**Department of Special Education**

**College of Education and Social Work**

304 Recitation Hall  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19383  
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Department of Special Education (http://www.wcupa.edu/specialEducation)  
Dr. Adera (badera@wcupa.edu), Interim Chairperson  
Dr. Hicks, (shicks@wcupa.edu) Graduate Coordinator

**Programs of Study**
The Department of Special Education offers the Master of Education in Special Education (in traditional or online formats), post-baccalaureate Pennsylvania teacher certification in Special Education, a graduate certificate in Autism Studies (online program), and a graduate certificate in Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology (online program).

The Post-Baccalaureate Certification in Special Education leads to a Pennsylvania Level I certification.

The Master of Education program alone does not lead to Pennsylvania Level I certification in Special Education.

The graduate certificates do not lead to a Pennsylvania Level I certification in Special Education.

The Certificate in Autism (Online) is being offered for practitioners and parents alike who wish to earn a certificate of specialization in autism spectrum disorders.

The Certificate in Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology (Online) provides professionals, parents, and other community members instruction and training in assessment, pedagogy, and technology that support the students who rely on UDL and AT for learning.

**Programs**

**Master’s Programs in Special Education**

- M.Ed. in Special Education (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/education-social-work/special-education/special-education-med)  
- M.Ed. in Special Education (Online) (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/education-social-work/special-education/special-education-med-online)

**Certificates in Special Education**

- Post-Baccalaureate Certification in Special Education (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/education-social-work/special-education/post-baccalaureate-certification-special-education)  
- Autism (Online) (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/education-social-work/special-education/autism-certificate)  
  - Important information about the educational debt, earnings, and completion rates of students who attended this program: Certificate in Autism (https://wcupa.edu/_services/fin_aid/gainfulEmployment/AutismStudies/gedt.html)  
- Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology (Online) (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/education-social-work/special-education/universal-design-learning-assistive-technology-certificate-online)  
  - Important information about the educational debt, earnings, and completion rates of students who attended this program: Certificate in Universal Design in Learning & Assistive Technology (https://wcupa.edu/_services/fin_aid/gainfulEmployment/UniversalDesignLearningAssistiveTechnology/gedt.html)

**Admissions**

All applicants to one of West Chester University’s graduate programs will be held to the graduate admissions requirements (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/general-information/admissions-enrollment/graduate-admissions). When applicable, additional requirements for admission into specific department program(s) may be listed below.

**Admission Requirements for the M.Ed. in Special Education**

1. An undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university  
2. Two letters of recommendation  
3. Application, including goal statements  
4. Submission of satisfactory GRE or MAT scores at the 50th percentile if GPA is below the required University GPA of 3.0  
5. Foundations of Special Education or equivalent - 3 credits (Must meet PDE Chapter 49.85 requirements)  
6. Admission interview (only if deemed necessary)

**Admission Requirements for the M.Ed. in Special Education (Online)**

1. An undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university  
2. Two letters of recommendation  
3. Application, including goal statements  
4. Submission of satisfactory GRE or MAT scores at the 50th percentile if GPA is below the required University GPA of 3.0  
5. Foundations of Special Education or equivalent - 3 credits (Must meet PDE Chapter 49.85 requirements)  
6. Admission interview (only if deemed necessary)

**Admission Requirements for the Post-Baccalaureate Certification in Special Education**

The applicant must have the following:

1. A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university  
2. A minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale calculated on the most recent 48 credits of college/university course work and 2.8 total undergraduate cumulative GPA. (If the applicant possesses a master’s degree, the GPA requirement applies to that degree.)  
3. Foundations of Special Education or equivalent - 3 credits (Must meet PDE Chapter 49.85 requirements)

**Admission Requirements for the Certificate in Universal Design for Learning and Assistive Technology**

Admission requirements are a bachelor’s degree from an accredited, four-year, degree-granting institution and a 3.0 GPA.

**Policies**

All graduate students are held to the academic policies and procedures (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/academic-policies-procedures) outlined in the graduate catalog. Students are encouraged to review departmental handbooks for program tips, suggested course sequences, and explanations of procedures. When applicable, additional policies for specific department programs may be listed below.

