed to provide graduate candidates skills and strategies for instructing students with high incidence disabilities, including dyslexia, that struggle to acquire literacy skills. Emphasis is placed on diagnosis and assessment of specific reading and writing difficulties to determine effective instructional strategies. Instructional strategies will address modifications directed at teaching oral language, reading, writing, and spelling skills.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the Master of Science degree program in special education or permission of the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8300 READINGS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (1-3 credits)
Reading and discussion of current methodological developments, research, and innovations in special education.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in special education. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8646 METHODS AND MATERIALS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
This course is designed to describe the various instructional methods that have been used successfully in supporting students with disabilities in a variety of settings. This course is also intended to provide pre-service and in-service candidates with knowledge and evidence-based teaching strategies essential for modifying the learning environment and individualizing instruction for students with disabilities. In addition, teaching methods will focus on academic curriculum lesson planning, development of IEPs, selection of instructional methods and materials, and universal design for learning (UDL). (Cross-listed with SPED 4640).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission into a Special Education Master’s program and SPED 8120. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8656 TRANSITION PLANNING (3 credits)
Curriculum oriented for teachers and related professionals to work with the career development and transition of individuals with disabilities within a multicultural and global society. Includes information for elementary through adulthood with emphasis on transition from high school to community living. (Cross-listed with SPED 4650).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): SPED 1500. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8670 MATH INTERVENTIONS (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is to prepare graduate candidates to teach, co-teach or consult in the area of mathematics interventions. Graduate candidates will examine and apply the existing research in mathematics instruction for students with exceptional needs.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in Special Education. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8700 SEMINAR IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
The seminar in Special Education is designed to be one of the very last courses taken by a master’s degree candidate. Content covers a wide range of topics such as: 1) continuum of care; 2) educational and community service systems; 3) legislation; 4) family concerns; and 5) comparative special education. Each candidate develops a teaching module on one of the course topics, which is discussed and evaluated in class.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Graduate standing.

SPED 8716 INTERACTIONS AND COLLABORATION (3 credits)
This course is offered to investigate the building blocks of collaboration. Effective interpersonal communication and collaboration skills are presented as the foundation necessary to build relationships among school personnel, families and community members. (Cross-listed with SPED 4710).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to Graduate College

SPED 8720 GRADUATE PRACTICUM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
This graduate special education practicum course provides candidates with either inservice experience or placement in a school program for students with exceptionalities at an academic level commensurate with the candidate’s desired level of the special education generalist endorsement (K-6 or 7-12).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in the desired endorsement, completion of 30 hours of required course work, and permission. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8730 ADVANCED GRADUATE PRACTICUM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
This course provides candidates with a second semester of classroom experience teaching students with disabilities. This experience is for graduate candidates who are extending their endorsement. For students seeking an additional endorsement as a Special Education Generalist, this course would prepare them for endorsement in grades K-6 or 7-12. For students seeking an additional endorsement in Behavior Intervention Specialist, this course would prepare them for endorsement in grades PK-6 or 7-12.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in the desired endorsement and completion of SPED 8720, SPED 8830 or SPED 8840. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8805 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH (3 credits)
This course is designed to prepare teacher candidates and graduate candidates with the understanding of the psychological, biological and environmental factors that affect the social-emotional development of children and adolescents. Emphasis is placed on the interaction of these factors for children with exceptional learning needs and the implications for the learning environment. (Cross-listed with SPED 4800).

SPED 8810 RESEARCH METHODS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
This course is designed to provide an examination of the theoretical approaches to conducting educational research, research design and analysis, and interpretation and evaluation of existing research in special education and related fields.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): SPED 8120 or permission from the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8816 BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (3 credits)
This course introduces a variety of practical interventions that teachers may use to support the positive classroom behavior of all students within a tiered model. Universal, targeted, and individualized strategies are presented. (Cross-listed with SPED 4810).

