



The Special Education PhD program prepares individuals for careers as university scholars and teachers and for leadership positions in schools. With a focus on the study of special education in urban and culturally diverse schools, we emphasize theory and research in language and literacy, early intervention, developmental disabilities, emotional/behavioral disabilities, special education policy, and teacher preparation. Classes are small, allowing faculty and students to get to know each other well. A faculty advisor works with each student to design individualized programs of study. Students have the opportunity to conduct research and teach university courses under the mentorship of a faculty member. Most of our graduates are now university faculty around the United States, conducting research and helping to prepare the next generation of special educators. Our PhD program has been recognized as an exemplary program by a leadership preparation grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Mavis Donahue, Professor and Program Coordinator, EdD, Boston University

Mary Bay, Associate Professor, PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago

Lisa Cushing, Associate Professor, PhD, University of Oregon

Vinni Hall, Clinical Assistant Professor, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Wu-Ying Hsieh, Assistant Professor, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Marie Tejero Hughes, Associate Professor, PhD, University of Miami

Norma Lopez-Reyna, Associate Professor, PhD, University of California, Santa Barbara

Michelle Parker-Katz, Clinical Associate Professor, PhD, Michigan State University

Christine Salisbury, Professor and Director of the Child and Family Development Center, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Elizabeth Talbott, Associate Professor and Department Chair, PhD, University of Virginia

Richard Van Acker, Professor, EdD, Northern Illinois University

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Special Education PhD program requires a total of 96 credit hours beyond a bachelor's or 64 hours beyond a master's and will include courses that focus on the historical, social, and philosophical influences on education; research design and statistical analysis; and educational measurement. Research seminars are offered on such topics as assessment, language disabilities, literacy interventions, inclusive models, preparation of special educators, and prevention of emotional/behavioral problems. Candidates also are required to take an examination with written and oral components, as well as to complete a dissertation based on original research.

SPECIAL PROGRAM FEATURES

Two funded research and policy centers directed by Special Education faculty provide unique opportunities for PhD students to engage in research, teaching, and policy work at the state and national levels. The Child and Family Development Center (CFDC) is an interdisciplinary public service and research center with the primary goal of promoting positive outcomes for young children and their families by working in areas of public service, research, and training. The federally funded Monarch Center responds to the urgent shortage of special education teachers for culturally diverse settings. Its mission is to test models for providing grantsmanship and program development services to faculty at minority institutions of higher education around the United States.

RESULTS

Most of our graduates are now university faculty and school leaders, directly affecting policy, conducting research, and preparing the next generation of teachers. In fact, our program produces the largest number of faculty for university positions in special education in greater Chicago. Our graduates publish articles in prestigious journals and regularly present their work at state and national conferences.

CONTACT INFO

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