**Degree Candidacy**

**Degree Candidacy for the M.Ed. in Special Education**

Students must apply to be admitted to candidacy after the completion of 12 semester hours of work at West Chester University, including EDF 500 or EDF 501 and two courses from the special education program. Grade point averages must be consistent with standards.
required in graduate studies at West Chester University (minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0).

Degree Candidacy for the M.Ed. in Special Education (Online)

Students must apply to be admitted to candidacy after the completion of 12 semester hours of work at West Chester University, including EDF 500 or EDF 501 and two courses from the special education program. Grade point averages must be consistent with standards required in graduate studies at West Chester University (minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0).

Certification Requirements

A. Students seeking PDE Certification Special Education PreK-8 and/or Special Education 7-12 must already possess an additional teacher certification in an approved area of study and must have the following as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE):

1. Students should obtain current PDE certification information from the PDE website. As of this catalog printing, persons seeking PDE certification in Special Education must have completed certification in one of the following areas:
   a. Special Education PreK-8: N-3, K-6, PreK-4, 4-8, K-12 (i.e., Art, Music, Health and PE, Foreign Language) and/or Reading Specialist
   b. Special Education 7-12: 4-8, K-12 (i.e., Art, Music, Health and PE, Foreign Language) Reading Specialist, and/or Secondary Content Area such as Mathematics, English, Social Studies or Science

2. West Chester University recommends the following options for students seeking PDE Certification in Special Education:
   a. Attain a teaching certification before entrance into the Special Education Post-baccalaureate programs.
   b. Dual enrollment in teaching certification programs at WCU
   c. Simultaneous enrollment in a teaching certification program at another institution

3. West Chester University maintains the same content-based (coursework) requirements as the Pennsylvania Department of Education. When the Pennsylvania Department of Education modifies certification requirements in the middle of a catalog (academic) year, the Special Education Department will modify program completion requirements to align with the Pennsylvania Department of Education certification requirements.

4. Evidence of Chapter 49.13 competencies must be met. If this is not present, or if course work does not meet these competencies, students may need to take additional course work, under advisement.

Dual Enrollment

Students enrolled in two or more teacher certification programs, whereby one enrollment is an initial teacher certification are subject to the following requirements:

1. Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university
2. Minimum GPA of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale calculated on the most recent 48 credits of college/university course work and 3.0 total undergraduate cumulative GPA. (If the applicant possesses a master's degree, the GPA requirement applies to that degree.)
3. Evidence of having completed college-level studies in English composition (three credits), literature (three credits), and mathematics (six credits).
   a. Note: Students may be admitted provisionally without these courses; however, they must take them within the first two semesters of graduate work.
4. Formal Admission to Teacher Certification Program

Students must do the following:

1. Meet the above program entry requirements
2. File a form in the certification office
3. Receive department approval

Faculty

Professors

Vicki A. McGinley (rmcginley@wcupa.edu) (1997)
B.A., University of Pittsburgh; M.A., Ph.D., Temple University
Claire Verden (cverden@wcupa.edu) (2006)
B.S., West Chester University; M.Ed., Temple University; Ed.D., Arcadia University
Donna Wandy (dwandy@wcupa.edu) (1999)
B.S., University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire; M.Ed., University of Utah; Ph.D., University of Florida

Associate Professors

Beatrice Ader (badera@wcupa.edu) (2010)
Chairperson, Special Education
B.S., University of Nairobi (Kenya); M.Ed., Ph.D., University of North Texas
N. Kim Doan (ndoan@wcupa.edu) (2008)
B.A., M.A., California State University; Ph.D., University of Virginia
Tara C. Guerriero (tguerriero@wcupa.edu) (2008)
B.S., M.A., Ph.D., Northwestern University
S. Christy Hicks (shicks@wcupa.edu) (2011)
Chairperson, Special Education
Graduate Coordinator, Special Education
B.A., M.A.T., Western Carolina University; Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Merry L. Staulters (mstaulters@wcupa.edu) (2017)
B.S., Wheelock College; M.S., Ph.D., State University of New York at Albany
York Williams (ywilliams@wcupa.edu) (2009)
B.A., North Carolina Central University; M.A., West Chester University; M.Ed., Ph.D., Temple University