SPED 8820 CHARACTERISTICS OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS (3 credits)
This course is designed to assess and examine the causes and characteristics of behavioral disorders, which constitute internalizing, externalizing, and pervasive developmental disorders. Extensive use of the case study method will be used.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the Master of Science degree program in special education.
SPED 8830 GRADUATE PRACTICUM IN BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SPECIALIST (3 credits)
This course provides candidates with either an in-service experience or placement in a school program in which the candidate works with students with emotional and behavioral disorders at an academic level commensurate with the candidate's desired level of endorsement (PK-9, or 7-12).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in special education with an emphasis in behavior intervention specialist, completion of 30 hours of the required coursework, and permission by the department. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8840 ADVANCED PRACTICUM IN BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SPECIALIST (3 credits)
This course provides candidates with additional experiences in working with students with disabilities who present challenging behaviors, including emotional disturbance and autism. This course is designed for graduate students who are already endorsed in special education.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Behavior Intervention Specialist program and permission. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8850 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS (3 credits)
The focus of the course will be on instruction and interventions that are effective for students with behavior disorders such as explicit instruction, social skills support, supporting executive functions, and cognitive strategy instruction.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Graduate standing and successful completion of SPED 8820, not open to non-degree students.

SPED 8860 BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION (3 credits)
This course is designed to equip candidates with the skills necessary to assess, modify, and evaluate behavior in accordance with best practice and research-based approaches. In addition, this course will train candidates on how to conduct a functional behavioral assessment and create behavioral intervention plans in accordance with IDEA.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in special education. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8870 AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS: BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS (3 credits)
This course is designed to provide information on the behavioral characteristics, instructional needs and necessary curriculum development specifically for children and youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in special education. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8900 SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is to research and explore legal and policy issues affecting special education within our schools. Case law will be examined to ensure effective special education programs for children and youth with disabilities.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Graduate Standing. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8910 ASSESSMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (3 credits)
This course provides candidates with an overview of measurement and evaluation concepts, strategies, and techniques that are appropriate for students with special needs. Graduate candidates will implement and analyze formal and informal assessments using a systematic and comprehensive approach. Emphasis is placed on those assessment strategies that yield objective data regarding individual learning characteristics that provide a basis for educational decision making.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Graduate standing and SPED 8120

SPED 8920 SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is to examine special education administration and leadership issues. This course will focus on policies and procedures necessary to effectively provide leadership to programs for children and youth with disabilities.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Graduate standing. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8930 INCLUSION/COLLABORATION PRACTICUM (3 credits)
This course provides candidates with a practicum experience in the inclusion/collaboration specialty area with emphasis across PK-12 settings.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the graduate program in inclusion/collaboration and permission by the department. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8960 ADVANCED ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION (3 credits)
This course provides graduate candidates with in-depth practicum experiences in the administration and interpretation of standardized academic achievement measures, criterion-referenced tests, informal assessments, and progress monitoring with children experiencing learning difficulties. Emphasis is placed on utilizing assessment information in order to develop and monitor intervention plans.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the Master of Science degree program in special education; SPED 8910, SPED 8646, SPED 8156, and SPED 8970; or have permission from the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8970 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES (3 credits)
This course is designed to prepare graduate candidates with in-depth information regarding effective teaching strategies for students with high-incidence disabilities. Primary emphasis is placed on providing students with theoretical and practical foundations in the design and implementation of cognitive strategy instruction and the use of evidence-based practices and the selection and monitoring of individualized interventions.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to the Master of Science degree in special education, SPED 8120, SPED 8646 or equivalent or permission of the instructor. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 8980 PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION (3 credits)
This course is designed to prepare candidates to work in collaboration with other professionals and parents to create a learning environment that enhances the potential for academic success and improvement of instructional practices. The focus will be on collaborative problem solving. (Cross-listed with TED 8850).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Admission to Graduate College.

SPED 8990 THESIS (1-6 credits)
This course is intended for all graduate candidates in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders who are seeking a Master of Arts degree. The candidate is expected to generate and complete an independent research project under the guidance of a thesis advisor.
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Permission of Thesis Committee Chair and TED 8010. Not open to non-degree graduate students.

SPED 9140 ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of autism spectrum disorders (ASD). (Cross-listed with PSYC 9140).
Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Not open to non-degree graduate students.