

Career Alternatives in Special Education



Special education is individualized education designed to address the unique needs of students with disabilities and help them achieve their maximum potential. Special education students include those with learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, mental retardation, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, physical impairments, special health care needs, hearing and visual impairments, and other low-incidence disabilities. Special education provides support for children's success in school and later in life.

The shortage of trained, qualified special education teachers is critical, in Texas and throughout the United States. To address this need, Texas State University-San Marcos offers Career Alternatives in Special Education (CASE), a unique program that trains and certifies people interested in a second career in special education. CASE is a post-graduate, full-certification program with an optional master's degree in special education.

TEXAS  STATE
UNIVERSITY
SAN MARCOS

The rising STAR of Texas

A member of The Texas State University System

Course Work

The CASE program, through a cohort model, places participants into existing Texas State classes for a total of 48 to 51 semester hours (16 or 17 courses) of general and special education courses, depending on previous course work. These courses can typically be completed in a year and a half of full-time attendance at Texas State.

Courses consist of curriculum and instruction courses, reading courses and eight special education courses. A master's degree requires no extra course work provided all graduate college requirements have been met.

After successful completion of these courses, you may bypass student teaching, enroll in a two-semester internship, and be hired in a Central Texas school district on a full-time teacher's salary. Texas State faculty will continue to provide supervision for one year, and a mentor teacher will be assigned to facilitate your first teaching year.

Upon successful completion of the internship, and after passing the state certification tests, you will obtain an all-level Texas teaching certificate in special education.

The CASE program has three basic phases.

1. Phase one is the time necessary to complete all general and special education courses necessary for certification. The courses can be completed on a full-time or a part-time basis. Graduate special education classes are offered once a week at night during the fall and spring semesters. Summer session classes are offered during the day, five days a week.
2. Phase two is an optional internship year in which the participant is hired as a new teacher on a one-year probationary certificate in a Central Texas school district while continuing to be supervised by Texas State faculty and a mentor teacher. Special education internships are available only to successful CASE participants. During phase two, participants can choose to complete an unpaid semester of student teaching instead of the internship. Passing the appropriate Texas teacher certification exams is also required during this phase. An all-level Texas Teacher's Certificate in Special Education will be awarded at the completion of phase two.
3. Phase three is the student's first year as a fully certified teacher.

Admission Policy

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Texas State Graduate College, the CASE program requires a minimum GPA of 2.75 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work leading to a bachelor's degree. For applicants wanting a master's degree in special education in addition to teacher certification, a preferred GRE score of at least 900 (verbal and quantitative combined) is required.

Each applicant must submit the following to the Graduate College at Texas State:

- an online application through ApplyTexas
- one official transcript from each senior-level post-secondary institution attended
- official results of the verbal/quantitative GRE (for master's degree only)

Each applicant must submit the following to the appropriate advisor:

- A CASE application package (available at: www.education.txstate.edu/ci/case), which should include:
 - application form
 - writing sample
 - one recommendation
 - recent résumé
 - additional documentation to support the application
- A completed certification plan developed by the Office of Educator Preparation, www.education.txstate.edu

Financial Assistance

For information about scholarships, financial aid and deadlines, visit the Graduate College Web site at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on *Financing your Graduate Education*.

Contact

Jo Webber, PhD
Special Education Program
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, Texas 78666-4616
Phone: 512.245.7718/8389
Fax: 512.245.7911
E-mail: jw10@txstate.edu

There continues to be a severe and chronic shortage of qualified special education teachers across the nation.

— Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education