Assistant Professors

Mary A. Houser (mhouser@wcupa.edu) (2013)
B.F.A., Kutztown University; M.A.T., The College of New Jersey; Ed.D., Fayetteville State University
Ashley J. Miller (amiller2@wcupa.edu) (2017)
B.S., Millersville University; M.Ed., University of Delaware; Ed.D., Wilmington University
Dawn Patterson (dpatterson@wcupa.edu) (2016)
M.Ed., Ed.D., University of North Carolina Charlotte

Courses

EDA

EDA 503. Family Systems in Special Education. 3 Credits.

This course bases its objectives on the knowledge of families of children with disabilities as essential for the child's education. The family is studied so that the prospective student can best know how to work with diverse families and family systems. Distance education offering may be available. Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 504. Advanced Methods for Low Incidence Disabilities. 3 Credits.

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the essentials of systematic instruction of functional life skills for learners with severe disabilities across the domains of a functional curriculum. A field component is required in the class. Distance education offering may be available.
EDA 505. Advanced Methods High Incidence Disabilities. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to prepare teachers to work with students with high incidence
disabilities. It provides an overview of curriculum and instructional methods. Emphasis is
placed on understanding and analysis of learning problems and academic interventions.

EDA 506. Legal Issues in Special Education. 3 Credits.
This course presents information on legislation that governs the delivery of special education
services. Attention will be given to teachers challenges in implementation and compliance,
and writing legally sound IEPs and SAPs.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 508. Introduction to Early Childhood/Special Education. 3 Credits.
This course is an overview of the field of early childhood special education (ECE). We will
explore the processes of early intervention including screening, assessment, instructional
programming, integrating children with and without disabilities, and family involvement.
Emphasis is placed on assessing and promoting the development of cognitive, language,
social, self-help and motor skills.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 510. Collaboration. 3 Credits.
Contact department for more information about this course.

EDA 511. Inclusion & Collaboration. 3 Credits.
The purpose of this course is to prepare teachers to cultural changes evident in American public
education with respect to inclusion and the education of students with disabilities. Students will
examine their beliefs about inclusion and collaboration, hear new perspectives on these
philosophies, learn how to work collaboratively with other professionals and learn practical
methods to support all students in the classroom.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Summer.

EDA 513. Career Dev and Transition Systems Structures. 3 Credits.
This course will address post-school support structures that serve students with disabilities as
they transition into adult life, stressing legislative foundations, inter agency linkages, school-
business partnerships, referral processes and seamless systems of service delivery. The teacher
practitioner as change agent will be an underlying theme.

EDA 514. PreK-8 Aspects of Transition. 3 Credits.
This course will address support structures that serve students with disabilities as they
transition from homebound to and throughout the PreK-8 school system.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 514 requires prerequisite EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall.

EDA 515. Middle/Secondary Career Development and Transition. 3 Credits.
This course addresses life span issues for persons with disabilities, stressing assessment,
planning, and instructional strategies that promote successful movement to and through adult
roles.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 515 requires prerequisite EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 516. Curriculum & Instruction for Individual Learning Differences I. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to prepare students to assist children and youth with disabilities
achieve skills in academics and functional life domains.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 516 requires prerequisite EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

EDA 517. Technology and Universal Design for Learning. 3 Credits.
This course provides an introduction to the principles of Universal Design for learning (UDL),
the incorporation of assistive technologies to accomplish UDL, and strategies for it’s inclusion
in diverse instructional settings.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall.

EDA 519. Introduction to Assistive Technology. 3 Credits.
This course focuses on the awareness of assistive technologies as it relates to education,
communication, vocation, recreation, and mobility for students with disabilities.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Spring.

EDA 520. Intro to Autism: Understanding Autism and the Interdisciplinary Process. 3 Credits.
This course addresses the principles and strategies involved in an interdisciplinary approach
to the treatment of individuals with autism. Faculty from the departments of Communication
Disorders, Kinesiology, Psychology, and Special Education provide students with autism
spectrum disorders within an opportunity to reflect upon the characteristics of individuals with
autism spectrum disorders within the context of individual discipline and how to successfully
work within an interdisciplinary setting.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

EDA 521. Assistive Technologies for Communication and Participation. 3 Credits.
This course will present various types of communication disorders and the impact of high and
low level technology, specifically, augmentative and alternative communication systems and
assistive technologies to support the child with disabilities in the K-12 classroom.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Spring & Summer.
Cross listed courses EDA 521, SLP 521.

EDA 522. Integrating Assistive Technology in the Classroom. 3 Credits.
This seminar and field is the final course in the Assistive technology Certificate. It is designed
for educational professionals and is focused on the integration of assistive technologies into
the K-12 classroom.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall.

EDA 523. Curriculum/Instruction for Individual Learning Differences II. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to support students in the research, development and implementation
of instruction for students with disabilities.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 523 requires a prerequisite of EDA 574 and EDA 516.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Spring & Summer.

EDA 530. Teaching Children with Autism. 3 Credits.
This course serves as an in-depth analysis of unique education needs of students with autism
spectrum disorders. Students will learn about the educational issues surrounding autism
spectrum disorders including history, etiology, current legislation, instructional strategies, and
issues related to transition. In addition students will develop a working sense of classroom
assessment and intervention strategies specific to educational settings for students with
autism spectrum disorders.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 542. Foundations of Special Education. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to acquaint the prospective teacher with the historical legal evolution
of the field, special education processes, and the characteristics of individuals with disabilities.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall, Spring & Summer.

EDA 544. Classroom Management. 3 Credits.
Exploration of current practices in the management and modification of behavior. The
professional’s role in achieving a better basis for meaningful communication with the special
child. Problems that may interfere with teacher effectiveness are discussed.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 544 requires prerequisite of EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

EDA 573. Develop Assess Child Wth Lnr Disabl. 3 Credits.
Diagnostic procedures and subsequent educational prescriptions useful with students
experiencing learning difficulties.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 573 requires prerequisite of EDA 541.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.

EDA 574. Assessment and Special Education. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to introduce students to instructional assessment in special education
and the development of relevant education plans to meet federal regulations.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 574 requires prerequisite of EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Fall & Spring.
EDA 580. Contemporary Issues and Trends. 3 Credits.
Current trends, problems, and issues in special education, teacher education, research, and administration will be explored. Emerging concepts relating to special education will be emphasized.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 580 requires prerequisite of EDA 542.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Spring.

EDA 581. Practicum: Special Education. 3 Credits.
Offers students an opportunity to put skills gained through course work into practice under supervision from the department. Weekly seminar required.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 581 requires a prerequisite of EDA 541.

EDA 582. Special Education Modified Student Teaching and Seminar. 1-3 Credits.
This is a required course for students pursuing special education certification at the post-baccalaureate level. The student will receive direct experience with students with disabilities receiving special education services. Field clearances required.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 582 requires prerequisites EDA 542, EDA 516, EDA 521, EDA 544, EDA 574, and EDA 514 or EDA 515.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Summer.

EDA 590. Independent Study. 1-3 Credits.
Contact department for more information about this course.
Repeatable for Credit.

EDA 591. Final Project. 3 Credits.
This course will provide the student the opportunity to learn how to evaluate and interpret published research, to conduct a critical research review, and to develop and produce an original research paper. Offered on a two-semester basis with each part carrying three credits.
Pre / Co requisites: EDA 591 requires prerequisite of EDF 500.
Distance education offering may be available.
Typically offered in Spring.

EDA 592. Workshop In Special Education I. 1-3 Credits.
Contact department for more information about this course.
Repeatable for Credit.

EDE

EDE 506. Infant And Toddler Development & Environment. 3 Credits.
Physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of the child newborn to two years is studied. The use of developmental tests for the diagnosis of infant and toddler needs is related to the structuring of an appropriate learning environment.

EDE 507. Preschooling Learning Environment. 3 Credits.
Methods and materials, developmentally appropriate for children 2-5, are presented. Readiness assessments, curricular discussions, and teaching approaches are addressed across the full spectrum of child development.